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Young Virgin Islanders Shine at Dance Competition, Bringing Home Top Honors

Azalea Pearsall and Nubia Richards, students of FAPA USVI Dance Academy, achieve remarkable success at the Artistic Dance Exchange in Jacksonville, winning multiple awards and scholarships

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Azalea Pearsall, age 9 (left), and Nubia Richards, age 8 (right) By. FAPA USVI DANCE ACADEMY

Two young Virgin Islanders have come home covered in accolades following their successful participation in a recent dance conference in Jacksonville, Florida.

Azalea Pearsall, age nine, and eight-year-old Nubia Richards, students of the FAPA USVI Dance Academy, traveled to Jacksonville in late October for Season 8 of the Artistic Dance Exchange

(ADE) Regional Competition & Convention.

There, Azalea earned two first place awards; top overall solo in the mini beginners to intermediate category, and top overall solo in improv dance. She was also awarded best in show for mini beginners to intermediate open choreography, and judge's choice in the same category.

Nubia was awarded third place for her solo entry in the mini beginners to intermediate competition. She also earned a scholarship to the 2025 Nationals.

Both girls were awarded gold medals for their excellent performances.

The FAPA USVI Dance Academy team is now preparing for the ADE National competition in Orlando in late June/early July 2025. Between now and then, they will also be competing in other regional events, says Academy Director Lea Scott. She expressed immense pride in her young dancers, calling Ms. Pearsall and Ms. Richards “the best competitive dancers on St. Thomas.”

Ms. Scott acknowledged the high costs of preparation and travel to these conventions and competitions, noting that participation fees, costumes, and travel can add up. To defray expenses, FAPA will host several dance fundraisers throughout the year. Ms. Scott appealed to the public to support these activities. She also welcomes donations from businesses or other organizations interested in the promotion of dance in the Virgin Islands.

Meanwhile Azalea, Nubia, and the other young dancers of FAPA continue to train hard, with the hopes of representing the Virgin Islands with distinction at their next regional or national event.

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