

The Virgin Islands Consortium

BVI Youth Wins Regional Tourism Competition

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Naomi Onwufuju, BVI winner of the 2023 Regional Youth Tourism Congress, with CTO Chairman Kenneth Bryan. By. CARIBBEAN TOURISM ORGANIZATION.

Naomi Onwufuju, a student of the Elmore Stoult High School in Tortola, beat out competitors from 13 other Caribbean jurisdictions at the 19th annual Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Regional Tourism Youth Congress in Turks & Caicos on Friday.

The event, part of the CTO's annual tourism conference, is designed to promote tourism awareness and enthusiasm among children aged 14-17 from CTO member countries.

Onwufuju's winning presentation was on three strategies industry stakeholders in the BVI could pursue to ensure greater access, safety, use and enjoyment of the tourism product

by visitors with disabilities.

During the three minutes allotted to each contestant, the 16-year old described her vision for increasing accessibility to BVI's beaches, restaurants and other attractions.

"Accessibility is not only a responsible tourism policy but also a moral obligation," she declared, as she laid out her plan to ensure inclusivity and equity for all visitors.

"I love my country and I am honored I have gotten the chance to represent and to win this for my territory," said Onwufuju at a press conference following her victory. She expressed excitement about being able to share her ideas in a space where high-level policymakers, including ministers and commissioners of tourism from across the region, were gathered. She also noted that the other participants shared valuable insight on how to enhance the tourism product of their respective countries. "Truly, everyone had amazing ideas!" she said.

Students from Barbados and Tobago placed second and third respectively at this year's Regional Tourism Youth Congress.