

September 2, 2009

STATEMENT FROM PAULA M. SHUGART, PRESIDENT OF THE MISS UNIVERSE ORGANIZATION, REGARDING INACCURATE ALLEGATIONS REGARDING THE PRELIMINARY JUDGING PROCESS FOR THE MISS UNIVERSE COMPETITION

In response to an inaccurate and incomplete account of The Miss Universe Organization judging process, I would like to clarify the following:

As disclosed at the top of each broadcast, members of the Miss Universe Organization play a role in the selection of the Top 15 semi-finalists. In the 2009 Miss Universe competition, a preliminary panel of judges selected nine of the Top 15 and members of the Miss Universe Organization, including owner Donald J. Trump, selected the remaining six.

A separate panel of judges, introduced live at the Finals telecast, is solely responsible for the selection of the Top 10, Top 5 and the ultimate winner of the pageant.

This system has been in place since 2005 and has always been fully disclosed to the contestants, their directors, the judges and the viewing audience. The procedure is overseen by the accounting firm of Ernst & Young and NBC Program Standards and Compliance. To in any way call into question the integrity of the judging process or suggest the pageant is somehow orchestrated or “rigged” is utterly false and misleading.

“When I bought Miss Universe 12 years ago it was a sick puppy, now the Miss Universe contest is seen in over 180 countries around the world and the ratings are through the roof and that’s because of the beautiful women,” said pageant owner Donald J. Trump. “I’m not changing a thing!”

This year’s Miss Universe Telecast scored NBC’s top non-sports results in its time period in both 18-49 and total viewers since the May 10 finale of “Celebrity Apprentice.” “Miss Universe” ranked #1 among the broadcast networks in its time period in total viewers.

For its concluding hour from 10-11 p.m., “Miss Universe 2009” ranked #1 among the broadcast networks in all key ratings categories and beat the combined ABC-CBS ratings in adults, men and women 18-34 and 18-49.

The Spanish language simulcast continued its streak as a ratings powerhouse on NBC-owned Telemundo, generating some of their highest ratings of the year.

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