

Catching up with...

Lauren McCreight

Miss Missouri's Outstanding Teen 2009



LOCAL TITLE: Miss Gateway St. Louis' Outstanding Teen

TALENT: Vocal - "The Girl in 14G"

PLATFORM: Curesearch: Finding the Cure for Childhood Cancer

YEARS COMPLETED: 1

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? I graduated with my Bachelor's in Finance and Management at Evangel University this past May and went on to pursue my MBA at Missouri State University. I am excited to graduate with my MBA this May! I recently accepted a job with The Principal Financial Group in Des Moines, Iowa, and will be in their Leadership Development Program.

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE MISS AMERICA? Miss America 2008, Kirsten Haglund. I remember watching her win 9 months before I even competed in my first pageant! I love her gentle spirit and boldness. I was also privileged to meet her at Miss America 2010. She walked past me and I reached out and told her I was a big fan. She stopped and turned around, asked me about myself and took a picture with me. She embodies what this program is all about!

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE AS MMOT? My favorite event was when I visited Camp Quality, which is a camp for kids with cancer. While there, I was able to see the kids having a blast riding horses, swimming and playing games. I was able to address them collectively and speak with them individually. Those kids are absolutely amazing. It made such an impact on me. I am so thankful for opportunities such as this that were given to me through the program and title.

WHAT DID YOU CHANGE FROM STATE TO NATIONALS? I edited my talent song slightly and wore a different dress for interview, talent and evening gown. Debbye Turner, a former Miss Missouri who went on to win Miss America, told me to remember "no girl has ever lost because of a dress."

BEST TIP TO PREPARE FOR INTERVIEW?

Have a list or blog of things you have done in preparation for MMOT such as events or charity work. Keep the interview around who you're there to serve as MMOT, rather than what the title can give to you.

BEST BEAUTY TIP?

Stay hydrated! Moisturize day and night and drink lots of water.

BEST TIP FOR TALENT?

Choose something that expresses who you are and showcases your talent best! You want to be comfortable with it too. The last thing you want to worry about is hitting a note or landing a jump while you are under the pressure of competing. Practice a lot and trust yourself!

BEST TIP FOR FITNESS?

Fitness for MMOT is more about being active than having a perfect figure. Stay active leading up to the pageant. It's also not bad to get in the habit of not eating after 7 p.m.



Prep like a winner...

FAVORITE HEALTHY SNACK: Cocoa roasted almonds, fruit smoothies or popcorn popped with my Whirlypop!

FAVORITE BEAUTY PRODUCT: Urban Decay Eyeshadow Primer

PAGEANT WEEK ESSENTIAL: Any sort of product that keeps your makeup in place all day. I love Makeup Forever HD Mineral Powder, Benefit POREfessional, and Smashbox primer made for high intensity lighting.

WISH I WOULD HAVE... Packed backup gown earrings - I lost mine during the state pageant. It just goes to show you don't have to have everything perfect to get the judges' attention!