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Rynel Harris Crowned Miss St. Croix 2022-2023 in First Queen Show Since 2019

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Rynel Harris was crowned the 2022-2023 Miss St. Croix Festival Queen at the St. Croix Educational Complex Auditorium on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2023. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Rynel Harris, contestant number 1 in the 2022-2023 Miss St. Croix pageant, was crowned queen in a competition where only 19 points separated the winner from the first runner-up. But Ms. Harris's winning streak started long before, and Sunday night's event served as the culmination of her years in pageantry.

Ms. Harris started pageantry in junior high school. She won Miss Arthur A. Richards Junior High School, Miss St. Croix Educational Complex, Miss Caribbean Student Organization, and now Miss St. Croix Festival Queen.

The show was also the first in the territory since 2019, as the world faced a global pandemic in 2020 that led to lockdowns and the halting of most in-person events.

Sunday night's pageant featured three contestants, Ms. Harris, Helena Gonsales who was contestant number 2 and won 1st runner-up, and contestant number 3, Kenaiya Henry.

Ms. Harris told the Consortium following her victory that she was relieved once the show was completed. "I feel amazing and also a sigh of relief. I've worked so hard for this. I've been preparing for this for years," she said. "This is a dream come true and I am so happy right now. My favorite part of the show was cultural wear. I enjoyed dancing around in the costume and having fun."

For young women seeking to pursue Miss St. Croix, she said, "Do it. Do not let anyone stop you."



The current Miss St. Croix was joined by queens of years past during the 2022-2023 Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant Show on Dec. 18, 2022 (Credit: V.I. Consortium)

Essi Gaston-Edwards, who chaired this year's event, delivered a well executed show that started and finished on time. The competition started at 6:00 p.m and was done by 10:00 p.m.

She also remarked on how the pageant has changed over the years. "The last time I was chairperson was 10 years ago and a lot has changed in the whole entire process. One change is that we are now under the Department of Tourism and Division of Festival. Our new Miss St. Croix, our 70th Jubilee Queen, she will definitely be an ambassador with the Department of Tourism and Division of Festivals. She will reign locally, globally, and internationally being that we are now branded across the world," she said.

This year's show was titled, "Beauty, Talent, and Intellect: Encompassing the Platinum Jubilee for Miss St. Croix 2022-2023".

Here are the segments and winners thereof:

- Viya's People Choice, Text-to-Vote: Rynel Harris with a total of 5,047 total votes
- Miss Popularity- Rynel Harris
- Miss Photogenic- Helena Gonsales
- Miss Congeniality-Kenaiya Henry
- Best Talent (188 Points)- Rynel Harris
- Miss Intellect (1,629 Points)-Rynel Harris
- Best Ambassadorial and Cultural Dress (311 Points)- Helena Gonsales

Below are the prizes for the contestants:

Prizes

Winner

- \$10,0000 Cash
- Official Crown, Scepter, Pin, Bag
- Official Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Sash
- Official Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Trophy
- 5pc Luggage Set
- 55" 4K TV
- 8pc Collection of Fenty Skin Care
- Michael Kors Signature Voyager
- East West Tote Bag
- Michael Kors Signature Jet Set
- Travel Continental Wallet

1st Runner Up

- \$5,000 Cash
- Official Miss St. Croix 1st Runner Up Sash
- Official Miss St. Croix 1st Runner Up Trophy
- 3pc Luggage Set
- 50" 4K TV

- 3pc Collection of Fenty Skin Care
- COACH Willow Leather Tote
- COACH Leather Wristlet

2nd Runner Up

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