

SAVANNAH DE ALMEIDA - HILLCREST, DURBAN, KWAZULU-NATAL

Name: Savannah De Almeida

Region: Hillcrest, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

Age: 23 (December 19, 1997)

Occupation:

Social media and digital marketing specialist

Previous beauty competitions or pageants you have entered:

Winner of The Face of Just You Model and Artist Management, 2018, a beauty and talent competition.



Why did you decide to enter Miss South Africa 2021 and why do you deserve to win this title?

The theme great women inspired me to boldly step up and use this platform for a purpose far greater than myself. A huge socio-economic issue our country faces is unemployment among the youth. I personally have experienced this and have overcome it. Knowing that my story is relatable to other women in and around South Africa, I will use this platform to not only be credible proof that it is possible to overcome unemployment, but educate young women on how to bridge the gap between where they are and where they want to be. If their dreams of being a doctor seem far away purely because they don't have the capital, I can educate them on how to use free social media platforms, and with my marketing knowledge, help them start a small business online that can help fund their passion and start their career just as I did. I am courageous and determined. I am resilient, and no amount of rejection will stop me from leaving my mark and making an impact where I can. I am determined to rise and achieve my goals.

Tell us about your biggest disappointment and how you bounced back from it.

The Covid-19 pandemic ended my career in the entertainment industry. I started training at the age of six with the dream of becoming a professional dancer and started working in the entertainment industry at 16. Prior to lockdown I was cast as the lead female dance role in a theatre show that was meant to go on tour. But it all ended quickly due to the nationwide lockdown. My dreams were crushed, but I focused my energy on another passion which was helping aspiring entrepreneurs and small businesses promote themselves online. The pandemic opened my eyes to endless possibilities and I saw an opportunity to help small businesses continue to operate even amidst a pandemic, through social media and digital marketing. With the money I had left from my previous job, I put myself through varsity and short learning programmes and started a new career. In less than 12 months, I went from unemployed to thriving in a new career.

What do you think is the biggest problem facing young people today?

The biggest problem facing the youth today is unemployment and, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the percentage of young people who are unemployed continues to climb.

Who are your role models?

My grandmother, Maureen, is my biggest role model. When I was very young, she was diagnosed with cancer and the doctors gave her three months to live but she fought it for six years. She taught me that the opinions of others do not determine your future and that

anything is possible with courage. My mother and father are also not only role models but my everyday heroes. They've showed me the importance of hard work and raised me to be a fierce and independent woman who not only faces her fears but loves others equally.

Tell us a bit more about your family?

My mother, Jane, is a self-employed insurance assessor and my father, Dario, is a manager at a pharmaceutical company. My stepfather Justin is a homeopathic doctor. I have two brothers, Liam (8) who loves to learn about the planet and Joshua (16), who is passionate about sports and aspires to have a career in sports science.

What do you do in your spare time?

Dance or hike.

What is your single biggest achievement?

When I was unemployed and there were little opportunities available, I created my own opportunities and turned my side passion into a thriving career in a short space of time.

In what way do you think beauty pageants are still relevant today?

Beauty pageants are more than just hair and makeup and outward beauty. These platforms encourage women to embrace their unique individuality and help them to become successful businesswomen. The pageant industry is constantly evolving in an effort to be more inclusive and to showcase diversity. Pageantry does not degrade women, but rather empowers them, helps build their self-confidence and provides a platform for them to inspire other women to be bold and face their fears.

What is your message to young girls and young women in South Africa?

Walk into a room, be seen and be heard. You are worthy of the attention that you demand.

What do you love about South Africa?

I love that South Africa is extremely diverse and I am so blessed to live in a country that is rich in culture.

What is one thing you would like to change about South Africa?

I would put an end gender-based violence as it is one of the biggest threats that we face in South Africa.

2020 and 2021 have been extraordinary years and difficult for people around the globe. Do you see any positives in what has happened in the past 18 months?

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only changed the way we communicate but also how businesses operate. The world's focus shifted from social gatherings to social distancing and communicating online which opened doors to new opportunities like starting a small business online. Large businesses also realised they can successfully operate with staff working from home. People have also become more empathetic towards others and we learnt to appreciate life and our loved ones.

If you won the Miss South Africa crown and was able to meet one person, who would it be and why?

Trevor Noah, I feel our personalities are quite similar and we would have a few laughs.

What is the one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

I can sing.

What is the No 1 piece of advice that you would give to your younger self?

You are stronger than you feel and braver than you think.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

Describe yourself in three words:

Courageous, kind and innovative

What's the best advice you can give in exactly four words?

Be bold, be brave

Who's your favourite designer and why?

Warrick Gautier, his designs are exquisite. Each one is elegant and perfectly showcases a person's personality.

You have to give up one of these? Handbags or shoes?

Handbags. I have a strong relationship with shoes, unfortunately it cannot be broken...

What is one thing that we would not know about you just by looking at you?

I spent most of my childhood on a farm and now I'm a city lover.

What would be your dream holiday?

I am a lover of all things arts and culture, so a trip to Brazil would be amazing. I would try all the different foods, listen and dance to the music and learn about and experience the different culture.

If you could have any superhuman power, what would it be?

If I were to have a superhuman power it would be the power of creation without limit. I could create solutions to socio-economic issues in areas that have little to no resources available.

What are you reading?

Elon Musk's *The Life, Lessons & Rules for Success*

What music are you listening to?

Pink Sweat\$ and Giveon

What are your favourite TV shows?

Friends and *Will & Grace*

What is your favourite meal?

Pasta

Who is your local and international celeb crush?

Trevor Noah and Michael B Jordan

What's your guilty pleasure?

Doughnuts

Social media tags:

- Facebook: @Savannah De Almeida
- Instagram: @savannahdealmeida

- Twitter: @savdealmeida