

## Comments by some Former Miss Deaf Utah Queens

**Rebecca Davenport, 2001.** Being involved with the Miss Deaf Utah Pageant was a rich experience for me. I met other ladies that I competed with and they became my friends for life. Also by being a participant in a pageant, it helped me build self confidence. People will always remember me and the service I did for the community. It is a great and learning experience about world issues that impacts our deaf community. Being involved with the pageant gave me more opportunities in life.

**Ellen O'Hara 2003.** Being a Miss Deaf Utah created a new meaning of honor. I realized my actions are louder than what say. "It helped me to become kinder and thoughtful of others. I looked outside of myself and I strived to comfort others. I learned to put others first and to become a representative for Utah Deaf community. It taught me the value of tactfulness and proper conduct. The experience was an eye-opener. I was amazed to see other girls representing other states in MDAP. I didn't really realize how much this pageant meant nationally. I enjoyed it more because I was able to create good friendships even though we lived states apart. I felt honored to be chosen to represent Utah and felt proud that I did well in my title.

**Camille Call, 1997.** Being involved with the pageant experience helped me grow in many ways including talent, confidence, poise, intelligence, and especially my leadership abilities. Being Miss Deaf Utah queen has taught me about the importance of hard work, commitment, and team-work. It is worth it in the long run as it has not been an easy task. I will always treasure this wonderful, memorable experience as being a role model in serving the community and especially deaf children. Through my platform on Deaf and Political Advocacy, I have developed greater appreciation for the deaf needs and services that we have today. I definitely will continue to be actively involved in the deaf community. It was fun making new friends!!! Representing Utah was one of the best experiences I had in my life!

**Andrea Vigil, 2009.** I loved being your Miss Deaf Utah. Before I became Miss Deaf Utah, I was just being myself, working and going on with my life as usual. But when I got involved with this MDUAP (Miss Deaf Utah Ambassador Program), competing and winning the title changed my life because it has allowed me to reach so many people from all walks of life. I learned so much from these people. I was able to expand my passion and work with deaf community. So many opportunities came up while I was Miss Deaf Utah and I learned many things that applied to my personal life and to the deaf community.

One of my favorite appearance as Miss Deaf Utah was the Miss Deaf Princess event, because of the young girls who were involved. They had the opportunity to experience being on the stage, sharing their talents, personalities and wearing their favorite dresses. It was so cute and I believe it was a good positive experience for the girls. During this event, I was able to share with the Utah deaf community my

talent, platform, and my evening gown presentation. I was also able to get feedback from UAD board which helped me prepare for the Miss Deaf America pageant in Philadelphia, PA. The experience in Philadelphia was a changing part of my life. It feels great to have confidence in myself and to know so many people believed in me as their representative for Utah.

***Kayla Stubbs, 2011.*** When I first heard about Miss Deaf Utah Ambassador Program, I thought it was all about being perfect and beautiful with a lot of amazing talents and I thought I wasn't good enough to compete but I decided to try it out anyways. When I won the title, I knew that I felt like I finally knew who I was. I knew what I believed in and I knew I could be true to myself and show young women that you don't need to compromise to get ahead or to become Miss Deaf Utah. You can be anything you want to be if you believe in yourself. I am so grateful for these experiences as I now know it has helped to shape me into a better person and a better leader. My year has been incredible with speaking engagements, appearances, and, of course, my indescribable trip to Miss Deaf America. These moments are forever etched into my mind and cannot be replaced. In a way, I hoped this night would never come because it means that my time as a titleholder is at an end. But I'm going to smile because I did have this chance and I now have the whole world in front of me. Miss Deaf America was in Kentucky Louisville last July, I was there for two weeks. There were 14 girls who competed and it was so great to meet all of these ladies, as they were all very smart and very beautiful. They all are very unique and I learned a lot about each of them. I love the diversity of people. We all worked together and supported each other during the finals. It was amazing because it felt like we were all sisters. Whenever one girl is crying or having a hard time, we all would try hard to make her feel better. I became really close to Miss Deaf Maryland named Chanel who is currently Miss Deaf America. We were roommates for the last two weeks and we just clicked. We have gotten really close and we did everything together at NAD. I am very honored that I got to know her and she is my role model. The overall experience was amazing and I will never forget it. I would like to thank my state director Andrea for pushing me because she believed in me and that I can do it when I couldn't believe in myself. She was like a mother to me, a great friend, and an amazing support ever through this amazing journey. I wouldn't be able to make it through without her. She's my hero. Thank you for not giving up on me. I would like to thank all of you for believing in me as well. Thank you for helping out with different events that made it possible for me to go to Miss Deaf America. I thank you who helped with the haunted house and who helped with Miss Deaf Utah Princess. This is a great community and I am so honored that I got the chance to represent you and be your last Miss Deaf Utah.