New Miss America Champions HIV Awareness

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The newly crowned Miss America 2010, Caressa Cameron of Fredericksburg, Virginia, promises to promote HIV awareness and education during her one-year reign, *The Free Lance-Star* reports. The platform is a personal one for Cameron, whose uncle died of AIDS-related illnesses when she was 8 years old.

“We need to let people know this is a disease affecting people right here, right now,” said Cameron, a 22-year-old African American. “We need to make sure we’re having those uncomfortable conversations that are lifesaving conversations.”

According to the article, Cameron, who is a college senior at Virginia Commonwealth University, volunteered for AIDS education organizations during her teen years and, as Miss Virginia, was involved in a program called Real Talk: AIDS in America, which teaches young people about HIV prevention. In addition to speaking out on HIV-related issues this year, she will also tour the country on behalf of The Children’s Miracle Network, the Miss America Organization’s partner charity that raises funds for children’s hospitals.

Cameron pointed out that every nine minutes someone in this country contracts HIV—and stemming that tide means talking about the problem.

Click here to read *POZ* columnist Shawn Decker’s blog entry on the new Miss America and her commitment to HIV awareness.

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