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Thrower Wins National Junior Teen

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Saturday, July 21st in Orlando, Florida, dreams came true as three young women were crowned Princess America Pageants' National Miss, National Teen, and National Jr. Teen 2012. The Princess America Pageants were held at Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando, Florida. The pageant was a week-long national event. Contestants all across the country gathered in Florida to compete for over \$25,000 in cash, prizes, scholarships, and awards.

Among those three young women who had their dreams come true that Saturday night was our very own Lauren Thrower. Lauren is the fourteen-year old daughter of Lori Hawkins and Bob Thrower. Lauren lives in Dexter, and recently started her freshman year of high school.

The Princess America Pageants crown titleholders in three divisions. The divisions include the National Junior Teen, which is for ages thirteen-fifteen, National Teen ages sixteen-eighteen, and National Miss ages nineteen-twenty-eight. Lauren took the crown of the National Junior Teen division.

There were four different phases of the competition, and each phase being worth twenty-five percent of the total score. The phases included: physical fitness, personal expression, private interview, and evening wear.

Soon after arriving in Florida, the contestants along with their families enjoyed a welcome luncheon. The luncheon was themed as a summer garden party. Some contestants wore floral prints and hats as they prepared for orientation and their first rehearsal in the hotel's Martinique Ballroom.

Wednesday of Pageant week, the contestants all boarded on a bus to enjoy a full day of activities planned for them. One of the activities included the Give Kids the World Village. An emotional video was watched, and the contestants got a personal tour of the village. They got to see the presentation of a check for \$10,588 that this year's participants raised to donate to Give Kids the World.

On Thursday morning the contestants participated in a professional swimwear shoot with Deanna Meredith. Contestants received call times in which they shot in physical fitness, evening wear, and Deanna Meredith fashions.

Friday morning began with a rehearsal for the Miss contestants while the Teens met with judges for their seven minute and thirty second interview. The evening began as the Teen and Miss contestants competed in physical fitness, personal expression, and evening wear. Afterwards, the Junior Teens had evening interviews.

All contestants met for their final rehearsal on Saturday morning. The Junior Teen competition began in the afternoon, and the Teen and Miss began promptly at 7:30.

Saturday afternoon at the end of the Junior Teen competition, Dexter, MO, had a queen. Miss Lauren Thrower was representing Missouri, and was crowned National Junior Teen.

When asked about the pageant Lauren said, "I loved meeting all the girls from different states and making new friends. I also liked being able to raise money for the Give Kids the World and to visit the village."

Lauren's future plans include the upcoming Miss Missouri Outstanding Teen (MMOT) competition, which will be held in Springfield on October 6th. Her platform for competing in the Miss America system is D.A.R.E, which Lauren spends plenty of time working with. Her talent in the pageant will be singing.

If Lauren wins the title in Springfield, she will then move onto the state competition in Mexico, MO to compete for the state title. If she wins state, she will compete in the National Miss America Outstanding Teen pageant to be held in Orlando next summer.

Many different things occupy Lauren's time as she engages in many activities, but she handles it all like a professional. Some of her engagements include: pageants, JV volleyball, keeping her grades up, working with the D.A.R.E. program, Honors Choir, Student Council, emceeing pageants, speaking engagements, music projects, and pulling as many shifts as she can at the business owned by her mother, Dexter Queen. Lauren cares deeply about all the things she engages in and does them all with a smile!

Lauren concludes by saying, “I liked being able to challenge myself to be a better person by competing with all these sweet and pretty girls who I know had a great chance of winning. When I won it was a great honor to be chosen, and it gave me a lot of self-confidence. I now know that if I set my mind to something I can accomplish it.”

We wish Lauren the best of luck in all her future endeavors, and congratulations on her accomplishments thus far!

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