Meet the New Miss Universe—She’s an HIV Advocate!

“HIV/AIDS is a very big problem in my country, South Africa,” says Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters.

November 30, 2017

Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, of South Africa, was crowned Miss Universe 2017 in Las Vegas, reports The Associated Press. Shortly afterward, the 22-year-old said she hopes to use her reign to draw attention to HIV/AIDS issues.

“HIV/AIDS is a very big problem in my country, South Africa, so I hope to stand as an advocate for that,” she told reporters.

> Get to know the newly crowned #MissUniverse Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters from South Africa! ????
> pic.twitter.com/3WKTjcxfY7
> — Miss Universe (@MissUniverse) November 27, 2017

Nel-Peters is the first woman from South Africa to win the Miss Universe competition since 1978.

The first runner-up was Miss Colombia, Laura Gonzalez; the second runner-up was Miss Jamaica, Davina Bennett.

Previous Miss Universe winners have also championed HIV advocacy. For more in POZ, read “Miss Universe Has a Few Choice Words for Critics of Her HIV Advocacy” from 2016 and our cover story “The Education of Miss Universe” from 2010.

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