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By SANCHESKA BROWN

THE newly launched DNA party seems to be something of a celebrity magnet. First, it attracted renowned singer Sammy Star and now Mario Almanzar - who, it is being claimed on social networking site, is a former Miss Drag Queen Bahamas winner.

The young man has gone from "Queen to Green" - having recently been elected to the position of vice president of the party's youth arm, the Young Democrats.

Since his past achievements came to light over the weekend, Mario has come in for some criticism, but sources within the party say it was something that was done in Mario's past and he should not be judged based on it.

"It was something he done when he was 16, he's now 23, you cannot hold the mistakes of his past against him forever. He has changed, he is actively involved in the church and he has a bright future in politics," one party source said.

President of the Progressive Young Liberals (PYL), the youth arm of the PLP, Keenan Johnson, said the PYL in no way seeks to be judgmental. He said he is not really surprised someone would stoop as low as to post pictures of Mr. Almanzar in drag on the internet, because election season approaches.

"We will not condemn anyone's personal lifestyle choice but we are urging anyone in politics to be careful how they portray themselves in the public eye. Once you allow yourself to be associated in politics, whether front line or just part of the youth organization, you are prone to public criticism," he said.

Jamal Moss, president of the Torch Bearers, the youth group attached to

the FNM, said the matter is something the DNA will have to deal with internally.

"Everyone has the right to choose how they are going to live their life, that's between them and God, but when you put yourself in the public eye, you must be honest.

"It is a matter for the DNA to deal with and hopefully they will respond because the public wants to know."

Earlier this week, pictures surfaced showing what appeared to be Mario dressed in drag.

They were posted on a popular social network site.

Leaders of both the PLP and the DNA youth arms say their organizations did not release the photos.

Jamarl Chea, President of the Young Democrats, said the matter is under investigation.

Mr. Almanzar initially agreed to speak to The Tribune concerning the revelations of his pageant success, but never showed up for the interview.