

## Little Miss HOLLA! 2018 Crowned



**Johntasia Harrison**

Johntasia Harrison, 11 year old daughter of Johnta and Shaneika Harrison of Morven, has been crowned Little Miss HOLLA! 2018. Johntasia is a fifth grade student in Ms. Moore's class at Morven Elementary School where her favorite subject is reading. Her hobbies are cheering, dancing and singing. She has aspirations of becoming a registered nurse, and her passion is helping others through giving back to her community. Johntasia was also the winner of the HOLLA!/Morven Chapter of Las Amigas MLK Essay Contest held in February.

According to Johnnie Pettiford, pageant director, the Little Miss HOLLA! Pageant is a component of the HOLLA! Youth Enrichment Program. "The mission of the program is for its participants to acquire educational and cultural experiences, develop new friendships and learn the importance of volunteerism," she said. It is a year-round program that endeavors to motivate youth through exposure and mentorship.

Devin Pettiford envisioned this year's theme as, "Stepping Into The Future." A highlight of the pageant was participation in the Black History Program at North Carolina State University. The young ladies had the remarkable opportunity to represent black historical figures at a Blacks In Wax Museum on the campus of the university. Carolei Bryan, Youth Career Connect teacher at Anson High School, orchestrated this opportunity. She was also instrumental in teaching the participants and the routine for the pageant. The step show was performed as a tribute to past and present celebrity 'stepping stones' as well as four local stepping stones.

Local 'stepping stones' honored during the pageant included, retired principal and present school board member Marilyn Bennett, Sarah Burns of the Caraway Foundation, Wadesboro Elementary School teacher Debra Rosebud and Anson Middle School Principal Danielle Hutcherson-Blount. After performing an uplifting step routine, the pageant participants proclaimed with raised fists; "We are your future!"

First Runner-up for the pageant was ten year old Makayla Teal, a student at Peachland-Polkton Elementary School; Second Runner-up was Marlee Sturdivant, an eleven year old Morven Elementary School student. Also in the pageant were Saleeyah Crowder, Ky'Lah Simons, Azaria Pratt and TyRihanna Lindsey.

HOLLA! is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization founded in 2005 to address low achievement in the local school system. The mission of the organization is to be an agent of positive change in the community. Tax deductible donations can be made to: HOLLA! P.O. Box 88 Wadesboro, NC 28170.

## Better Business Bureau Releases Study on Sweepstakes, Lottery and Prize Scams

**A new report says sweepstakes, lottery and prize schemes are using ever-changing methods to hurt victims financially and emotionally, often targeting senior adults**

A report by Better Business Bureau (BBB) says sweepstakes, lottery and prize schemes are using ever-changing methods to hurt victims financially and emotionally. These frauds concentrate on seniors, targeting them by direct mail, cold calling, social media, and even text messages and smartphone pop-ups. BBB warns consumers to be on guard against these serious frauds and their perpetrators.

The report – "Sweepstakes, Lottery and Prize Scams: A Better Business Bureau Study of How 'Winners' Lose Millions Through an Evolving Fraud" – notes these scams bilked at least \$117 million out of half a million Americans and Canadians in 2017 alone. Seniors are the most frequent target and suffer the largest losses by far in these scams. The report found the scams commonly originate in Jamaica, Costa Rica and Nigeria.

The report recommends stronger law enforcement efforts on three fronts:

- In Jamaica, which has seen an increase in violence related to lottery fraud profits
- In the U.S., where law enforcement is urged to step up extraditions and prosecutions of overseas fraudsters operating in the U.S.
- Globally, as law enforcement agencies worldwide are encouraged to take steps toward holding offending organizations accountable and stopping mail fraud.

The report also urges social media platforms to take steps to weed out fake profiles and make fraud reporting easier.

Among the report's key findings:

- The majority of lottery or sweepstakes scam victims are between 65 and 74 years old. Among that age group, people who recently experienced a serious negative life event, and who expect their income in the near future to remain steady or decline, are even more likely to be victimized.

- Sweepstakes/lottery scam strike through many channels – phone calls, text messages, pop-ups on a smartphone's Internet browser, social media, and mailings.
- In 2017, 2,820 individuals reported sweepstakes and lottery scams to BBB Scam Tracker. These reports show a median loss of \$500, with wire transfer as the most common method of payment.

- Jamaica is a major source of "cold calls" to victims who are told they have won money. Although similar calls come from Costa Rica, the scam has had a major impact in Jamaica, where the amount of money generated by lottery fraud has resulted in gang wars between rival fraud groups. This has also led to a dramatic spike in violence. More than 95 percent of reported fraud in Jamaica involves lottery or sweepstakes scams.

BBB offers the following tips for consumers to avoid lottery or sweepstakes fraud:

- True lotteries or sweepstakes don't ask for money before you claim a prize. If they want money for taxes, themselves, or a third party, they are most likely crooks.
- Call the lottery or sweepstakes company directly to see if you won. Publishers Clearing House (PCH) does have a sweepstakes but does not call people in advance to tell them they've won. Report PCH imposters to their hotline at 800-392-4190.
- Check to see if you won a lottery. Call the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries at 440-361-7962 or your local state lottery agency.
- Do an internet search of the company, name, or phone number of the person who contacted you.
- Law enforcement does not call to award prizes.
- Talk to a trusted family member or your bank. They may be able to help you stay in control of your money in the face of fraudster pressure.

Visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) to view the whole report.

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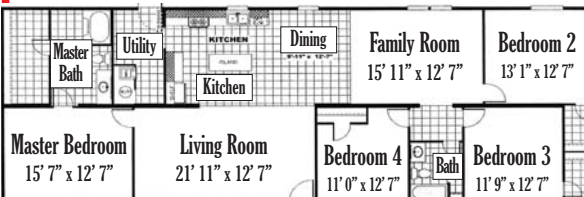
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