
February 10, 2026

Monroe University Awards Miss St. Croix Full Scholarship to Support Education and Opportunity in the U.S. Virgin Islands

Bronx, NY and St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands -- [Monroe University](#) is proud to announce that it has awarded a full-tuition scholarship to Amenti Philip, the newly crowned Miss St. Croix for 2025-2026, to attend the University as part of her pageant win.

The scholarship reflects the University's ongoing commitment to expanding access to higher education and empowering young leaders who demonstrate academic achievement, public engagement, and dedication to community.

A 20-year-old resident of Strawberry Hill, St. Croix, Ms. Philip has lived in the community since the age of three and describes it as a place that has "truly become home." She is a 2023 graduate of St. Croix Educational Complex High School, where those who knew her would no doubt describe her as a positive presence who lights up a room and inspires those around her.

"As the 73rd Miss St. Croix Festival Queen, I am deeply appreciative of this investment in my education and future," said Ms. Philip. "At 20 years old, this opportunity represents more than financial support -- it is a powerful affirmation of the importance of education, leadership, and service."

She continued: "I am proud to represent St. Croix and the Virgin Islands, and I look forward to using this opportunity to continue growing academically while giving back to my community in meaningful ways. I extend my sincere thanks to Monroe University, the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant Committee, and the Department of Tourism for their continued support and belief in young women like myself. I am excited for what lies ahead and grateful for everyone who has played a role in this milestone."

Ms. Philip plans to pursue a degree in [Hospitality Management](#) at Monroe. Her long-term career goal is to work within the tourism industry to help build a stronger, more vibrant St. Croix while positively impacting both visitors and the local community. The University's Admissions team is currently helping her through the application process so that she can begin her studies upon completion of her tenure as Miss St. Croix.

She noted that studying abroad has long been a personal dream and that she is grateful to now see that dream becoming a reality through this life-changing opportunity.

Said Shamari I. Haynes with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism: "As Deputy Commissioner, I am incredibly proud to see Miss St. Croix 2025-2026, Amenti Philip, earn this full tuition award from Monroe University. Under the leadership of Commissioner Jennifer Matarangas-King, the Department of Tourism remains deeply committed to creating opportunities that empower our young women beyond the stage -- through education, leadership, and personal growth. Scholarships like this not only recognize achievement, but also reflect our continued investment in the future of the Virgin Islands."

The Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant Committee also praised the partnership and its impact on young women across the territory.

"On behalf of the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant Committee, I extend our sincere gratitude to Monroe University for awarding a full scholarship to our 73rd Miss St. Croix Festival Queen, Ms. Amenti Philip," said Essi Gaston-Edwards, Chairperson for the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant. "As an educator and Chairperson, I am deeply appreciative of this investment in higher education and leadership. Opportunities such as this affirm the value of academic excellence and empower our young women to pursue their goals with confidence and purpose. We are truly grateful for Monroe University's continued support in shaping future leaders and champions for our community."

Founded more than 90 years ago in the Bronx, New York, Monroe University has grown from its historic urban origins into a globally engaged institution with a deep and enduring presence in the Caribbean. Nearly two decades ago, Monroe established its international campus in Saint Lucia, extending its mission to support regional talent development, expand access to career-focused education, and partner with Caribbean industries and governments on workforce advancement. Today, the Saint Lucia campus serves as a hub for specialized academic programs, leadership development, and cross-border educational collaboration, reflecting Monroe's long-term commitment to the region.

"We are incredibly proud to partner with the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen Pageant Committee and the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism to help make college dreams come true for the Miss St. Croix Festival Queen – and we look forward to welcoming this year's crowned winner, Amenti Philip, to campus," said Marc Jerome, President of Monroe University.

Looking ahead toward her reign as Miss St. Croix, Ms. Philip plans to speak with younger residents about the importance of prioritizing education, encouraging them to see postsecondary education as a powerful pathway to personal and professional growth, emphasizing that education opens doors, builds confidence, and creates opportunities to give back in meaningful ways.

ABOUT MONROE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1933, Monroe University is a recognized leader in urban and international education. The University is proud of its innovative programs to increase college access, affordability, and completion outcomes, especially among first-generation students, and for the national recognition it receives for its strong impact on graduates' social mobility.

Monroe educates more than 9,000 students each year, offering Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's, and Master's degree programs from New York campuses in the Bronx and New Rochelle, as well as in the Caribbean nation of Saint Lucia. Students may also pursue degree programs through Monroe Online. Programs are offered through Schools of Allied Health Professions, Business and Accounting, Criminal and Social Justice, Education, Hospitality Management, Information Technology, and Nursing, as well as through its King Graduate School. Liberal arts and continuing education programs are also available. For more information and admissions criteria, please visit <http://www.monroeu.edu>.