

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE: KRISTEN DAVIDSON NAMED STATE'S MISS AMAZING PAGEANT WINNER

By Jeffrey Symes
One Sky

With 20 years of hindsight looking back at a girl dancing in her yard and playing dress up, it seems only logical now that Kristen Davidson would have landed comfortably in the world of pageants. Crowned New Hampshire Miss Amazing earlier this year, Davidson will join contestants from 35 states gathered at a hotel outside Chicago to compete in the national pageant in August.



KRISTEN DAVIDSON OF EPPING IS THE STATE'S MISS AMAZING AND WILL COMPETE NATIONALLY IN CHICAGO NEXT MONTH.

"It's for girls and women with disabilities," explains Davidson. The 25-year old Epping resident was crowned NH's Miss Amazing at a day-long event at Oyster River High School in April. From the "royal wave" in her evening attire to the interview with a panel of judges, Davidson worked her way through the pageant and then delivered on her real passion - dancing is her "special interest." For the national pageant, Davidson plans on a hip-hop dance to "This is Me" from the movie soundtrack for "The Greatest Showman."

"I've been dancing since I was 4," says Davidson. "When I was little, I did tap." Including some early lessons in jazz and ballet, Davidson has years of experience dancing and spends as much time dancing as she can. She counts Ariana Grande, Pitbull, and Katy Perry as among the numerous artists she listens and dances to.

The Miss Amazing pageant was started in Nebraska in 2007 by a teenaged Special Olympics volunteer named Jordan Somer and it has blossomed into a circuit that looks to create a "culture of celebration and empowerment."

"It gives the girls an opportunity to feel good about themselves, to shine," says Davidson's mother, Cindy. "To show that they have abilities that people overlook and that they're capable of doing a lot more than the stereotype. It shows people that there's more to them than just their disability."

As thrilling as the journey has been for Davidson, the pageant is also just another pearl in a long string of jewels that make up her busy life. From her more than nine years working at Market Basket to her volunteer work at the Echo Thrift Shop in Durham and her daily postings on Epping Squawks,



KRISTEN DAVIDSON'S MOTHER CINDY HELPS FASTEN KRISTEN'S NECKLACE.

the town's Facebook page, Davidson likes to stay engaged with the world and her community. "I'm a people person," she says.

To that end, Davidson covers a lot of ground in social media, connecting with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. It's not unusual for her stay up late drafting what she wants to post the following morning on Epping Squawks. "The only time I put my phone down is when I'm doing chores or dancing," she laughs.

Besides the Market Basket where she has been working as a bagger and in the bakery department, Davidson also stays busy with Friends in Action, Best Buddies, Wildcat Friends and the Manchester Sharks swim team with Special Olympics where she competes in four swim events. Summers, she can be seen riding Pandemonium at Six Flags New England or spending a week at Camp Allen in Bedford. She's also joined her mother and her father, Jim, to visit her older sister, Tara, who moved to Tennessee more than a year ago.

If there's a lot that Davidson has done and continues to do, there is more she would like to accomplish in her life. That includes living on her own one day. Above all, it's to

connect with others and help recognize and celebrate the value that everyone brings to life. "I want to see people get involved," she says, "to be part of a community, helping one another."



Incorporated in 1983, One Sky Community Services has been dedicated to providing a comprehensive array of services, supports and programs to individuals and families with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as acquired brain disorders. A private 5013C nonprofit organization, it is the designated area agency serving the following communities: Brentwood, Deerfield, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Fremont, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, Kingston, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, North Hampton, Northwood, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Raymond, Rye, Seabrook, South Hampton and Stratham. One Sky works with nearly 1,200 individuals and families on a yearly basis.