

Miss Oregon Scholarship Program

On the road to Miss America

Miss Oregon Scholarship Organization, founded in 1947, is unlike any other group conducting a pageant in the State of Oregon. With a focus on conducting a competition that emphasizes the unique aspect of each young woman and which highlights their personal successes from community service to academics to performing arts, the Miss Oregon Scholarship Organization is so much more than a “stereotypical” pageant. The organization

strives to provide young women with the opportunity to rise to the top. The program is fully committed to motivating and assisting young women in the state of Oregon to fulfill their individual and professional goals by rewarding its participants with significant college and university tuition assistance.

Supporting and promoting the self-esteem of the contestants is of the utmost importance to the organization. It is essential that the young women who compete feel

a sense of belonging with both her fellow contestants and the larger pageant community. The skills learned in the Miss Oregon and Miss Oregon’s Outstanding Teen Pageants have been said to last a lifetime. Contestants gain the ability to speak and perform in public, to serve as leaders in their own communities and to have a sense of confidence in themselves and their abilities.

From its signature font to the winner’s crown and sash, the Miss

Oregon Scholarship Organization is committed to representing the Miss America brand and the young women we serve with service, scholarship, success and style.

Miss Oregon and Miss America paint a vivid picture of the changing ambitions of their contestants. Miss America is a powerful cultural institution that continues to reveal much about our changing nation. But beyond the symbolism lies the human stories which speak of the changing position of women in so-

ciety and how the pageant has been a road to personal and professional success.

The Miss Oregon Scholarship Organization has created a relevant, forward-thinking public program based upon the sense of tradition that makes the Miss Oregon Pageant one of the most popular and anticipated events on the state’s cultural calendar.

For more information about Miss America, go to www.MissAmerica.org.



Ally Pederson

Title: Rogue Valley
Hometown: Medford, Oregon
Age: 18
Platform Issue: Diabetes Education
Talent: Vocal Performance – Black Horse and the Cherry Tree
Education:
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Train Diabetic students internationally
Local Pageant: Rogue Valley Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Shannon Monning
Scholarship Received: \$350



Tamara Evans

Title: Southern Jewel
Hometown: Bend, Oregon
Age: 22
Platform Issue: Slavery to Freedom – Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention
Talent: Vocal Performance – Via Doloresa
Education: Bend High School, Oregon Institute of Technology
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Obtain Master of Science in Civil Engineering. To design infrastructure in order to build water systems in developing nations.
Local Pageant: Southern Gem-Southern Jewel Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Jann Leeper
Scholarship Received: \$250



Kaylee Nelson

Title: Three Rivers
Hometown: Eugene, Oregon
Age: 23
Platform Issue: CPR: Stayin’ Alive One Beat at a Time
Talent: Sassy Jazz Dance – Ruby Blue
Education: University of Oregon
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology, Teach High School Psychology and Literature.
Local Pageant: Three Rivers Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Julie Fleck and Vicki Mills- O’Donnell
Scholarship Received: \$400



Alexandra Amber

Title: Cascade
Hometown: Eugene, Oregon
Age: 21
Platform Issue: Fit for Life
Talent: Vocal Performance – Orange Colored Sky
Education: High School Graduate, Lane Community College
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Masters in Social Work, Family and Marriage Counselor
Local Pageant: Cascade Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Julie Fleck and Vicki Mills- O’Donnell
Scholarship Received: \$900



Bailey Pilant

Title: Marion-Polk County
Hometown: Salem, Oregon
Age: 21
Platform Issue: Domestic Violence Awareness
Talent: Vocal Performance – It’s a Good Thing He Can’t Read My Mind.
Education: Oregon State University
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Earn Bachelors, then Masters in Communication, Peace Corps
Local Pageant: Marion-Polk County Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Blaine Barlow
Scholarship Received: \$1,250



Allison Burke

Title: Mt. Hood
Hometown: Tigard, Oregon
Age: 19
Platform Issue: The Backpack Program: Feeding Americas Children One Backpack at a Time
Talent: Classical Violin – Vivaldi’s Concerto in A Minor, 1st. Movement
Education: Tigard High School, Linfield College
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Complete Bachelors of Science in Nursing and work in Pediatrics.
Local Pageant: Cascade Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Julie Fleck and Vicki Mills- O’Donnell
Scholarship Received: \$900



Katie Noyed

Title: High Desert
Hometown: Minnetonka, Minnesota
Age: 21
Platform Issue: Eating Disorder Awareness
Talent: Lyrical Dance – Back to the Earth
Education: Minnetonka High School, Arhus Katdralskole College, OSU Cascades/Central Oregon Community College
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Wants to become a Naturopathic Doctor, Peace Corps Volunteer
Local Pageant: Hi Desert Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Ann Fisher
Scholarship Received: \$250



Cassidy Smith

Title: Douglas County
Hometown: Roseburg, Oregon
Age: 19
Platform Issue: Community Outreach: Helping People Help Themselves
Talent: Piano - Vesuvius
Education: Roseburg High School, Oregon State University
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Obtain Biology Degree and Doctorate of Medicine to become an Obstetrician
Local Pageant: Douglas County Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Summer Fox
Scholarship Received: \$6,400



Veronica Norris

Title: City of Sunshine
Hometown: Aurora, Oregon
Age: 18
Platform Issue: Griselda Project
Talent: Lyrical Ballet - Bloom
Education: North Marion High School, Oregon Institute of Technology
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography
Local Pageant: Klamath County – City of Sunshine Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Jann Leeper
Scholarship Received: \$3,800



Liza-May Skeie

Title: Bandon Cranberry Festival
Hometown: Bandon, Oregon
Age: 17
Platform Issue: Band for Everyone
Talent: Alto Sax – Georgia on my Mind
Education: Bandon High School
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Masters in Hospital Administration
Local Pageant: Bandon Cranberry Festival
Local Pageant Director: Robin Koch
Scholarship Received: \$1,000



Ali Wallace

Title: Portland
Hometown: Portland, Oregon
Age: 21
Platform Issue: Traumatic Brain Injury: Education and Awareness
Talent: Lyrical Dance - Latch
Education: Sunset High School, Portland State University
Scholastic/Career Ambition: Graduate from Portland State University with honors and pursue a career in the film industry.
Local Pageant: Three Rivers Scholarship Program
Local Pageant Director: Julie Fleck and Vicki Mills- O’Donnell
Scholarship Received: \$360

Phillips: ‘We call ourselves a pageant family and we really are’

Phillips from Page 1A

the Miss Portland pageant — Phillips was herself a theater major at Portland State University and very anti-pageant — that is, until one of her friends became Miss Oregon, and it sucked her in, she said.

In the early 1970s, Phillips started working on the Miss Portland pageant, which is a preliminary to the Miss Oregon pageant. When she moved to Seaside in 1979, her husband, Steve, was running the Miss Oregon Scholarship Program as a co-executive director. Seven years later, it was Phillips.

“I always laughingly say I didn’t like the way he was running it, so I took over,” she joked.

Around the time of transition, the Phillipses and a few others had recognized the program needed to grow in terms of the scholarship dollars distributed, and they knew the way to do that was by setting up a nonprofit foundation with a separate board of directors. The Oregon Scholarship Foundation now handles the scholarship money for Miss Oregon, as well as the memorial scholarships the Phillips family set up in the name of their daughter, Tiffany.

When reflecting on which aspect of the program she takes the most



KATHERINE LACAZE PHOTO

Dana Phillips has been the executive director of the Miss Oregon Scholarship Program since 1986, but has been involved with the program since 1979. She is retiring after the 2015 Miss Oregon Pageant, held in Seaside from June 24 through 27.

pride in, Phillips said it would have to be that the first Miss Oregon, Jo Ann Amorde, is still involved, although as now at a local level as she progresses in age. “We have so many of our past contestants, past Miss Oregons, past Miss Oregon families, past contestant families still being involved in the pageant,” Phillips said. “We call ourselves a pageant family and we really are.”

That became evident in a personal way when

the family lost Tiffany in a car accident in 1998 shortly after she turned 17. Phillips was supposed to fly to a National Association of Miss America State Pageants meeting in New York when the accident occurred. She didn’t attend the workshop, but when her counterparts heard what happened, “the phone calls kept coming in,” she said. They also raised about \$50,000 to set up a memorial fund in Tiffany’s name.

Tiffany — a 6-foot-4 star athlete — was never a contestant herself, but she liked the behind-the-scenes aspect and was close to the Miss Oregon winners who would stay with the family, Phillips said. “She was one of those young ladies who was always willing to help others and believed in making sure people understood that you can pick up your own bootstraps and you do whatever you want to do,” she said.

Tiffany “was a miracle child,” and though she was unexpected, Phillips said. “We were so blessed to have had her, but too short.” Her spirit remains, however. “She’s my guardian angel,” Phillips said.

Having Tiffany also gave Phillips a deeper understanding and ability to form relationships with the Miss Oregon winners.

Growing up, she didn’t babysit and she didn’t like being around children. “Then Tiffany came into my life,” she said. “It just gives you an insight, to have a little person that you made and that you can sit there and enjoy and mentor. It gives you an insight that I wouldn’t have had without that. I didn’t really have the true heart of it until I had my own

child. And I think that’s one of the reasons Steve and I have stayed so involved is because of the heartache so many of these young people go through in life because they don’t have or come from loving families. And there isn’t anybody to be supportive and there isn’t anybody to lift them up and say, ‘you can achieve whatever you want to achieve.’”

From not being particularly fond of children, Phillips now has been “accumulating daughters in a special way by being involved in this organization” for several decades.

“These young ladies are the legacy that we’ve helped build in this program,” she said. “Our daughters — our Miss Oregons — are very special.”

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