First African Queen Pageant aims to inspire, encourage education

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The African Students Association crowned Anuoluwaatobi Osibo their first African Queen at the African Queen Pageant on Wednesday, Nov. 8.

The pageant had four contestants: Asia Dauntain, Kyiesha Johnson, Kiaja Amos and Osibo. It was divided into three sections: African attire, talent, and evening gown.

From the African music played while the audience entered the event to discussions about where the food in Africa could be found between performances, the pageant was dedicated to sharing different African cultures and traditions. Contestants each performed an original dance routine inspired by different African dances to a mix of popular African songs. There was also a step routine between events performed by three representatives of Alpha Phi Alpha, the first African-American intercollegiate fraternity. The pageant coincided with ASA’s motto of the week, “My roots, my heritage.”

“The purpose of the pageant, the purpose of ASA, is to promote African culture within the ULL community,” Oni Modupeoluwa, vice president of ASA, said. “We want to show what we stand for by educating the students about our culture. The queen will become the face of the ASA for the next year, and will be expected to represent us and our culture.”

For the African attire event, contestants were supposed to show off how they would represent African culture with poise and personality. Osibo’s dress was inspired by the clothing worn by the African Edo tribe, of which her mother was a part.

The talent section featured Dauntain singing, Johnson giving poetry, Amos performing a cheer routine and Osibo playing the Nigerian National Anthem on a keyboard while the Nigerian students in the audience stood and sang along.

“It feels amazing to be chosen to represent African society to America,” Osibo said. “I have been in the ASA since I was a freshman, and it has become a home away from home to me.”

Osibo said she looks forward to continuing to represent African society as she works toward her degree. Osibo said she aspires to work as a pediatrician in Africa to help children who do not have access to the same kind of medical care available in America.

Asked what message she would give to Americans regarding the needs of Africans, Osibo said, “Do not take things for granted. There are people out there who do not have the things that you have, yet I still see people waste food, waste money on lavish things. Even if you have too much, you can donate it to people in need or volunteer to help those less fortunate. Do not take anything for granted.”

Anuoluwaatobi Osibo is dubbed named queen of the African Queen Beauty pageant.

Photos by Klint Landry / The Vermilion

Participants pose for group picture after pageant with various awards and flowers.

Beauty pageant contestants show off their fashion attire.