

## **PLATFORM STATEMENT**

**Jessie Buckman**  
**Miss Greater Richmond 2007**  
**1<sup>st</sup> runner-up - Miss Virginia Scholarship Pageant**  
**Winner of a \$12,000 scholarship in 2007**  
**Music Major at George Mason University**

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### **Genocide Awareness: A Recurring World Problem**

Jessie currently leads the Save Darfur Richmond, a local chapter of the national Save Darfur Coalition. She led a grassroots campaign to pass divestment legislation in the Virginia General Assembly, which included state legislators and launching a letter-writing campaign. Jessie has attended Save Darfur Now rallies in New York City and Washington, DC. She recently participated in the Darfur Diaries event at the Virginia Holocaust Museum. In addition, she organizes teams of volunteers who provide information stations at community events to raise awareness and recruit future activists.

**Name: Jessie Buckman**  
**Title: Miss Greater Richmond 2007**  
**Platform Essay for Miss Virginia Competition**

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### **Genocide Awareness: A Recurring World Problem**

My own life has taught me that suffering is part of life's experience, but compassion should be as well. Because suffering is a fact of life does not mean that we should turn a blind eye to those who are in need of help. We are endowed with reason, and we should use this skill to overcome the terrible realities of violence, terror, and oppression. I am dedicated to the pursuit of human rights for all individuals, without fear of persecution and death from the very governments that are supposed to protect them. The suffering of the people in Darfur and of others around the world is important to me because I view those people as valued individuals. They are more than a number, more than a statistic on a page. Each number represents a person who has a history, a family, and aspirations. With a slight change in circumstances, any one of those people could be our friends, family members, or even ourselves.

I also believe that how we teach our children has a tremendous impact on who they become and the decisions they make. I aim to teach children to understand that others are worthy of this compassion. As Miss Virginia, I would use my advocacy of the Right Decisions, Right Now platform and my support for awareness of world events to encourage children to not only make right choices for themselves, but eventually make positive decisions that will affect others. When speaking to young people, whether teaching them to stay away from negative situations like tobacco and alcohol use, or promoting volunteerism, in the end, I am simply encouraging children to stand for something positive! If they are inspired to get involved in world issues and be more aware of things around them after meeting me, then I just might have touched the life of a future Peace Corps leader, ambassador, or activist. Then, I have done my job.