

Beat: Local

VANESSA WILLIAMS IS RETURNING TO MISS AMERICA PAGEANT 3 DECADES AFTER RESIGNING

FOLLOWING A NUDE PHOTO SCANDAL

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USPA NEWS - Vanessa Williams, the award-winning actress and singer is returning to the Miss America pageant, Dick Clark Productions and the organization announced on Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. It is coming more than three decades after she resigned from her post of Miss America, following a nude photo scandal...

Vanessa Williams, the award-winning actress and singer is returning to the Miss America pageant, Dick Clark Productions and the organization announced on Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. It is coming more than three decades after she resigned from her post of Miss America, following a nude photo scandal. She was forced to give her crown back because Penthouse published unauthorized nude photos of her, though they had been taken before she won in 1984.

The significance of becoming the first African-American Miss America really hit her once she started touring the country. Despite the scary moments, Williams said she also had amazing experiences. She met presidents, actors and athletes, singing in parades and traveling the United States.

"It was two drastically different images. ... That was the issue. It was Miss America who's really kind of untouched in that reality. And then there was this woman in a picture," Vanessa Williams said to ABC.

"I have been friends with Vanessa for 32 years," [?] Miss America CEO Sam Haskell told the Associated Press. "When the photos were published, there were people urging her to fight, but close supporters knew if she lost that fight that she would be completely removed from the history books. Instead of pursuing what would surely have been a long and stressful legal battle, Vanessa decided to resign and focus on her career. Vanessa and her family were hurt during the aftermath of the resignation, and that saddened me." [?]

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