



MEET MS. AMERICA



Stewart Smith Photography

Bridget Cleary, 28, from Boston, Massachusetts was crowned Ms. America® 2009-10 at the national pageant held Sunday, September 6, 2009 in Ontario, California. This is Bridget's first time to ever compete in a pageant and she is the sixth woman to be crowned Ms. America®.

The reigning Ms. America® is a senior manager at Arnold Worldwide advertising, which is owned by the 6th largest global advertising company, Havas. One of the most highly awarded agencies in the world, Arnold has won the Grand Prix at the International Festival in Cannes, top honors at the International ANDY Awards, and is a consistent annual winner of Clios, EFFIEs, Obies and One Show awards, while generating over 100M in revenue yearly. A successful career advisor and motivational trainer, Cleary conducts and coordinates inspirational seminars across the east coast for employees at the junior, mid and executive levels. Known as the 'Talent Developer,' Cleary helps employees reach their greatest potential through strategic goal setting and specializes in elevating employees' talents for branding, advertising and digital technology to the next level. Her passion for providing successful, inspirational business training ensures that the agency produces winning brand strategies and promotions for clients such as: McDonalds, Volvo, Ocean Spray, Carnival cruises, Hershey's and Fidelity.

A 2003 graduate from Villanova University in Pennsylvania and Chi Omega alumna, Cleary holds a BA in Communication, with a Women's Studies concentration and Philosophy minor. Ranked third in her class, Cleary achieved Magna cum Laude and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, Lambda Pi Eta honors societies, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and was a Rhodes and Marshall Scholar nominee based on her scholastic achievements and strength of character. A life-long advocate for education, motivation and serving others through philanthropy, she has worked with the Make-A-Wish foundation, Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity, Babson College Leadership Development Program and is a Project Leader for the Boston Cares organization, the largest volunteer organization in New England and a part of the internationally recognized HandsOn Network with 370 volunteer affiliates serving 83% of the American population and 12 international communities.

As Ms. America®2009-10, Cleary is honored to represent an organization that enriches the lives of women across the country and is passionate about continuing to give back to others through philanthropic endeavors and being the inspiration that helps others achieve their dreams.

Ms. America Pageant 2009-10

**BRIDGET CLEARY IS CROWNED
MS. AMERICA 2009-10!**



Photo by Ken Herczeg



Photo by Ken Herczeg

WINNER AND RUNNER-UPS

Ms. America 2009-10: Bridget Cleary
First Runner-Up: Christy Van Der Westhuizen
Second Runner-Up: Catherine Blades
Third Runner-Up: Daphne Rice
Fourth Runner-Up: Heidi Ritz



Photo by Ken Herczeg

(R to L) Pam Bolter, Karen Rautio, Ann Johnson, Donna Do, Kelly Tran, Dr. Heidi Ritz, Christy Van Der Westhuizen, Bridget Cleary, Catherine Blades, Daphne Rice, Holly Telford, Shannon Morgan, Laura Leopardi, Sue Drakeford, Latasha Haskins, DeAnna Emborski

SPECIAL AWARDS

Ms. Congeniality - Voted by contestants: Shannon Morgan

Ms. Fitness: Daphne Rice

Ms. Personality: Latasha Haskins

Outstanding Volunteer Award: Heidi Ritz

Spirit of America Award: Kelly Tran

The Power of One Award: Shannon Morgan

Community Service Award: Deanna Emborski

Woman of Distinction Award: Daphne Rice

Humane and Wildlife Rehabilitation Award: Laura Leopardi

Beauty With a Purpose: Pam Bolter

Visionary Award: Sue Drakeford

Ms. Photogenic - Chosen by Official Photographer of the pageant Ken Herczeg: Catherine Blades



CROWNING



Evening Gown Competition



Sportswear Competition

IN THE NEWS



(Left) By participating in competitions that showcase her strengths, Shannon Doyle '07 A&S, the current Miss Pennsylvania, has earned a significant amount of scholarship money to help pay for her Villanova education and medical school. (Above) On Veterans Day, Bridget Cleary '03 A&S, Ms. America® 2009-10, joined soldiers from Hanscom Air Force Base for the Run to Home Base. The race benefited the Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program, which serves veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with combat stress disorders and traumatic brain injury.

Rising to the challenge

The decision to compete in the Ms. America Pageant® resulted from a triple-dog dare by a colleague. Could Bridget Cleary '03 A&S, career coach, apply to her personal life the advice she gave others about how to set professional goals? Since she enjoyed being in front of other people and making a difference in their lives, could she...win a beauty pageant? "I love a challenge, so I took it on!"

The Ms. America® competition appealed to the "pageant newbie" because it welcomed unmarried women over the age of 25 and encouraged winners to wear their crown for a purpose. "I was involved in philanthropy, but I could do even more with a title."

Since being crowned Ms. America® 2009-10 in September, Bridget has been making public appearances and working with various charities. On Christmas, she

helped serve dinner to impoverished families. When one man thanked her for making his day special, she realized "how valuable time is when you spend it giving back to others."

The skills Bridget brings to her title were honed at Villanova, the alma mater of many of her relatives, including the Rev. William Cleary, O.S.A., '58 A&S. As a freshman in a first-year learning experience, she connected with housemates from diverse backgrounds. "We would stay up all night sharing stories and ideas."

In the classroom, her conversations with associate professor Kermit Moore, Ph.D., who enjoyed "having his ideas challenged," stimulated the Communication major. In addition to excelling academically, Bridget grew to love volunteerism and undertook service projects with her Chi Omega sisters.

Originally from Maryland, Bridget lives in Boston and hopes to one day have her own business. In the meantime, she is leading by example the people she trains. "If you have the right goals and work hard, you can achieve what you set out to do."

Making the dream happen

As a child, Shannon Doyle '07 A&S was already imagining herself in a white coat with a stethoscope around her neck, asking a patient to say "ash." The desire to become a physician led the Wilkes-Barre, Pa., native to Villanova University and Jefferson Medical College. Along the way, she helped finance that dream by successfully competing in scholarship programs, including the Miss Pennsylvania Scholarship Pageant in June 2009.

Shannon arrived at Villanova an experienced titleholder. Her senior class's valedictorian, she also had been named




Oscar Night In Boston

By Inside Track

Monday, March 8, 2010

Actresses Erica McDermott and Melissa McMeekin of the upcoming made-in-Mass. flick 'The Fighter,' go glam for the Ellie Fund's Oscar Night Boston Gala at the Langham Hotel. Other folks in attendance included WCVB anchors Bianca De La Garza and Randy Price, car czar Ernie Boch Jr., **Ms. America 2009-10 Bridget Cleary**, Mix 104.1 personalities Fast Freddy, Sue Brady and Gregg Daniels and Miss Massachusetts 2009 Lacey Wilson.

Award-winning director James Ivory, with Brattle Theatre creative director Ned Hinkle, was the guest of honor at the Harvard Square landmark's Brattle Film Foundation's 10th Anniversary Oscar Party and fund-raiser last night.



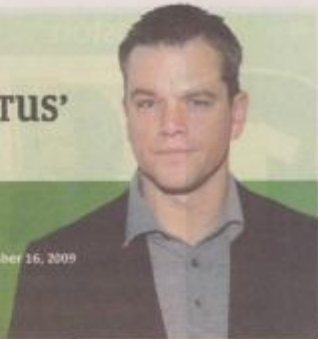
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DAMON

TALKS 'INVICTUS'

FILMS

(page 34)





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Charity. On ice



▶ Alex Wilfand and Ms. America Bridget Cleary

Skating for the children

Reigning Ms. America 2009-2010, Bridget Cleary, joins Disney on Ice performer Alex Wilfand for a few laps around the Frog Pond for charity yesterday. The Skate-to-Donate event teamed local personalities with stars from Disney on Ice to raise gifts for Toy for Tots. © 12/16/09

The Boston Globe

December 16, 2009



Photo by Jim Davis/Globe Staff

Looking Good

By Mark Shanahan & Meredith Goldstein, Globe Staff | December 16, 2009

Local television personalities and other recognizable faces spent yesterday skating at the Frog Pond on Boston Common during an event to benefit the US Marines Toys For Tots program. The event was held in conjunction with Disney On Ice.

Taking a few spins around the ice were TV types **Bianca de la Garza**, **Alice Cook**, **Anne Allred**, and **Kathryn Tappen**, among others, as well as **Ms. America 2009-10, Bridget Cleary**.



Click above to go to the Boston Common Magazine website.



JOB SHOP: Ms. America on goal setting

FOX25, myfoxboston - If you ask a successful career or business person how they got their start, they may say a great idea, a lot of hard work and persistence, or they may say they set smart goals.

That's what Bridget Cleary did. Cleary is the associate director of Talent Development at Arnold Worldwide Advertising. She is also the newly-crowned Ms. America 2009-10 and lives in Boston.

THE NORTH END REGIONAL REVIEW

North End resident Crowned Ms. America

By Phil Orlandella

North End resident Bridget Cleary, 28, was recently crowned Ms. America 2009-10 at the National Pageant held in Ontario, California. She is the sixth woman crowned Ms. America and it's her first time to ever compete in a pageant.

Over 50 contestants applied for the competition which was narrowed down to 19 finalists.

Cleary managed her way through four final categories on her way to the title. These categories included: interview, evening gown, sportswear and final on-stage question.

Currently, Cleary is a senior manager at Arnold Worldwide Advertising. A 2003 graduate from Villanova University in Pennsylvania and Chi Omega alumna, Cleary holds a BA in Communications, with a Women's Studies concentration and Philosophy minor.

As Ms. America, Cleary will represent the American women 26 years of age and up who are single, divorced or married. Cleary is reportedly honored to represent an organization that enriches the lives of women across the country.

NEAA Little League Banquet held at Garden

By Phil Orlandella

It was a great North End Athletic Association Little League baseball season and it's only fitting that a great Awards Banquet followed.

"It was the biggest, well attended Little League banquet ever held," NEAA Baseball Coordinator John Romano told the Review. "It was standing room only, well almost," he said referring to the Boston Garden where the Awards Banquet was held for the first time.

This season was a restructuring year as the NEAA re-grouped following a discontinued merger with Hill House and coordinated Little League under their banner.

See pages 8 and 9 for photos of the NEAA Little League banquet

NEAA officials, coached, Bridget Cleary, is crowned as Ms. America.

NEWNC says No to Fortune Teller

By Phil Orlandella

Following three firing presentations involving the North End and surrounding areas, the North End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council got down to business addressing three requests.

105 Prince Street Condominium Association's request for zoning relief to rebuild and expand the head house on the roof of the five-story residential building was supported by a 9-0 vote of the Council.

Most Council member's opinion was that this type of business didn't fit in the area and that they didn't want to set a precedent opening the flood gates for more of this kind of business entering the community.

Anderson's plans included tarot card and palm readings, teaching tarot card and palm reading and the sale of retail products such as books, cards, candles and incense. Anderson planned to be open from 10am to 11pm seven days.

Anderson agreed to not place

Click onto newspaper to go to the website.

REPEATS, SURPRISES AT EMMYS

TAKING AIM AT CHOLESTEROL

The Boston Globe

Monday, November 23, 2009

UNHAPPY AFTERNOON FOR PATRIOTS

Health fight has other bills sidelined

Some lawmakers say impact leaves part-off in question

Diplomacy opens a portal to profit

Thanks to its proximity to an historic building

Gentryne struggles to recover from virus

As the town's population grows

Backwoods crime patrol

Conrad, N.H., has Page members after theft

New president has Dartmouth eager for change

As the school's new leader

The Boston Globe Newspaper

MS AMERICA BLOG

2011 Pageant Update!

Hi All!!

I'm back from a whirlwind of a summer—traveling through Europe and parts of the US! I had a blast, met some amazing people and am now looking forward to a great fall as Ms. America 2010... I wanted to let you all know about the upcoming pageant that's happening in January!!!!

The Ms. America Pageant 2011 will be held on January 28th, 29th and 30th in California at the Doubletree Guest Suites Anaheim Resort. We're inviting all eligible women from across the US to enter and are hoping to find that special woman who will carry on the mission of the pageant that focuses on celebrating women worldwide. It's going to be an amazing event and I can't wait to see all the contestants from across the US making friends, competing for the title and sharing in the excitement of the experience.

Plus, not only will it be a fabulous event ending in crowning the next Ms. America 2011, the resort is only 2 blocks away from Disneyland Park so you can take some extra time exploring that fun, magical kingdom! What a treat! There will be more details to come, but don't forget to email msamericapageant@aol.com in order to get more updates directly...can't wait to see you all there!

Stay tune to hear about all the fabulous prizes that are going to be awarded to the new Ms America 2011!

XOXO

Bridget

March 16, 2010

St. Patricks Day Parade

This Sunday, I was invited to be in the st. Patrick's Day Parade in Boston—the second largest St. Patrick's Day celebration in the US! It was such an honor getting to represent the Ms. America organization, celebrating my Irish heritage all while getting cheered on in my 'neighborhood'! Every year, Phil Wuscke and his team create an amazing line of of firefighters from all over, politicians, live music, bands and local media. The weather this year, however, didn't cooperate-- we all got soaked!!

Fortunately, Bob Noonan from Quirk Cars escorted me through the parade route in an adorable Yellow VW bug!! While it would have been even more fun to put the top down, but I did get a chance to walk with some of the 2,300 Boston Police Officers who volunteered for the parade. And, I even got to hop on top Engine 11's fire truck!! Despite the rain, the crowd was strong and it was such fun to get cheered as Ms. America in the St. Patrick's Day Parade!



March 6, 2010

Ms. America with Make-A-Wish Volunteers at 'A Pot Full of Wishes' fundraiser.



Ms. America with Make-A-Wish Volunteers at 'A Pot Full of Wishes' fundraiser.

Here I am with all my friends at '*A Pot Full of Wishes*' Fundraiser for Make-A-Wish (through Chi Omega), Coogan's Bluff, Boston, MA. I was the EMCEE for the event, a celebrity guest and I auctioned off a 'Lunch with Ms. America' in the silent auction!

November 21, 2009

Making friends at the Miss Maine Pageant



Mrs. Massachusetts, Rosalie Morris; Ms. America, Bridget Cleary and Mrs. Maine, Jessica Radley. At the Miss Maine pageant, Nov. 21st, 2009, South Portland, ME.

Comments

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November 12, 2009

Honoring Veterans with the Red Sox Home Base Program



Walking with the owner of the Red Sox

On Veteran's Day, I had the honor to partake in a 5K walk/run that was hosted by the Home Base Program (check out the slideshow of pictures below!).

In attendance were soldiers, veterans, Sen. Paul Kirk (MA), Larry Lucchino (Owner of the Red Sox), and many other volunteers. The Home Base Program is the collaborated efforts of the Red Sox Foundation and the Massachusetts General Hospital. The partnership is designed to help veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and their families. Working in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the program supports and serves veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars who are experiencing emotional and psychological difficulties readjusting to civilian life after deployment.

The charity's mission is to:

- provide diagnosis and clinical care for Veterans with PTSD and TBI;
- offer outreach and support services to families of affected Veterans;
- conduct innovative research to deepen the understanding of these problems and
- develop better treatments for them and educate community health care providers about the diagnosis and treatment of these disorders.

Coming from a family with military veterans, I can appreciate and understand how necessary an outreach program like this is.

only the soldiers who come back from serving their country, but their families as well. The memories of war live on and are sent back home and some need help moving on from those experiences. That's why it was an honor to show my support for the Home Base Program. With the help of Tracy West (Dir. of Signature Programs) and Mike Allard (Dir. of Development) from Fenway Park, I had the opportunity to partake in the event and met some of our brave men and women from FortDevens and Hanscom Air Force Base. I talked with current soldiers, veterans and volunteers about how the Home Base Program is changing lives, and changing the way we think about PTSD. Educating the families and the community about PTSD and TBI helps to shed more light on the situation and the shadows. These invisible wounds of war can cause even more suffering after the fact, and that's where the Home Base Program is working by identifying the causes and working on treatment for any veteran that needs it.

While getting to take pictures with the soldiers and running across home base at Fenway was a thrill, the true highlight was meeting Matt Mannon-Brodeur, a young veteran and the first veteran to have brain surgery for TBI at MassGeneralHospital. He came out of the field as he left the field and couldn't have been more grateful for all the work the Home Base Program was doing for him and other veterans. It was a true testament to what a philanthropy with this focus and the backing from the Red Sox and MGH can do. I am honored to do what I could to support it. I am truly looking forward to the next opportunity to work with this great group.

And, they need your help too, so check out their site and give back at: <http://www.homebaseprogram.org/>

And check out the event on Channel 7 News:

<http://mms.tveyes.com/Transcript.asp?stationid=924&DateTime=11%2F11%2F2009+16%3A45%3A58&mediapreliminary=1>

November 6, 2009

Ms. America President Interviewed on Great Day Houston, Texas
Check out the TV interview that the President of the Ms. America Pageant did while on her speaking tour.

She was interviewed on Great Day Houston, Texas TV show with Deborah Dunkin.

http://www.khou.com/great-day/gdh_091106_seg6_queens-69399647.html



KHOU.COM

Comments

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November 3, 2009

Lucy Grand Opening Event & Fundraiser



lucy Grand Opening event:

I just wanted to write to tell you all that I have FINALLY found adorable, affordable fitness clothing—in bold colors, comfy fabrics and flattering styles! It's called *lucy* sportswear and I recently had the pleasure of being a guest of honor at the Grand Opening Weekend of events for the *lucy* sportswear store in Dedham, MA. Stepping into the store, I was so impressed with the friendly, fun vibe from all the employees and the rows of rows of 'must have' yoga pants, running tops and running skirts. After I checked out all the goods, I was introduced to Kristi Charroin (marketing manager) and Kira Karmazin (VP of merchandising and marketing) —both amazing *lucy* women who are passionate about the values and mission that *lucy* sportswear is all about: helping women achieve their greatest potential. And their mission was one of the real reasons I chose to be a part of the event, since the pageant supports the empowerment of women and celebrates their style, accomplishments and philanthropic endeavors. I got to meet some other fantastic women during the store opening event and we wrapped up the day with a champagne toast to celebrate and thank all those who had made the store a reality.

Kristi Charroin (Marketing Manager), Bridget Cleary, Kira Karmazin (VP of Merchandising and Marketing)

At *lucy* sportswear, they're all about performance balanced with fashion...but they're also serious about giving back too. A portion of every sale that weekend went towards yogaHOPE, a non-profit yoga outreach program dedicated to bringing the healing practice of yoga to underserved women. It was inspiring to hear about yogaHOPE's foundation and I was honored to be a part of an event that not only celebrated an exciting store opening, but benefited women in need. All in all, it was a great event that I was proud to be representing the Ms. America® pageant...and I can't wait to head to the gym sporting my new *lucy* outfits that look good and make me feel like I can go that extra mile on the treadmill!

Links:

lucy Sportswear

www.lucy.com

yogaHOPE

www.yogahope.org

October 3, 2009

Bodyscapes in Brookline hosting a fundraising event for Ellie Fund



Walking for Ellie a Breast Cancer Research Fund

Here are some photos of me, at the event I attended at Bodyscapes in Brookline. Bodyscapes is a fantastic fitness center with locations throughout Massachusetts and they hosted a fundraiser to support the Ellie Fund (a breast cancer research fund) where a donation would be made for every mile logged on a PINK treadmill. When I arrived, I was greeted by some of the organizers and Julie Nations, Executive Director of the Ellie Fund. She's a dynamo—full of energy and smiles for everyone! I got a chance to learn more about her, the fund and its history and was truly honored to be a part of the event for such a worthy cause. For the event, *lucy* sportswear sponsored all the participants (including me) and provided us with the BEST workout gear I've ever worn—and it was pink to boot. *lucy* doesn't make your average gym clothes—they're fitted, fashionable, practical and fun! Plus, this month they're donating 10% of the sales from their pink water bottle to the Young Survival Coalition, which means even more good work can happen! Once I was decked out in *lucy*, I donned my crown and sash and ran a mile on the pretty pink treadmill. It was a blast: I got my cardio in while donating to

the Ellie Fund! Afterwards, I took some more photos with the owners of the gym and some of the attendees. And, I even got my picture taken with some of the Patriot's Cheerleaders!! They were so fun and friendly...though I was glad that we didn't have to compare running times on the treadmill after seeing how athletic they are...It was a great event and one that I hope generated lots of support for the Ellie Fund. It even ended up on Boston Channel 5's website—check out the slideshow:

<http://www.thebostonchannel.com/slideshow/news/21184723/detail.html>

LINKS:

Ellie Fund

<http://www.elliefund.org/index.htm>

Bodyscapes Fitness center

<http://www.bodyscapesfitness.com/>

Lucy Activewear

Special thanks to *lucy* sportswear—it's now my most favorite workout outfit, and I know I'll be wearing more of it soon!!

<http://www.lucy.com/>

Comments

[Show Comments \(1\)](#)

[Add a new comment](#)

Heidi Ritz on October 19, 2009 10:08 PM

Nice job!! It looks like such a great event to support an important cause. And as always, you look fabulous Bridget!! Keep up the great work! Love ya, Heidi

[Reply](#)

October 3, 2009

Visiting with the Patriot Cheerleaders at the Ellie Fund Fundraiser



Comments

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September 25, 2009

Urban Jungle Fashion Event



Melissa Prince, Account Executive, WAAF Radio Station &
Bridget Cleary, Ms. America 2009-10.

Denise Arrondo, Director of the McCourt Foundation
At District Lounge for the Urban Jungle Fashion Event
on September 23rd, 2009

Comments

[Show Comments \(2\)](#)

[Add a new comment](#)

Heidi Ritz on October 3, 2009 4:12 PM

More good work!!

[Reply](#)

Holly Telford on October 5, 2009 9:40 PM

You are doing a great job Bridget!

[Reply](#)

[Show Comments \(2\)](#)

[Add a new comment](#)

September 25, 2009

Ms. America attends Bostons Fashion Week!



Bridget with Jay Calderin,

It's the 14th Annual Fashion Week here in Boston and I had the pleasure of attending some awesome fashion shows as Ms. America that supported great causes, showcased awesome attire and were fabulous fun! For my first event, I was a celebrity guest at District Lounge for the 'Urban Jungle' Fashion Event, hosted by Lola Grace Events. The show was put on to benefit the McCourt Foundation, a local charity dedicated to funding neurological research targeting the cures for MS and Alzheimer's disease. In the picture, I am with Denise Arrondo, the Director of the McCourt Foundation. It was such an honor to meet her, the McCourt Family and hear about the great work they're doing.

The foundation has been able to donate over \$275,000 to the Brigham and Women's Neurology department to support their research efforts to cure MS and Alzheimer's, host many symposiums and provide support to patients and families affected by the diseases. The fashion show was the brainchild of Rachael Gross (of Lola Grace EVENTS) who holds a special place in her heart for finding the cure for MS. The show itself was amazing...plus, it was my FIRST public appearance as Ms. America since my crowning—what a thrill!! The lounge was transformed into a dark, mysterious fashion runway, and they had photographers, a great DJ, fashion designers and models throughout which offered a very chic vibe to the event. I was seated with the EMCEE of the event, Greg Hill of WAAF radio and the McCourt director, though I spent much of my time circulating through the crowd and taking pictures with the attendees. I met the guests of honor, one of the clothing designers Dakin, some of the models and the stylists who made the show happen. The models (who were regular women from all walks of life) were transformed by Christopher DiLorenzo of Salon 10 and Noel Escstacio into exotic creatures. Their hair was creatively wild, their makeup animalistic and the clothing—predominantly all black—was mesmerizing yet completely wearable. The runway show was upbeat, exciting and over far too soon! I wrapped up the night with more pictures, thanked all the hostesses for such an amazing experience and went home to dream of all the exotic fashions I'll be seeing this fall!

LINKS:

Rachael Gross/Lola Grace EVENTS

<http://www.lolagraceevents.com/>

McCourt Foundation

<http://www.mccourtfoundation.org/>

For my next event, I went to the Copley Place atrium and was a celebrity judge for the 'Height of Fashion Event' hosted by the Hello Stiletto Shoe Club. While there, I met Melissa O'Shea, founder and President of the Shoe Club and we swapped shoe stories and had a blast. I loved working with the Shoe Club, which has ten thousand members nationwide, because it caters to women of all walks (and shoes!) of life, celebrates who they are in a positive way and donates to help cure MS. Even the models in the show were actual Shoe Club members, which made it even more fun—and now I'm a member too! Before the show, I also got to circulate the crowd, taking pictures and meeting Jay Calderin (founder of Boston Fashion Week), Reggie B. (fashion show producer), attendees and models, and even got to handpick three attendees with fabulous shoes that would compete later in a 'walkoff.' The show was kicked off by Melissa O'Shea and Tina Sutton (Fashion Editor, Boston Globe) who discussed the hot new trends for fall fashion...and all her tips were seen throughout the show's clothing and shoes. Designers like Stewart Weitzman, Karen Millen, Nine West and Giuseppe Zanotti lent stilettos, boots and heels to create a steady stream of hot, new shoe trends to keep an eye out for this year like sequins, fringe and luxurious fabrics. After the dazzling array of footwear (and accessories!), I was called up on stage. I spoke about the Ms. America pageant and our mission and then I got to call up the walk off contestants! After a fun competition, it was up to Melissa and I to decide on the winner! We chose a woman whose mother had helped her take a fabulous pair of Stella McCartney shoes to the next level with some help from Vera

Founder and Executive Director of Boston Fashion Week; Director of Creative Marketing at the School of Fashion Design in Boston and Melissa O'Shea, President of the Hello Stiletto Shoe Club and organizer of the Height Of Fashion Show held on Sept. 24th at Copley Place.

Wang Tulle. It was outrageous! I then helped raffle off some prizes and we wrapped up the night with more pictures. I went home walking on Cloud 9—even though I'd been in my stilettos all night—and can't wait for the next Shoe Club event!

Stay tuned for my next appearance—supporting Breast Cancer research in conjunction with Bodyscapes and the Patriot's Cheerleaders!

LINKS:

[CLICK HERE For A Video of Hello Stiletto Event](#)

[CLICK HERE For Hello Stiletto Shoe Club](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR MY OWN PERSONAL VIDEO AND PICTURES!](#)

Comments

[Show Comments \(2\)](#)

[Add a new comment](#)

Latasha on September 26, 2009 9:59 PM

Awesome to see you representing the accomplished women of America!

[Reply](#)

Heidi Ritz on October 3, 2009 4:11 PM

Looks like fun!! And who doesn't enjoy fashion!! Hope you are doing well!! Love ya, Heidi

[Reply](#)

[Show Comments \(2\)](#)

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September 10, 2009

A DREAM COME TRUE!



Photo by Stewart Smith

Wow! This is my first week back home in Boston, Massachusetts —as Ms. America 2009-10!! While I'm not sure it's fully sunk in just yet, I have to say that being crowned this weekend was truly THE highest point in my life! And—judging by the way my family reacted—probably one of their greatest moments too! I'm honored to have been chosen to represent the Ms. America organization as it follows my same passion of empowering and inspiring women to achieve their best. And I know that I'll be able to foster that goal, since I'm a life-long advocate for inspiring others to be their very best and being a role model to others by leading by example!!

The pageant itself was an amazing experience—and it was my VERY FIRST pageant ever! It's always been my dream to be a part of something that gives back to the world in a very big way, which is why I chose to participate in the Ms. America pageant—for the opportunity to utilize such a prestigious title to better the country.

Before I made it as a finalist, I had some great help: my pageant coach Elizabeth McGlynn of the Professional Pageant Preparation, LLC helped get me up to speed on all things pageantry, Stewart Smith Photography did a fantastic job on my headshots and my evening gown was a beautiful, handmade version inspired by the latest trends.

After making it as a finalist, I arrived in sunny California on Friday to kick off the pageant weekend and it was a non-stop whirlwind of activity up until I was crowned! I not only learned a lot about myself and my convictions throughout the process but I also met a bevy of beautiful, talented and kind women who were so supportive and encouraging. We all worked together during the rehearsals and throughout the weekend, and I know I've made connections with the women that I'll keep forever. And it was so cool to be able to meet the very first Ms. America (and President of the Pageant), Susan Jeske, the former Miss California USA and EMCEE Alisa Kimble and be evaluated by a panel of well-known judges. It was incredible (and fun!!) to compete among such talent and I know that I'll make everyone proud representing the title this year.

I have already received so many wonderful calls and notes from all of you who are part of the Ms. America family and I am blessed to have you and to have this job as Ms. America 2009-10.

I also have to thank my fantastic support system of family, friends and co-workers at Arnold Worldwide. Without their unending love and constant 'cheering on,' I know I could never have gotten to where I am today. I am so grateful for you all and I look forward to channeling all the kindness, support and generosity I've been blessed with so I can give it all back to others from all backgrounds around the country.

I have so many wonderful plans for this coming year of ways that I can help to foster the mission of the Ms. America pageant by celebrating the lives and accomplishments of women across the United States. I can't wait to get started by traveling the country, collaborating with philanthropic partners and sponsors, and spreading the word on how others can make their dreams come true—just like mine came true with this crown!! I'll be setting my schedule of appearances and events to represent this organization and will keep you posted on all my awesome adventures as Ms. America...Stay tuned!

Love, Bridget