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No Other Contestants, but a Queen Will Be Crowned: Markeymah Cargile to Become Miss St. Croix

Facing public backlash over the possibility of not holding the pageant, the Department of Tourism has confirmed that Cargile will receive the 2024-2025 title in a ceremony that keeps the tradition alive.

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Markeymah Cargile

The V.I. Department of Tourism has officially announced that Markeymah Cargile will be crowned as the 2024-2025 Miss St. Croix Festival Queen. The decision comes after a review process, during which the department said it weighed options for this year's pageant amidst uncertainties about moving forward with the competition.

In an official statement released on Monday, the DOT and its Division of Festivals spoke about the importance of the pageant tradition. "As a community, we understand the historical and cultural significance of the Queen pageants throughout the territory and continue to encourage the rising generations to partake in and elevate the rich traditions of our islands," the statement read.

The crowning ceremony is scheduled for December 26, 2024, when the reigning Queen, Na'Zirah Armstrong, will transfer the crown to Cargile. The event will take place during the Prince, Princess, Duke, Duchess, Jr. Miss, and Tiny Tarts Pageant at the Festival Village, featuring performances from eleven young participants who represent the future leaders of St. Croix.

The announcement follows a period of controversy and public debate about the future of the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen pageant. Despite its cultural significance, there was uncertainty about holding the traditional Queen Show during the 2024-2025 Crucian Christmas Festival, as Markeymah Cargile was the only individual who had signed up to compete.

Concerns were raised by community members, including notable Crucian Claire Roker, who has been recognized for her contributions to tourism, women's advocacy, and youth development in the Virgin Islands. Roker, who was honored by the 35th Legislature in Bill 35-0239, took to social media on October 14 to express her disappointment in the Department of Tourism's handling of the situation.

"Good morning to all. This is a message to Commissioner Joseph B Boschulte," [Roker wrote in a Facebook post](#). "I know I might be disliked for what I am about to say, but it's ok because I am tired of St. Croix being treated as a stepchild. Not having a Queen for St. Croix is unacceptable Commissioner, you need to rethink your decision and accept the young lady who applied and get her ready for this Ambassador position." She questioned whether the same scenario would be allowed to happen in St. Thomas and called on the commissioner to let Tourism Deputy Commissioner in the St. Croix District, Shamari Haynes, and Chairwoman of the Miss St. Croix Pageant, Essi Gaston Edwards, fulfill their roles in preparing Cargile for the position.