

Seattle University

ScholarWorks @ SeattleU

The Spectator Online

Newspapers

3-1-2023

2023-03-01 Miss Seattle Contestant Lauren Sturgill Highlights Inner Beauty

Madden Armstrong
Seattle University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online>

Recommended Citation

Armstrong, Madden, "2023-03-01 Miss Seattle Contestant Lauren Sturgill Highlights Inner Beauty" (2023).
The Spectator Online. 911.
<https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online/911>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Newspapers at ScholarWorks @ SeattleU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Spectator Online by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ SeattleU.



The Spectator • March 1, 2023 • <https://seattlespectator.com/2023/03/01/miss-seattle-contestant-lauren-sturgill-highlights-inner-beauty/>

Miss Seattle Contestant Lauren Sturgill Highlights Inner Beauty

Madden Armstrong, Staff Reporter

The world of beauty pageants is sometimes notable for spectacle and drama, but in recent years some competitors are trying to show viewers that beauty is more than skin deep. The 2023 Miss Seattle competition Feb. 25 featured a roster of talented and driven young women vying for a scholarship and a platform for a cause.

Lauren Sturgill, third-year nursing major at Seattle University, has competed in beauty pageants since she was four years old. She followed in the footsteps of her two older sisters, and the three of them competed in youth competitions on a national and international scale.

“My sister was Miss Seattle a few years back during COVID and she got a lot of scholarship money, opportunities and work connections. She benefited a lot from the organization, so I decided to sign up and compete,” Sturgill said.

Applications to participate in Miss Seattle are facilitated through the Miss America Organization (MAO). The winner of Miss Seattle competes in Miss Washington, where the winner then moves on to the Miss America competition. Runners up for Miss Seattle move into a Miss Sweeper Competition which allows contestants one last chance to compete at the Miss Washington level.



Jordie Simpson

Third year nursing student, Lauren Sturgill, a participant in the 2023 Miss Seattle Competition, holding Hawks Up on campus.

Sturgill hesitated to join an MAO competition before substantial changes to the organization were made. In 2019, MAO CEO Gretchen Carlson implemented two new policies that would change the way the competition had operated for the last 97 years: there would no longer be a swimsuit event during the pageant and contestants would no longer be judged on their appearance.

The organization has prioritized other criteria in the absence of appearance-based scoring. According to the MAO website, the two most prioritized categories in local events like Miss Seattle are the private interview and the talent event. Sturgill sees these changes as necessary to MAO.

“Beauty pageants bring out the inner beauty more than the outer beauty of a contestant because talent and interview are weighed more than the evening gown and onstage question sections,” Sturgill said. “I think this goes to show it’s about what you can bring to the community through your talent and through your intelligence.”

Sturgill devoted significant time—about an hour and a half of practice—each day leading up to the competition. For the talent event, Sturgill connected with her heritage through Irish dance, a hobby she has pursued for over a decade. For the private interview, she prepared to talk about any aspect of her resume and current events. The interview lasts for 10 minutes on the morning of the pageant. Sturgill also prepared a social impact pitch which highlights a social issue that a prospective Miss Seattle winner would use her platform to bring awareness to as a titleholder.

“After the onstage question we do a sort of TED talk about our platform. It’s really big in the interview section as well, so you have to choose something that you’re passionate about.” Sturgill said. “My social impact pitch is ‘Exercise is my Superpower.’ I really want to go into pediatric nursing, and psych nursing in particular. With my job at Seattle Children’s, I’ve been working on implementing exercise as a regular treatment for mental health disorders.”

Sturgill noticed a dive in youth mental health in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and hopes to help address the issue through her work as a pediatric nurse.

“I have always known that I wanted to go into pediatrics, specifically in nursing, since I was eight. I was born with a medical condition so I spent a lot of time in and out of Seattle Children’s... There’s nothing else that ever really interested me,” Sturgill said. “I’m glad that I got to pursue it at Seattle U because they have a good nursing program. They’re also known by Seattle Children’s and so I hope that I get a job there when I graduate.”

When Sturgill’s sister won the Miss Seattle competition, she used her platform to expand her social impact pitch, which was financial stress and literacy. She traveled to colleges across the state to teach other students about student loans and investing.

While Sturgill did not win the Feb. 25 Miss Seattle competition, she was awarded the Joell Posey Grager Perseverance Award for submitting an essay on the subject of perseverance in her personal life.

“To me, perseverance means finding the determination within yourself and being confident in your abilities and knowledge to overcome any challenge thrown your way,” Sturgill wrote to the Spectator.

Sturgill expects to compete in one more MAO competition with her sister before returning to focus full-time on her education at Seattle U and her future nursing career.