

Heidi Klum Joins America's Got Talent Spinoff After Gabrielle Union Replaced Her

Model Heidi Klum, who was initially replaced by Gabrielle Union on America's Got Talent, joins the spinoff, America's Got Talent: The Champions.

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JAN 08, 2020



Heidi Klum has decided to join the *America's Got Talent* spinoff, *America's Got Talent: The Champions*, after actress Gabrielle Union initially replaced her. The *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit model was welcomed back with open arms as the premiere episode kicked off.

The incident regarding *America's Got Talent* started on November 22, when the NBC network announced that both judges Gabrielle Union and Julianne Hough would not be returning to the show for season 15. According to multiple reports, Union's contract was not renewed due to rumors of clashes that occurred behind the scenes. It was also reported that Union spoke to the show's producers, telling them she felt there were racial and gender concerns that made their workplace a toxic environment. Recently, many former NBC employees, such as Howard Stern and Sharon Osbourne, have commented on how it is the "ultimate boys club."

Now, the *America's Got Talent* franchise is set to go back on the air with a spin-off called *America's Got Talent: The Champions*. According to *People*, the series aired on January 6 and will aim to feature different champions from all seasons. There will also be a different set of judges than *America's Got Talent*, which includes the return of Klum.



The premiere episode had no hiccups, as no one mentioned the scandal regarding Union, Simon Cowell, and the NBC network. Fans will recall that both Union and Hough were told back in November of 2019 that they would not be welcomed back for season 15. Rumors also swirled around that Union had reported concerns about guest judge, Jay Leno, and his reported cultural insensitivities. Both women were allegedly subjected to extreme notes on their appearance, which included their hair, makeup, and apparel.

Even though Union said that she did have a productive sit-down meeting on December 4 with NBC executives, not much has been done about the situation since - publicly, at least. Union said she pointed out that Cowell's production companies, Freemantle and Syco Entertainment, needed to be looked into on account of their reported toxic environments. The production companies released a joint statement, saying that they are committed to ensuring a respectful workplace for everyone. Cowell, who is the brains behind the show's creation, was said to have hired Larry Stein as his legal representation, while Union is working with Bryan Freedman. Fans and network executives alike are hopeful for a positive outcome and hope the spotlight cast by Union brings about a real change in the entertainment industry as a whole.