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Two local clothing designers put good will above all else

IN THE SPIRIT OF REPRESENTING THE CITY'S GREATEST POTENTIAL HUMANITY, PARTNERS AJANI JEFFRIES AND JOSIAH MONTALVO PROMOTE THEIR SKATE CLOTHING LABEL, GOLDNRD (A RIFF ON A HENDRIX SONG, IF YOU DIDN'T CATCH THAT) BY PRACTICING NOT RANDOM, BUT INTRINSIC ACTS OF KINDNESS ON THE STREETS. THE EMINENT PRODUCT OF THEIR LABOR IS MORE THAN COMMODITY: IT'S A CONTAGIOUS CAMARADERIE.

In February, Jeffries and friends Tyshawn Heath and Scott Haag surprised a total stranger with a hand-sewn GoldnRd hat and 20 dollars in free gas at the South Clinton Avenue Valero station. The deed was a fun way to hype their hat sale at Krudco Skate Shop.

"We spent so long trying to pick the right person," Jeffries says. "We were in there for, like, an hour ... waiting for someone to say, 'Let me put 5 [dollars] on the tank,' or, '10 on the tank.' ... We really wanted to help that person out."

Equipped with two small video cameras, GoldnRd broadcasted the deed on their FlowerCityFilms YouTube channel. Their intention: "WE HOPE THIS INSPIRES YOU TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE IN YOUR CITY, WE LOVE YOU ROCHESTER NY!"

The man they picked appears, at first, skeptical, but his suspicion thaws in the warmth of Jeffries' rejoice as the benevolent performance of a kind idea invites laughter from even the gas station attendant. "We will definitely be doing more of it," Jeffries laughs. "And that guy, he wasn't who I was expecting to pick."

At 22, Jeffries is the portrait incarnate of an old soul honeyed from the nectar of a joyful self-reliance. The work of local legends Hassan Mackey, Shawn Dunwoody, the late Sam Lowry, and others inspired his and Montalvo's aim to exalt the artist in everyone. Detached from the trendy posture often at the forefront of locavore mentality, GoldnRd represents the recombinant benefits of personal interaction.

For Jeffries, viable business is a just a perk when their label is the vehicle for exercising tenfold goodwill.

"I cherish success, and I don't think success is necessarily money," he smiles. "Having the ability to invest in your ideas—that's success."

GoldnRd apparel is available at Krudco Skate Shop at 83 Howell St. in downtown Rochester.

—Carlie Fishgold