

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Miss Black Virgin Islands Takes First Runner Up On National Stage

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ST. CROIX -- Miss Black Virgin Islands USA 2015, Amaris N. Chew from this island, took 1st Runner-Up in the Miss Black USA National Scholarship Pageant held this past weekend in Washington, D.C., according to a press release issued on Saturday.

Of the 36 competing contestants, the title went to Ms. Madison Gibbs of Greensboro, North Carolina. Chew, however, would assume the title should the winner be unable to fulfill her duties.

Segments included personal interview, personal fitness, evening wear, on-stage Q & A and talent. A top 15 was announced and the ladies would have to compete in every

segment again with new judges. Chew's talent segment was a dramatic interpretation of the Black Struggle in the Americas and included excerpts from Bob Marley's 'Redemption Song' and the 'Black National Anthem' by James Weldon



Amaris N. Chew.

The pageant was held at the Theatre for Performing Arts at the University of the District of Columbia. Hosting was Kalilah Allen-Harris, M.D. who is an actress and Miss Black USA 2007. Judges included scholar John Wesley Blassingame and make-up artist Derrick Rutledge among others.

Founded in 1986, Miss Black USA provides educational opportunities to outstanding young African American women. The pageant has awarded more than \$300,000 in scholarships to date.

Amaris Chew is a paraprofessional teacher at Arthur A. Richards Junior High School (AARJHS) and will start graduate school at Clark Atlanta University later this month. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from the University of the Virgin Islands. Chew has also represented the territory as a competitive soccer player on the USVI National Women's Soccer Team. Her pageant experience started when she placed 3rd Runner-Up in Miss St. Croix 2011-2012, she then won Miss Black Virgin Islands USA in 2014 and, most recently, was delegated in 2015 to which this last competition was the final round.

You may have seen Amaris around St. Croix waiting tables at Fort Christian Brew Pub or on-stage at Caribbean Community Theatre, where she played Joanne in the musical 'RENT' and Michelle in the musical 'Dreamgirls.' She also coaches soccer, softball and majorettes at AARJHS and is a part of their pageant committee.

Amaris would like to thank sponsors former Senator Judi Buckley, Ms. May Adams Cornwall, Ms. Carmen Garvey James, Jackie's Beauty Supply and her beautiful mother, Ms. Michelle Greene. A special shout out to creative critics Michael Armendariz, Eileen des Jardins of the Caribbean Community Theatre, Isabella Sylvester and Hanife James. Another special shout-out to supporters Senator Sammuel Sanes, former Senator Diane Capehart and, again, Michael Armendariz. Amaris says she has been honored to be an

ambassador for the territory on the national stage and has been blessed to do so well.

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