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## St. Thomas Crowns 2025 Petite Princess, Princess, and Jr. Miss at Eight-Hour Pageant Showcase

**Skai Lewis, Kaysa Freeman, and Jada-Marie Donovan were crowned 2025 STT Petite Princess, Princess, and Jr. Miss after a night of talent, culture, and creativity that showcased recycled fashion, madras couture, and heartfelt tributes to USVI heritage.**

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In an eight-hour display of culture, creativity, and youthful poise, the Division of Festivals within the Department of Tourism hosted the 2025 St. Thomas Petite Princess, Princess, and Jr. Miss pageants on Saturday night. The triple-pageant event took place at the Eldridge Blake Sports and Fitness Center on the University of the Virgin Islands campus.

With two contestants each in the Petite Princess and Princess categories—Skai Lewis and Suraia LaPlace Thomas for Petite Princess, and Kaysa Freeman and Emelia Brooks for Princess—each competitor was guaranteed a spot on the winners’ podium. The Jr. Miss category, however, was more competitive, featuring four contenders: Ayanna Saunders Gardener, Amaya Marks, Alauna Petersen, and Jada-Marie Donovan.

The evening opened with the on-stage interview segment for Jr. Miss contestants. Each girl shared what they enjoyed most about their school and how that aspect positively shaped their development. Ayanna Gardener highlighted the personalized instruction afforded by small class sizes at Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic School. Amaya Marks spoke about her love of Bible class, while Alauna Petersen pointed to the extracurricular opportunities and clubs available to her. Jada-Marie Donovan expressed her appreciation for pep rallies, which provide a space for social engagement and fun.

Contestants then delivered promotional campaign speeches, followed by a unique Virgin Islands Botanical Garden segment for the Princess category. Kaysa Freeman and Emelia Brooks represented yellow cedar and frangipani respectively, donning themed dresses inspired by their chosen flora. The segment was scored out of 80 points.

Next came the futuristic couture wear segment for Jr. Miss contestants, incorporating elements of traditional madras fabric. Each design reflected cutting-edge fashion blended with cultural identity, showcasing the vision and skill of the design teams.

Petite Princess contestants then returned for a creative twist on fashion, presenting outfits made from recycled or biodegradable materials. Skai Lewis wore a striking red-and-gold gown crafted from 800 paper cups and 20 trash bags, paying tribute to Fort Christian. Suraia LaPlace Thomas modeled a biodegradable balloon dress, designed to raise awareness about the harm such materials can cause to marine life.

The Princess fashion segment followed, with designs inspired by creative cultural representation using madras. Jr. Miss contestants also participated in a similar VI Culture segment, further showcasing heritage through costume.

The always-popular American Doll category, reserved for Petite Princess contestants, delivered heartwarming moments. Skai Lewis portrayed a Virgin Islands-themed collectible doll, while Suraia LaPlace Thomas represented Addie, a former enslaved girl from the American Girl series. Her costume—a birthday dress with lace-trimmed West Indian madras—imagined Addie’s visit to the Caribbean.

The talent segment, a pivotal category worth up to 100 points, featured performances by Princess and Jr. Miss hopefuls. Contestants showcased a variety of talents including dance, baton twirling, singing, instrumental performances, and stilt-walking.

Pre-recorded interviews were then shown before the evening wear segment, the final judged category before scores were tallied and crowns awarded.

Before the winners were announced, several awards were distributed. People’s Choice winners included Skai Lewis (Petite Princess), Kaysa Freeman (Princess), and Alauna Petersen (Jr. Miss).

Ms. Photogenic titles went to Skai Lewis, Kaysa Freeman, and Amaya Marks, while Ms. Congeniality was awarded to Suraia LaPlace Thomas, Kaysa Freeman, and Jada-Marie Donovan.

Ms. Cooperative was shared by Skai Lewis and Kaysa Freeman in their respective categories, with a tie at the Jr. Miss level between Alauna Petersen and Jada-Marie Donovan.

Miss Intellect honors were awarded to Skai Lewis, Kaysa Freeman, and Alauna Petersen.

Performance scores revealed dominant showings from both Skai Lewis and Kaysa Freeman, who won every Viya-sponsored award and led in each performance category within the Petite Princess and Princess divisions.

Among Jr. Miss contestants, Amaya Marks earned top marks in the promotional speech, talent, and evening wear segments. Jada-Marie Donovan led in the madras couture segment, while Alauna Petersen won the culture and interview segments.

At the close of the evening, crowns were awarded. As anticipated, Skai Lewis was named 2025 Petite Princess, and Kaysa Freeman was crowned 2025 Princess.

In the Jr. Miss category, Alauna Petersen placed third, Amaya Marks took second place, and the title of 2025 St. Thomas Jr. Miss went to Jada-Marie Donovan.

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