

2012
MISS USA® & MISS TEEN USA®
DELAWARE ★ ILLINOIS ★ MARYLAND ★ NEW JERSEY ★ RHODE ISLAND

State Contestant Handbook



Rima Fakih
MISS USA® 2010
Michigan



Ximena Navarrete
MISS UNIVERSE® 2010
Mexico



Kamie Crawford
MISS TEEN USA® 2010
Maryland

Wish it... Dream it... Do it...



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*Be part of a beautiful dream ...
Where beautiful dreams come true*

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*Be part of a beautiful dream ...
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Congratulations... and welcome to the 2012 MISS MARYLAND USA® pageant family!

You have been selected as an Official State Finalist in the 2012 Miss Maryland USA pageant! You are about to embark on an invaluable experience that will remain memorable in all the years to come. Only a very select group of young women have the opportunity to participate in this prestigious event, and you are one of them.

This year's pageant promises to be one of the most exciting ever, and we are thrilled to have you as a contestant. As you go through the preparations involved in participating, we hope you find it to be a journey of self-discovery and development. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about yourself, and be sure to enjoy your moment in the spotlight! Ultimately, success is not measured by whether or not you wear the crown. True success is determined by how you prepare, how you compete, and how you handle the outcome.

By participating in the Miss Maryland USA pageant, you are taking the step to become a part of the largest, most prestigious pageant system in the world. Remember, however, that we already view you and your sister contestants - all of whom have been accepted in the Miss Maryland USA pageant - as winners. It is our hope that you will enjoy the pageant and that for years to come you will feel enriched by the experience and the new friends you have made. We want to make this pageant weekend the best of your life!

The 2012 Miss Maryland USA pageant will be held October 28 – 30, 2011 at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center. There is much information in this Contestant Handbook and your State Finalists Packet so please take the time to review all materials. Stay organized and remember to keep right on schedule with your deadlines and sponsorship. The sooner you obtain your sponsorship goal, the sooner you will be able to concentrate on your personal goals to become the next Miss Maryland USA!

The pageant staff is standing by to answer any questions or to offer tips on how to raise sponsorship money. As always, feel free to call us if you need any assistance. We may also be reached by e-mail at MissMarylandUSA@msn.com for any questions.

GOOD LUCK!

Sincerely,

Deborah N. Miller and Cynthia J. Provost
State Directors – MISS USA® & MISS TEEN USA®



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Maryland State Pageant Office
PO Box 3509
Cranston, RI 02910

Phone: 401-228-7019
Fax: 401-228-7021

E-mail: MissMarylandUSA@msn.com
Website: www.missmarylandusa.com

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST

Website passwords in the Contestant Corner:
Official Forms: **dreamit**
Final Sponsor Listing: **doit**

Executive State Directors
Deborah Miller & Cynthia Provost

Office Staff:
State Pageant Coordinator
Michelle Zoglio

Bobbi Coffman
Theresa Campbell
Elaine Paolo



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WHAT TO DO NEXT: Now that I've been selected to participate, what are my next steps?

1. FIRST STEP: Be sure to read this handbook and all documents included in your packet completely! Everything you need to know to start your preparations is included in this manual. The Frequently Asked Questions are especially helpful in answering many initial questions you or your parents may have - read it thoroughly and remember to share all information with them! Pay close attention to details, forms and especially your deadlines. Be sure to return the required paperwork on or before your deadline. Stay organized by keeping everything in the folder provided.

2. MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW: The 2012 Miss Maryland USA & Miss Maryland Teen USA pageant will take place October 28th, 29th & 30th, 2011, at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center. Our Pre-pageant Orientation Seminar will also be at the same hotel on Saturday, September 24th. You will receive more details regarding the seminar, including times and what to bring, in early September. Mark these dates, plus every date listed on your checklist on your calendar now!

3. PRIORITIZE: Although we provide ample time to prepare, your deadlines will come around sooner than you expect if you do not prioritize. After reading all materials in your packet and printing the documents from the website, your next steps should include making a list of potential sponsors and drafting a letter or telephone script to use when asking for support. We have included samples of each in this handbook. You should edit it to personalize it and make it your own. Next, complete your Official Forms and make copies of your Birth Certificate and Proof of Residency documents so that they are ready to send in by your first installment's due date. Pay close attention to the dates on your residency documents to make sure they meet the requirements listed.

4. DEADLINES: Your deadlines for all forms, photos and sponsorship are listed on your checklist which is printed on colored paper and located in your pageant folder. Each contestant has her own individual deadlines. Please put them on your calendar now. In producing an event of this size and caliber, it is imperative that each contestant submits her requirements and meets her deadlines on time. We understand the time it takes to meet your deadlines so if you do run into any delays, please call or e-mail us to request an extension so that we know you need extra time. We will do our best to work with you and grant an additional extension as long as time limitations permit with our program book printer's deadline. Please understand that the closer it gets to the pageant date, the more difficult it becomes to grant extensions. Deadlines are set to ensure that your information is included in our program book at the time of production. If you need an extension we will work with you, but if deadlines are missed for any reason, without advance notification, we can no longer guarantee that your information will be included. No one is allowed to compete without being listed in the program book.

5. SPONSORSHIP: Our sponsorship program is a great way to raise the required fee and keep your out-of-pocket expenses to a minimum. There is much more information in this handbook that will help you in raising your fee, including a list of potential sponsors, helpful tips, a sample letter and telephone script, and receipts. Your sponsorship may be paid by submitting business checks, personal checks, money orders, cashier's checks, and traveler's checks. There will be a \$25.00 fee for any returned check. All checks are to be made payable to: Miss Maryland USA.



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If you receive a check that is made out to you and still owe a balance on your sponsorship, you may either endorse that check by signing the back and make it payable to the pageant or deposit that check and write one check for that amount out of your (or parent's) personal checking account or purchase a money order or cashier's check. It is highly recommended that you do not send cash in the mail.

For your convenience, you and your sponsors may submit sponsorship online with a major credit card or an electronic check using PayPal. You do *not* need a PayPal account in order to submit payment on-line. You will find that feature in the *Contestant Corner* section of our website. All credit card payments must be submitted through the state pageant website; we do not process them over the phone or through the mail.

The installment amounts listed on your checklist are guidelines to help keep you on track. Although most contestants find it easiest to use those amounts, you may submit the full amount before your deadline if you wish, or submit more or less of the installment, or request additional installments; as long as it adds up to the full amount prior to the pageant weekend. As an added incentive, if this is your first time competing with us, all new contestants will receive a \$100 discount on the total sponsorship fee if the entire amount is submitting in full on or before your first deadline. (Returning contestants have already received this discount and therefore this does not apply to you.) All contestants must have at least one payment in before or at the seminar at the latest.

6. SPONSORS & THIRD PARTY VENDORS: On several occasions, the pageant will send you materials and information from our pageant sponsors and third party vendors who offer many different services and/or products that may interest you during your preparations. They are not employed by the pageant and it is not required that you use any of them. We provide this information simply for your benefit only and at the request of past contestants.

If you do make a purchase, please be sure to get a receipt from the vendor as we will not have record of any orders. Questions or concerns regarding your order will need to be directed toward the company itself.

7. WHAT IF I WIN? Be prepared...it could happen to YOU! If you win, your life will change forever. The most exciting year of memories and experiences will begin. You may be asked to stay overnight at the hotel following the pageant in order to appear on a local television station in the morning or have your initial photo shoot and orientation with the executive pageant staff. If you are asked to stay, the pageant will provide a room for you Sunday night at the host hotel.

8. WHAT DO I DO IF I DECIDE TO WITHDRAW? Should you decide to withdraw from the competition, notify us immediately either by e-mail or phone so that we may make your spot available for another interested young lady. Understand that any amount of money you or your sponsor(s) have paid will be forfeited completely and will not be refunded for any reason. Any payment you've made cannot be transferred to any other contestant.



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HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Each contestant will be required to stay overnight at the Host Hotel and each contestant will be assigned one other contestant as her roommate. You will have an opportunity to sign up for a roommate at the Pre-pageant Orientation Seminar. Your request will be taken in consideration when assigning roommates. If you are unable to attend this seminar or do not have a roommate request, we will pair you with another contestant in your age division.

1. HOST HOTEL: The cost of each contestant's hotel accommodations is included in their sponsorship fee. The official host hotel for the 2012 Miss Maryland USA & Miss Maryland Teen USA pageant is:

Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center
5701 Marinelli Road
North Bethesda, MD 20852
Hotel Phone: 301-822-9200

2. ARRIVAL: Each contestant will be assigned her own specific arrival time on Friday, October 28th between the hours of 3pm and 6pm. We ask that you do not arrive earlier than your assigned time. This helps us maintain order to avoid chaos & confusion on arrival day. You will receive your arrival time at the Pre-pageant Orientation Seminar or in the mail if you do not attend. The pageant can not write letters to excuse you from missing school or work so it is important to notify us if you can not make your assigned time and we will adjust it to best meet your needs. Please remember, however, that this time is not your interview time. Interviews are not scheduled by time and typically do not end until after 9pm.

3. MEALS: Contestants are provided with well-balanced meals on-site at the host hotel. You will receive a sample menu at a later date. You may bring additional snacks with you on pageant weekend if you choose or if there is something that you prefer to have in between meals. Any dietary restrictions you may have will need to be noted on your medical form included in the Official Forms section. While we will do our best to make sure each meal provides options for those with dietary restrictions, we ask that if you have any specific needs, that you bring these with you on pageant weekend.

4. PAGEANT CHAPERONES: There will be approximately one chaperone assigned to every fifteen contestants. They will help to make sure you are where you are supposed to be at all times. They will also be present in dressing rooms if you need help with wardrobe changes (zippers, buttons, etc.) These chaperones are there to assist you with any problems or questions you may have. Please remember that these ladies are volunteering their free time, so please be courteous and treat them with respect.

5. TRANSPORTATION: Each contestant is responsible for her own transportation to and from the Host Hotel. All contestants will be released from the pageant following the Final Show and Competition. You will be given instructions regarding your hotel check-out at the seminar.

6. INCIDENTAL EXPENSES: The cost of the hotel room and taxes are covered by your sponsorship fee and will be paid directly by the pageant. The pageant is not responsible for any additional incidental expenses incurred by you such as phone calls, valet services, room service, laundry, bottled water, etc. Please note that if any charges are made to your account, you must give a credit card or cash deposit and you are responsible for reconciling the bill upon your checkout of the hotel.



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SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

1. OVERVIEW: Each contestant is responsible for paying a registration fee of \$99, and a sponsorship fee of \$995. There are no other required expenses. While some contestants may choose to pay for it themselves, we recommend that you utilize our sponsorship program. You will be able to list up to 25 different sponsors in the program book.

The sponsorship fee can be paid in full, or three payments as outlined on your checklist. As mentioned on page 5, if you make full payment on or before your first deadline, you will receive a \$100 discount bringing the amount due down to \$895. Once you have paid your entire sponsorship fee, any additional funds *must* be made payable to you and not to the pageant. If that is not possible, any additional amount submitted to the pageant can be used towards the following: show tickets, spotlight ads or transfer your overage to the following year's sponsorship fee if you choose to compete again. There will be no cash refunds issued if you go over your required sponsorship. It is recommended that you only send the required amount and have any additional donations go straight to you.

2. WHAT IS IT FOR? The sponsorship fee pays for the following expenses:

- ★ Overnight lodging for you the evenings of October 28th & 29th at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel
- ★ All of your meals during the pageant weekend
- ★ Your share of the costs to produce the MISS MARYLAND USA® pageant, including but not limited to your activities during the course of the entire pageant, such as the dinner dance party and individual photo shoots
- ★ Publication of your photograph in the Official State Program Book
- ★ Recognition listing of your sponsors in the Official Program Book
- ★ Prizes and Awards
- ★ Winner's trip to the National Pageant for an opportunity to become MISS USA®
- ★ Pageant Orientation Seminar
- ★ Advertising Costs
- ★ Printing Costs
- ★ Entertainment
- ★ Miscellaneous Expenses

3. HOW TO GET SPONSORSHIP: By obtaining outside sponsors, you should be able to enter this pageant at little or no cost to yourself or your family. Here are some of the techniques used by thousands of pageant contestants in years past. Please read this thoroughly and feel free to call us if you have any questions.

First, you must share the fabulous news...you are a state finalist for Miss Maryland USA®! That, in itself, is quite an accomplishment and you and your family and friends should feel very proud! So tell everyone! And make sure everyone knows what an exceptional opportunity this is for you. There is also a sample Press Release included in this handbook that you may use.

The MISS TEEN USA®, MISS USA® & MISS UNIVERSE® pageant system is the most respected in the country and the world. This pageant system offers opportunities of a lifetime...a live major network telecast seen by millions of people worldwide...an incredible prize package and the chance to meet important people who can open doors for you. Most of all, this pageant system offers memories that will last a lifetime. Gaining confidence, building self-esteem, making lasting friendships, working hard towards a goal, being a role model...are just some of the things a state finalist will achieve.



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Your parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and other close relatives can provide the best help in finding sponsors for you, especially if they have been established in their community for a long time! For example, there are many people in your community and small businesses who have appreciated your and your family's patronage over the years. They know you and your family and have enjoyed having you as their customer. Now it is time for you to ask for their support. They should be very willing to help sponsor you for two reasons, 1) they know you and your family...and 2) they want to support you just like you've been supporting them.

When you begin looking for sponsors, you should first make a list of all the people you know (family, friends, etc.) and all the people you do business with, such as...your doctor, dentist, orthodontist, hair salon, dry cleaner, tanning salon, local restaurant or pizza shop, health club, etc. Once you have a complete list, begin asking for sponsorship. (See additional list of potential sponsors on page 10.)

Another great way of obtaining sponsors is getting smaller contributions from groups of people. For instance, you may be able to gather "collections" from people you work with, your parents, your friends, a club you may belong to, or your parents' work or a club they may belong to.

Keep in mind your sponsors will not come to you, you MUST go to them! Try to stay away from peak business hours, and always ask to speak with the decision maker. Locally owned businesses are easier to approach than national chains because the owner is usually on site. Be prompt for any appointment you make. Remember to be yourself and show enthusiasm. After all, your sponsor may be talking to the next MISS TEEN USA®, MISS USA® or even MISS UNIVERSE®. Before you set out on your sponsorship adventure, read and understand all of the pageant literature that has been provided. This will help you do a better job of selling yourself, and the program. Be sure to show them a copy of the Sponsor Letter provided for you in your sponsorship packet, and always be gracious. Remember to send thank you notes to show your appreciation.

You should obtain your sponsors right away. Don't wait for the deadlines! As you get closer to pageant time you will want to concentrate on the fun aspects of participating in a pageant such as selecting your wardrobe, learning more about yourself, your goals, etc. The sooner you send in your sponsorship fee the sooner you can focus on preparing yourself for the competition.

The actual agreement for sponsorship support, and the amount of money each sponsor gives, is solely between you and your sponsors. It is up to you what amount you ask from each sponsor. Also, keep in mind that it's your responsibility to make sure the proper information, and money, is turned into the office.

With the exception of using PayPal, please do not let your sponsors send their donation into the pageant office themselves. They need to mail or give it to you to send in. You need to keep a record of your sponsorship progress. You must also be sure that your name is written in the comment or memo section of each check submitted. Remember, you may list up to 25 sponsors, but you can raise as much money as you want.

The only limitations are those you put on yourself. YOU CAN DO IT! Go into it prepared to be told "no", but understand that every "no" puts you one person closer to a "yes"! With patience and persistence you will achieve your goals.



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4. SOME IMPORTANT TIPS:

- a. Start Right Now! Begin working on your list of potential sponsors. It is important to have the financial part of your entry completed well in advance so you can concentrate on yourself!
- b. You need to ask for sponsorship IN PERSON. A sponsor is more likely to say "YES" if you ask in person.
- c. Explain to each sponsor that you have been chosen as a STATE FINALIST and you will be representing your (and their) town or city.
- d. When approaching a potential sponsor, be sure to show them your Official Sponsor Folder, with the letter that states you have been accepted as a State Finalist in the MISS MARYLAND USA® pageant.
- e. Make your sponsors aware that you are involved with the most prestigious Pageant System in the world...MISS USA® • MISS TEEN USA® • MISS UNIVERSE®!
- f. Let your sponsors understand the importance of raising sponsorship. Explain to them what their contribution will cover. Help them understand that this is a positive opportunity and how important this is to you!
- g. Remember, if the sponsorship fee is \$995.00, you can obtain sponsorship from 10 people giving you \$100 or 20 people giving you \$50 each. Do not expect one sponsor to cover the full amount.
- h. Many times, contestants will collect small donations from every family member and their friends to make up the total amount required.
- i. Let your sponsors know what they will receive in return for supporting you:
 - ✓ Recognition in the Official Pageant Program Book in your Sponsor Listing
 - ✓ Good Public Relations for their firm in your community.
 - ✓ Tax deduction as an advertising expense for their businesses
- j. Sponsorship should be submitted using PayPal found in the Contestant Corner on our website or mailed in by you in the form of a check or money order. Please do not send cash through the mail. Make sure that your name is listed in the lower left corner of each check or money order usually where the memo / comment line is located.
- k. SPONSOR RECEIPTS are included in your packet. There is one receipt for businesses and a separate one for individuals. Give a completed copy to any of your sponsors who requests one after they have made a contribution. This is your responsibility to complete; the pageant office cannot supply individual receipts.
- l. Personal checks will only be accepted up to 2 weeks before the Pageant. After that date, sponsorship must be submitted in the form of cash, money order, business checks or by using PayPal. Please keep this in mind as the pageant date nears.
- m. If for some reason you have difficulty obtaining sponsors...DO NOT GIVE UP! Just keep on working hard and be persistent. Some contestants will even organize a bake sale, car wash, yard sale or some other fun way to raise sponsorship. It is amazing how it all adds up so quickly!
- n. If your sponsorship deadline is near and you haven't raised all of your sponsorship...DON'T WORRY AND DON'T GIVE UP! Just give us a call and we will try to make other arrangements with you.



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5. WHO ARE SPONSORS? Sponsors can be businesses, family and friends, neighbors, co-workers, teachers and professors. You may also choose to take another approach to raising your sponsorship. Get your family & friends together and have a bake sale, a car wash, a block party, sell candy bars, etc. Recycle items for cash such as old cell phones, empty printer cartridges, scrap metal. Many companies will buy these items back from you and you will be helping the environment as well! The following is a list of potential sponsors and types of businesses who have sponsored our contestants in the past. The list is endless – be creative!

Accountants	Church Groups	Jaycees/Lions Club	Printing Companies
Alarm Security Systems	Community Organizations	Jewelry Stores	Radio Stations
Ambulance Services	Credit Unions	Landscapers	Real Estate Agents
Amusement Parks	Dance & Cheer Team	Laundromats	Restaurants & Lounges
Animal Kennels	Day Care Centers	Lawn & Garden Stores	Roofing Companies
Auto Parts Store	Delicatessens	Lawn Services	School / University
Auto Repairs / Body Shops	Dentist / Orthodontist	Law Offices	School Clubs / Teams
Bakeries	Doctor	Limousine Services	Service / Gas Stations
Banks	Dress Shops	Locksmiths	Shoe Stores
Beauty Consultants	Dry Cleaners	Machine Shops	Ski Shops
Beauty Supply Stores	Elks/Eagles/Moose Lodge	Mini-Golf Centers	Small Groceries & Markets
Beer Bottlers & Dist	Eye Glass / Optical	Modeling Schools	Soft Drink Bottlers & Dist
Bicycle Shops	Farm Equipment & Supply	Motorcycle Shops	Specialty Shops
Boat Sales & Rentals	Fire Department	Moving & Storage Centers	Sporting Goods Shops
Book Stores	Fitness Centers	Music Stores	Sports Organizations
Bookkeeping Services	Flower Shops	Nail Salons	Tanning Salons
Bowling Alleys	Funeral Homes –really!	News Stands / Cigar Stores	Tile Centers
Bridal Stores	Furniture Stores	Nurseries	Tire Dealers
Building Contractors	Fraternities/Sororities	Nursing Homes	Towing Garages
Cabinet Refacers	Glass – Auto & Window	Office Supply Stores	Town Mayor
Car & Truck Rental	Hair Salons	Oil Change Services	Travel Agencies
Car Dealers (New & Old)	Hardware Stores	Package Stores	Trophy Shops
Car Washes	Horse Riding Academies	Painters	Upholsterers
Card & Gift Shops	Hot Tub / Sauna Sales	Pest Control	Veterinarians
Career Schools	Hotels / Motels	Pet Shops	VFW – American Legion
Carpet & Rug Cleaners	HVAC Companies	Pharmacies	Video Movie Rentals
Carpet Stores	Ice Cream Stores	Photography Studios	Vinyl Siding Installers
Caterers	Insurance Agents	Pizza Shops	Volunteer Fire Departments
Chiropractor	Kitchen & Bath Remolding	Plumbers	Weight Loss Centers
Computer Repair Services	Kiwanis Club	Police Department	...and many more!

This is just a sampling to get you started. You may think of many others – use your imagination!



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6. BENEFITS TO SPONSORS: If you list a business sponsor in the sponsor listing section of the program book, they will be able to deduct their sponsorship from their advertising budget, and write it off as a tax-deduction. You should give them one of the business receipts provided in this handbook, so they will have proof of purchase. There is also a receipt provided for individual contributors. It is your responsibility to give receipts to your sponsors who request them. Although this is not a charitable donation, even your non-business sponsors can be listed in your sponsor listing and thus receive adequate recognition for their support.

Remember that you have room for 25 listings, so be sure you take care of your largest business sponsors first. Of course, you can always save room by combining your individual sponsors into general listings such as "Family & Friends", "The Jones Family", "Staff at Pop's Grocery", and "Co-workers at First National Bank," for example.

Check the program book from a previous year that is included in your State Finalist packet to see how the sponsor listing is shown in the book or to get examples of how to best list your sponsors. Please note that the pages in the back of the book with contestant photos and good luck messages are called Spotlight Ads and are separate from the sponsorship. You will receive additional information shortly regarding these pages.

7. SUBMITTING PAYMENT: It is a good idea to make a photocopy or record of each check you send in to the pageant office for your own records. Your sponsors should make their checks out to Miss Maryland USA or to you if you have met your goal of \$995. Be sure your name is listed on each check you submit. If you or your sponsor would like to submit a credit card payment, you can do so by visiting the Contestant Corner section of our website and complete your transaction using PayPal. A PayPal account is *not* required to use this feature. Although we do accept cash, it is recommended that you do not send cash in the mail. You may submit cash in person at the seminar if you wish or to pay any balance due on pageant weekend.

As previously mentioned, each contestant has her own deadlines. If you need more time to meet your deadlines, e-mail or call us! We will work out an arrangement to provide you with an extension. If it is getting close to your deadline and you haven't mailed your paperwork or sponsorship in yet, please just give us a call and leave a message or e-mail that it will be a little late. Please remember that if you choose to submit your entire sponsorship payment on or before your first deadline, you will receive a \$100 discount off of your total sponsorship, bringing your total amount due down to \$895.

Unless you are specifically requested to do so, there is no need to spend additional money on Priority or Overnight mail; regular 1st class mail will suffice and will not cost you extra money. If you do decide to send something to us using a faster method of delivery, please make sure you waive the need for our signature. We are unable to sign for our packages on a daily basis and it will only further delay our receipt of your package if we have to wait to sign for them. This applies to all mailings you send in to Pageant Headquarters.

8. SUBMITTING YOUR FINAL SPONSOR LISTING: You must submit into the Pageant a final listing of your sponsors so that they can be listed in the Official State Program Book. We do not take the names off of the checks you submit to us. You may also want to thank people other than those who gave you sponsorship; such as anyone who has helped you prepare in other ways or simply showed their support. See the next page for detailed instructions for submitting your list.



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FINAL SPONSOR LIST INSTRUCTIONS

You must submit into the Pageant a final listing of your sponsors so that they can be listed in the Official State Program Book. You will submit your Final Sponsor Listing by going to our website at www.missmarylandusa.com and following the instructions below.

Please check the date on your checklist for the deadline to turn in your list of sponsors. If your listing is not received by the due date, "Friends & Family" will be noted after your name.

You may list no more than 25 sponsors. Please list sponsors' names only. Due to space limitations, addresses, phone numbers, dollar amounts, relationships and personal messages will NOT be printed. Consider using group names such as *The Smith Family*, *Mr. & Mrs. Steve Jones & Family*, *Employees of ABC Co.*, *Friends & Family*, etc...instead of trying to list every name separately.

Once you have your final version ready for the program book; follow these instructions to submit your Final Sponsor Listing in to the pageant office:

1. Go to www.missmarylandusa.com
2. Click on *Maryland* to go to the main state page, then *Contestant Corner*
3. Choose "*Submit Final Sponsor Listing*" and enter password: **doit**. Be sure to use your mouse to click the password submit button; do not use the enter key.
4. Read the instructions carefully before completing the form.
5. Type the names you want listed into the fields provided. Use correct spelling and punctuation. Do NOT use all capital letters.
6. If you need to submit a revised version, please use the drop down menu at the top and choose "Revised"; follow the same procedure. Please note, if you are sending a revised listing, you must include ALL sponsors names, including those you previously submitted.
7. When complete, click "Submit Sponsor Form" and make sure you receive a "Thank you for submitting" page. If you receive an "Oops" message, please go back and complete all required fields.



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MISS USA® & MISS TEEN USA®

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SAMPLE TELEPHONE SCRIPT

The following is a suggested script that you may use in talking with prospective sponsors either on the phone or in person. We emphasize that it is only a sample script and that you should *modify it as necessary*. Your ideas in dealing with those in your city will probably be most successful!

Hello! My name is _____ and I am calling you to share some exciting news! I have been selected as an official State Finalist in the Miss Maryland USA Pageant. Have you ever heard of the MISS TEEN USA, MISS USA or MISS UNIVERSE pageants? These pageants are a Donald J. Trump and NBC Universal, Inc. joint venture. They are the most prestigious pageants in the world. This is a chance of a lifetime for me and I am asking you for your support in this unique opportunity.

If I happen to be crowned the new Miss Maryland USA, I will represent Maryland in the nationally televised Miss USA pageant as seen on NBC television. I will also represent Maryland during my reign by making numerous appearances throughout our state, by helping the community, local businesses, and charitable organizations, as well as appearing at special events, grand openings and parades.

A sponsorship program is incorporated into the Miss Maryland USA state pageant. Your sponsorship is tax deductible as an advertising expense. Would you like to be one of my sponsors as I represent our great state and pursue a life-long dream?*

***Note:**

- ✓ Sponsorship donations are tax deductible for businesses only.
- ✓ Ask for a specific amount, depending on your relationship with the sponsor.
- ✓ Remember to tell them that the Pageant also accepts credit cards & PayPal.
- ✓ Please make checks payable to: Miss Maryland USA.

(Any amounts over your sponsorship requirement should be made out to you personally.)



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SAMPLE SPONSORSHIP LETTER

We strongly encourage all contestants to call on potential sponsors in person first, and then follow up with a written letter. Below is a sample letter to leave with or send to potential sponsors after you have spoken with them.

Current Date, 2011

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you very much for taking the time to speak with me and for considering my sponsorship request. I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. My name is _____ and I am a _____ year old _____ at _____. Some of my proudest achievements include:

- (Here list all your honors, awards & activities)
- Member of the National Honor Society
 - Cheerleading or PomPom Squad Member
 - Drama Club
 - Special Training in Dance, Gymnastics, etc.
 - Student Government
 - List all other Activities, Interests

My most recent accomplishment was being selected as a State Finalist in the Miss Maryland USA pageant to be held in October at the Bethesda North Marriott. The Maryland pageant system is one of the premier state pageants in the United States and I am proud to have been selected from among the hundreds of applicants that were processed.

This kind of competition is an excellent experience. I am confident that I can do well, and that it will lead to many opportunities for my future. If I do become Miss Maryland USA 2012, I will represent the state and compete for the national title of MISS USA 2012!

I have contacted you because I am hoping that you will participate with me! Yes, you can participate and get some recognition for yourself and your company by being one of my sponsors. The sponsorship fee is \$995.00, and you may contribute all or a part of it. My top sponsors will be recognized in the Official State Program and in press coverage. The sponsorship is necessary to help cover the costs of the pageant weekend, such as hotel rooms, meals for three days, production costs, etc.

I sincerely hope you will choose to celebrate this event with me while receiving some valuable advertising and community exposure for yourself.

Gratefully yours,

Your Signature

Your Name

Address / Phone Number



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BUSINESS RECEIPT

This is to acknowledge receipt of the amount of \$ _____

Amount of Sponsorship

from _____

Name of business

for _____ who is competing in the

Name of Contestant

2012 MISS MARYLAND USA® pageant, the official state preliminary to the nationally televised MISS USA® pageant. The state pageant will be held October 28th – 30th, 2011. In exchange for sponsorship, I (the contestant) will provide the sponsor with business recognition in the Official Pageant Program Book. I (the contestant) am solely responsible for providing all information to the Pageant Office needed for publication.

Signature of Contestant _____ Date _____

Tax Information: This is tax-deductible as a business advertising expense.

INDIVIDUAL RECEIPT

This is to acknowledge receipt of the amount of \$ _____

Amount of Sponsorship

from _____

Name of Sponsor(s)

for _____ who is competing in the

Name of Contestant

2012 MISS MARYLAND USA® pageant, the official state preliminary to the nationally televised MISS USA® pageant. The state pageant will be held October 28th – 30th, 2011. In exchange for sponsorship, I (the contestant) will provide the sponsor with recognition in the Official Pageant Program Book. I (the contestant) am solely responsible for providing all information to the Pageant Office needed for publication.

Signature of Contestant _____ Date _____



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WARDROBE INFORMATION

1. OPENING PRODUCTION NUMBER: There will be an opening dance production number in the beginning of the presentation show and final competition. Contestants competing in the MISS age division will need a black cocktail dress (solid only, no prints). Cocktail length is typically defined as above the knee. Please do not wear an evening gown or a dress longer than your knee. You will also want to be sure that your dress is not too short as you will be on stage and required to dance in this outfit. Sequins, crystals, and other embellishments are permitted as long as it is still a solid color – no prints!

Your shoes for opening number must be black, gold or silver in the heel height of your choice as long as you can move freely in them. You may wear any accessories you choose during this part of the program; contestants are not judged during the opening number.

2. SWIMSUIT COMPETITION: It is important to remember that it is not about any particular body style, shape or frame. Rather it is about maintaining good health. The goal is to make the most out of what you have! During the actual swimsuit competition, you should present yourself as a confident young woman, with natural looking hairstyle and light/natural make-up.

Contestants competing in the MISS age division may choose between a one or two-piece swimsuit, in a solid color. As a MISS contestant, you have the option of wearing whichever you look and feel the best in. If you do choose a two-piece suit, remember that it must be conservative; meaning it should not be too high cut or revealing and the back should cover your bottom completely. We suggest bringing a one-piece alternative with you as well. Other approved swimsuit styles include “Tankinis”, bikinis with “boy-short” bottoms, and “Monokinis” where there is a piece of fabric connecting the bottoms to the top - usually down the middle of your stomach.

Adequate coverage is required; Brazilian cuts and thongs are not allowed. Swimsuits may be any appropriate style, and design, and there are no color restrictions. Although we ask that the suit be solid in color, there may be a small embellishment or trim of another color. If you have concerns whether your swimsuit is an approved style – you may bring it with you to the seminar to show a member of the pageant staff or e-mail a photograph to us for review.

You may wear any style shoe you choose during the swimsuit competition; however, neutral, skin color or clear shoes tend to look best during swimsuit presentation - but are not required. Sandals are also a good option. Pantyhose is not allowed; however, you may use body make-up, if desired, to cover a scar, blemish or tattoo. You may wear any jewelry of your choice although it is recommended to keep it at a minimum during this phase of competition. Wearing body jewelry such as a belly ring is purely a personal choice and you may decide what is best for you. Additional accessories such as a wrap, hat, sarong, or sunglasses may not be worn during swimsuit competition.

3. EVENING GOWN COMPETITION: Each contestant wears a gown she has chosen for herself. The most important thing about evening gown is that you are comfortable and that it portrays your sense of style. Make sure you wear the gown and that it doesn't wear you. You should simply “shine” for the judges.

You will need one full-length evening gown for competition. Your gown should represent your own personality and taste. The style, design, and color are up to you. You should wear whatever you



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look and feel the best in. There is no “right” style or color but it must be full length down to the floor. It can be elaborate, or very simple. Choose something that makes you feel beautiful. The important thing is to pick a gown style and color that flatters YOU! The judges will be scoring you not the gown. Choose a dress that walks well, and shows well on stage. But, most importantly you must be able to walk comfortably in your shoes and dress. Too much jewelry is usually not recommended. Usually fashion earrings are enough. However, in some instances a bracelet or choker may be appropriate. Neutral pantyhose are sufficient under your gown, but are not necessary. In the end, just pick a gown that makes you feel like a winner! And, know that you don’t have to spend a million bucks to look like a million bucks! Teens are encouraged to wear gowns that reflect a more youthful style and look than the Miss contestants.

4. INTERVIEW COMPETITION: Judges spend time with each contestant to learn about her successes, goals and ambitions. This is your opportunity to let the judges know why you are the right person for this job! The best way to prepare is to practice. Remember, there is a difference between practicing and rehearsing. You should practice your skills, but never rehearse your answers. Always be genuine, natural and honest with your answers.

You should select an outfit that you find appropriate for a job interview, and that reflects your personality. The outfit should make you feel comfortable and present yourself in a sophisticated and self-confident manner. Some examples include: slacks and a sweater set, pants and a blouse, a skirt with a coordinating top, etc. The outfit can range from casual to business oriented. The most important thing is to wear something that you would normally wear. Do not choose an outfit that is too flashy, as it might be distracting. Judges should be listening to what you are saying and not be focused on what you are wearing. Do not wear cocktail attire. Select shoes and pantyhose (if worn) that compliment your outfit. Earrings, broaches, bracelets, etc., are appropriate when not overdone. Accessories should be used to only enhance your outfit. You should present yourself in a professional manner, with a simple and natural looking hairstyle, and daytime make-up. Don’t wear too much make-up as you will be in close proximity to the judges.

NOTE: On-stage interviews will be conducted for the top-5 finalists. All on-stage interviews will be conducted in your competition evening gown. No additional outfit is needed for on-stage interviews.

5. REHEARSALS AND OTHER WARDROBE NEEDS: You will also need to bring comfortable clothes for rehearsals (sweats, sweatshirts, tennis shoes, etc) and there will be a dance party on Saturday night after preliminary judging! You may wear whatever clothing you wish to the dance party – jeans, cocktail dress, sweats – but you can not wear your pajamas or wear them around in the hotel or to breakfast. Since this year’s dance party will fall on Halloween weekend, some contestant’s have asked if they could wear a costume. Although this is not officially a costume party – you may wear one if you choose too!

An “arrival” outfit is not required. Contestants whose last names begin with the letter “A” or “B” will be asked to arrive in their interview outfit. All other contestants may wear any clothing of their choice. No additional purchase should be necessary.

MISS Wardrobe Reference Sheet

Items shown are to illustrate examples of approved styles only and do not cover all possibilities.

Opening Number



*Opening number shoes should be black, gold or silver in any style to best compliment the black cocktail dress of your choice.

Interview



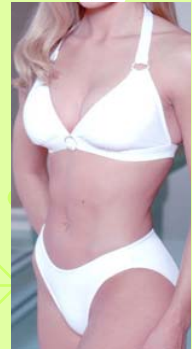
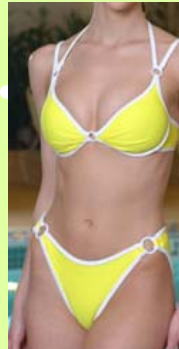
*Interview shoes can be any color or style to best compliment the outfit of your choice.

Evening Gown



*Evening Gown shoes can be any color or style to best compliment the gown of your choice.

Swimsuit



*Swimsuit shoes should be neutral in color or best match to your skin tone to compliment the one or two-piece swimsuit of your choice. Examples shown below.

Swimsuit Shoes





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JUDGING INFORMATION

Who are the judges?

Your judges will come from a diverse range of occupations. In the past, judges have been professional athletes, actors, models, casting and talent agents, journalists, professors, former titleholders, doctors, lawyers, entertainers, business professionals, entrepreneurs, fashion designers, hair and makeup professionals, fitness trainers, and even housewives. The common bond they all share is that they are successful in their own right. They have a grasp of the importance of good communications skills, self-discipline and public image.

What are they looking for?

Does she radiate natural beauty both inside and out? Does she have a warm, genuine, compassionate personality? Will she be a good representative for the state at the MISS USA® or MISS TEEN USA® pageant? Is she a confident, self-assured individual who is comfortable with herself and her surroundings? Is she an intelligent and articulate young woman who can serve as a good role model for her peers? Does she want to win and why? If she does win, what will it mean to her, and ultimately to others? These are all questions the judges ask themselves about each contestant as they evaluate them in the three phases of competition. It is important to understand they are not looking for the best in swimsuit, or the best in gown, or even the best in interview; rather, they are looking for the “total woman” and “total teen.”

Judging the phases of competition:

Swimsuit: During swimsuit competition, the judges' attention is on the contestant's overall physical fitness. Does she demonstrate a healthy lifestyle through the proper care and maintenance of her body? They will be focused on her beauty of face and figure, tone, proportion, poise and grace under pressure. Numerical measurements are NOT considered.

Evening Gown: During Evening Gown the attention is again focused on her beauty of face and figure, but also on her overall appearance. They will consider her poise, elegance, confidence, the manner in which she carries herself, her sense of fashion and style, and her stage presence. They will be looking for the qualities that she is able to radiate as she walks across the stage in her gown. They are scoring the contestant, not the dress!

Interview: During the private interview, they will be looking for an articulate, compassionate, and genuine individual who will make a good representative of the pageant, pageant sponsors, and state. Each interview lasts for approximately three minutes, during which they will discuss mostly items right off your Interview Form. They may ask other questions regarding your education, goals, family, special training, hobbies, occupations, travel, community pride, likes, and dislikes. Interviews will be very conversational and enjoyable. During onstage interview competition, they will be looking for the same qualities, in addition to how you handle yourself speaking in front of an audience. Remember, one question cannot win or lose the pageant, so relax during interviews.

Scoring Procedures:

The Preliminary round of competition will consist of three equal phases; swimsuit, evening gown, and interview. Interviews will be conducted on arrival day. The swimsuit and evening gown competitions will take place on stage during the presentation show on the second day. Each judge will assess each contestant by listing their selection of the twelve contestants they feel are the best in each category. The selection given by all seven judges for each phase of competition will be tallied, and the semi-finalists will be determined from the highest composite scores. Once the semifinalists are announced, the preliminary scores are erased, and they will re-compete in swimsuit and evening gown on stage during the final show. Each judge will assess each semi-finalist contestant by listing their selection of the five contestants they feel are the best in each category. The selection given by all judges for these two phases of competition will be tallied, and the Top-5 finalists will be determined from the highest composite scores.

The last round of competition for the final 5 will consist of an on-stage interview, group judging and an individual final look for the judges. After all 5 have had a final presentation in the spotlight, each judge will be asked to rank them in the order they believe they should finish. Point values will be assessed for each ranking, and the contestant with the most points will be crowned. In the case of a tie for any Top 5 position, judges will complete a tie-breaker ballot. Due to Miss Universe regulations, we are unable to release scores / rankings after the pageant concludes.



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*Be part of a beautiful dream ...
Where beautiful dreams come true*

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

Some contestants wish to seek professional advice or training. There are people who specialize in fitness training, interview skills, wardrobe consulting, and overall pageant preparations. If you wish to speak with a professional, that is your choice, and you can check our website or the vendor list below for our sponsors' information. Many young women have entered and won our pageants with no professional assistance. Preparing for the pageant should be fun, and can be done on your own. The professionals are simply there if you feel you need them. The most important thing to us is that you have a positive experience, and that you feel as though you're a better person for having participated in the pageant!



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GENERAL INFORMATION

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- ★ Only take what you need for on-stage competition with you to the dressing rooms. Suitcases are not allowed so please leave them in your hotel room. Large tote bags and carry-ons are permitted, as are garment hanging bags. There will be garment racks available to hang your wardrobe on. You **MUST** label everything so that you won't get your belongings mixed up with someone else's. It is suggested that you put an address label with YOUR name (not your parent's) on everything you bring into the dressing rooms. If you are called into the semi-finals on Sunday, the chaperones are in the dressing rooms moving your belongings into the semi-finalist dressing room. If your items are not labeled properly – we will not be able to move them for you, you will not have your essential items needed for your final competition, and it will delay the entire production. So please make sure all items are labeled!
- ★ Rehearsals are closed. No family or friends will be allowed in the ballroom during rehearsals. This is to keep everyone focused on the task at hand, and to assure the best learning environment and show. Cell phones are not allowed in rehearsals. Please keep them in your hotel room only.
- ★ You will be given an official pageant ID button after all contestants have checked in. Keep track of your button; you must wear it at all times. We are not the only guests at the hotel during pageant weekend. Your button is the only way that pageant staff, chaperones and security will be able to identify you as part of our group. You will also wear it for both stage shows on your opening number outfit, swimsuit and evening gown.
- ★ Each contestant will receive one complimentary pageant program book as a souvenir. Additional books may be purchased by friends and family on pageant weekend.
- ★ There will be no family or friends allowed back stage, in dressing rooms or in contestant hotel rooms at anytime. Contestants are prohibited from bringing their own personal hair and make-up stylists - they are not allowed back stage or in your hotel room nor are you allowed to enter anyone else's hotel room during pageant weekend, including your parent's. This is strictly from a security standpoint – we must know where you are at all times. Additionally, if everyone brought their own personal assistants, we would not fit in the hotel! There will be a team of professional make-up artists and hair stylists present for the pageant. You will have an opportunity to meet them and discuss pricing and specific styles before the pageant weekend if you choose to use their services. Detailed information will be provided at the Pre-pageant Orientation Seminar. Chaperones will be happy to assist you with things such as zipping, tying, lacing, buckling, etc., but are not able to assist you with your hair and makeup.
- ★ No video cameras will be allowed during either the preliminary or final shows. There will be a professional videographer present to tape the shows and copies will be available for purchase. They are an independent business not affiliated with the pageant. All questions regarding your video order, delivery time, etc. should be directed to the video company. Their contact information can always be found on our website. Please keep a receipt for your records.



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- ★ You, your family and your friends may take pictures throughout the weekend. However, any pictures taken during the stage shows must be taken from their seats and must be non-flash photography. Professional photography equipment will not be allowed into the ballroom. They may NOT stand up, get into the aisles or approach the stage or judges' table in order to take pictures. There will be a professional photographer that will have a premium location during the shows to photograph you during the stage portions of the competition. It is your responsibility to learn the correct choreography and to make sure that you hit your mark, in order for the best photograph possible to be taken. The photographer will be available for orders before each show. They are an independent business not affiliated with the pageant. All questions regarding your photography order, delivery time, etc. should be directed to the photography company. Their contact information can always be found on our website. Please keep a receipt for your records.
- ★ It is important to always keep a positive attitude. It can make a world of difference. Do not get caught up in any gossip or rumors that may go around – none of it is usually true. Also, while on stage, stay in the moment and don't stress out about the next phase of competition, or cut. Enjoy EACH moment as it comes! Most importantly, remember you can do this. Relax, have fun, and GO FOR IT!

PAGEANT ETIQUETTE: None of these things will win or lose a pageant for you. However, once you have entered the pageant everyone is watching you, and it is important to make a good impression. These guidelines will help you create an impression of a responsible, confident, organized individual who can handle any job given to her.

- ★ **Meet every deadline...**or call for an extension!
- ★ **Follow all rules!** They are for your safety & security.
- ★ **Be neat and clean!** No one should have to pick up after you.
- ★ **Be organized!** It is your responsibility to arrive with everything you need.
- ★ **Be prepared!** It is your responsibility to know what's happening and be ready.
- ★ **Get acquainted!** You should get to know the other contestants, the contestant coordinators, and your chaperones. Most importantly, be respectful to everyone!
- ★ **Be complimentary of all accommodations and meals!** Sponsors and Staff always do their best...please always remember that.
- ★ **Be cheerful even when you aren't "the winner."** Only one person can win the crown, and you're still a winner for trying!
- ★ **Be a gracious winner!** It happens once in a lifetime, and many others would like to be in your shoes!



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PRESS RELEASE

You deserve recognition! If you would like to increase your exposure within your community, the following is a great way to start.

1. Re-type the sample press release below; filling in the blanks with the appropriate information. This is only an example - you may edit it if you wish.
2. Take your completed release along with a photograph of yourself to your local newspaper. Check their website; they may even let you e-mail it to them or submit it on-line!
3. You may bring it to as many newspapers as you wish.
4. Please note that this is strictly optional, but we encourage you to take advantage of it. You do not have to complete this step nor do you send this form into Pageant Headquarters.

Also, be sure to give them the Pageant's phone number and your parents' phone number so they can call to verify any information.

FOR RELEASE UPON RECEIPT

LOCAL RESIDENT TO COMPETE FOR MISS MARYLAND USA 2012

October 28th, 29th & 30th, 2011

Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center

WINNER TO REPRESENT MARYLAND AT THE NATIONAL
2012 MISS USA® PAGEANT AS SEEN LIVE ON NBC!

____ (Your Full Name) _____, ____ (Age) _____, of ____ (City) _____ will compete for the title of MISS MARYLAND USA 2012 on October 28th, 29th & 30th, 2011 at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in N. Bethesda, Maryland. Miss ____ (Last Name) _____ is the daughter of ____ (Parent's Names) _____. She attends ____ (Name of School) _____ and her activities and/or hobbies include _____. Her sponsors for the pageant are _____.

Other interesting information about ____ (First Name) _____ includes _____.
_____. The MISS MARYLAND TEEN USA® and MISS MARYLAND USA® pageants are the Official Preliminaries to the MISS TEEN USA®, MISS USA® and MISS UNIVERSE® pageants and are a Donald J. Trump and NBC Universal Inc. joint venture. The young woman chosen as MISS MARYLAND USA 2012 will go on to represent the state of Maryland in the 2012 MISS USA® pageant as seen LIVE on NBC television, one of the most anticipated television events of the year.

###

Note to the Press: For more information or press passes, contact:

Elaine Paolo, Pageant Coordinator

MISS USA® & MISS TEEN USA®

Phone: 401-943-0001 or MissMarylandUSA@msn.com



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Below are samples of some of the most commonly asked questions about wardrobe, sponsorship, paperwork, the program book and pageant weekend. Please read them thoroughly as they will be very helpful. Of course, should you have further questions, do not hesitate to call or e-mail us.

PAPERWORK:

Q: I have just received my packet. How do I get started?

A: You have already taken the first step by reading through your handbook! The best way to start is to first read all the materials in your official state packet and those you have printed from the Contestant Corner on our website. Second, you should start making a list of potential sponsors and drafting a letter or telephone script to use when asking for support. Third, complete your Official Forms and make copies of your Birth Certificate and Proof of Residency documents so that they are ready to send in by your first installment's due date. Be sure your residency documents are all dated correctly.

Q: Is it necessary to have any of the paperwork or signatures notarized?

A: No, you do not need to have anything notarized.

Q: I will have to send away for a copy of my birth certificate. Are there any other documents I can use instead?

A: No, a photocopy of a birth certificate is required from all contestants even if they have previously participated in this State Pageant. It does not need to be a certified or notarized copy – a regular photocopy will suffice.

Q: All of the information I want to put on the Production Information and/or Interview Form does not fit on one page. Can I use a second page, write on the back or retype my own form so that I may have more room?

A: No, you can only use the forms that are provided. Do not write on the back of the page, retype it or make your own form. Also, please do not add your photograph to the form or print it on colored paper.

Q: I need to print additional forms. What should I do?

A: You can access all files on our website. Go to www.missmarylandusa.com and choose *Maryland*. From that menu, click on *Contestant Corner* and then *Official Forms*. Enter the password, **dreamit** and then choose the document you are looking for.

Q: I filled out the Production Information and Interview Forms using my computer, but why am I unable to save my completed forms?

A: You will not be able to save your completed forms if you are using the free version of Adobe Reader. You should simply print additional copies of the forms when you have finished. If you are using the upgraded version of Adobe Acrobat, you will be able to save your completed forms to your computers hard drive and access it again at a later date.

WARDROBE:

Q: Should I wear a one or two-piece swimsuit?

A: As a MISS contestant, you have the option of wearing whichever you look and feel the best in. Wearing a one-piece suit will not put you at any disadvantage – we have had MISS contestants win their state titles wearing a one-piece swimsuit. Whatever style best compliments your body type is the best choice you can make.

Q: Where can I find a swimsuit?

A: In the summer you can find a swimsuit just about anywhere; in the fall it is a little more difficult. There are year round retailers, such "Water Water Everywhere" & "Everything But Water" located in local shopping malls. Catalogs, the internet, and area sporting goods stores can also be good resources. Catalogs from Victoria's



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Secret & JC Penney's usually carry swimsuits year round. We also have a Pageant Wardrobe sponsor, *La Casa Hermosa*, that you have the option of purchasing a swimsuit or evening gown through. More information will be sent out at a later date from our sponsor and we expect them to be present at our pre-pageant seminar. More information can be found on www.LaCasaHermosa.com.

Q: Is it acceptable if my swimsuit has cut-outs, mesh or sheer inserts?

A: Yes, cut-outs with or without inserts are fine.

Q: Does my swimsuit have to be a solid color?

A: Yes, a solid color looks best on stage; however, it may be any color you choose and it can have a different color trim, sequins/crystals or small embellishment.

Q: Are there restrictions on tattoos or body piercings?

A: No, there are no written restrictions on tattoos or body piercings; however, if any are visible while you are in your swimsuit, evening gown or interview suit, you have the option of removing your body jewelry or covering up tattoos with body make-up.

Q: Do I wear the same swimsuit & evening gown on both days?

A: Yes, your pageant wardrobe is the same for both the preliminary judging and the final competition.

SPONSORSHIP:

Q: Whom should I ask to sponsor me?

A: Anyone may be a sponsor for you. Please refer to the detailed sample list on page 10 of this contestant handbook.

Q: My sponsor made the check out to me instead of the pageant. What should I do?

A: You can either endorse the check by signing on the reverse side and send it to us that way - or you may deposit it in your own or your parent's checking account and write us another check made payable to Miss Maryland USA.

Q: I received cash from my sponsors. How should I submit it to you?

A: You may submit cash directly to us at the pre-pageant seminar and on pageant weekend only. We suggest that you do not send cash in the mail. You may either deposit it into your own checking account and write us a check or convert it to a money order prior to mailing.

Q: May I raise more sponsorship than needed?

A: Yes, you may raise as much sponsorship as you like to help defray your costs for an evening gown and swimsuit, shoes, make-up, etc. if you need to purchase any of these items. Any sponsorship you collect above and beyond \$995 should be sent directly to you, and if it is in check form, should also be made out to you personally and not to the pageant. If you have collected more than is needed and your sponsors have already made the checks out to the pageant, you can submit them to the pageant office and you will be issued a credit that you can use towards the following: show tickets, spotlight ads or transfer your overage to the following year's sponsorship fee if you choose to compete again. There will be no refunds issued if you go over your required sponsorship of \$995. It is recommended that keep track of your balance and only send the required \$995 into the pageant office and have the rest made out to you.

Q: What if I cannot make my sponsorship deadlines?

A: Don't give up! Just give us a call and we will try to make other arrangements with you personally. It is very important to contact us if you will miss a deadline by more than one week so that we can make specific arrangements with you. We are here to help you - you've come this far and we want to give you every opportunity to participate in this fabulous program.

Q: Can I turn in any sponsorship on pageant weekend?

A: Yes. If you have any balance remaining on your sponsorship, you must bring it with you on pageant weekend and turn it in on Friday at the pageant registration tables. Please note that personal checks and credit



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cards will not be accepted on pageant weekend – only cash, business checks, money orders, or traveler's checks. If you plan on using a credit card for your final payment, you must submit it on our website no later than 3 days prior to the pageant - October 25, 2011.

Q: Can I turn in all of the requirements (paperwork, sponsor listing, photograph for program book) including the entire sponsorship amount on pageant weekend?

A: No. In producing a pageant of this caliber, we must have our final list of contestants 5 - 6 weeks before the pageant in order to properly make all the necessary arrangements. All contestants must have made a previous sponsorship payment prior to the program book going to print. The program book typically is printed 5 weeks prior to the pageant. Contestants without any sponsorship in at the time the book goes to print will not be included in the pageant program book and therefore will be unable to compete,

PROGRAM BOOK:

Q: Why is my picture not in the program book that was included in my packet?

A: This is a program book from a previous year's pageant. We have sent it to you for your reference only so that you may see the photograph style we need from you and the sponsor listings. You may also wish to familiarize yourself with our pageant sponsors and can review their ads in the book. Although you may receive a book from another state, please note that they layout and design are the same.

Q: What type of photo do you need for the program book and website?

A: We would like a basic color head & shoulders photo of you. A solid background looks best but is not necessary. Please remember that the photograph that you submit will not only be used for our program book, but will also be featured on our website.

Q: Are the photos printed in the program book judged?

A: There is a "Miss Photogenic" award; however, this award is decided by the pageant staff and the pageant photographer, not by the judges. The judges will look at your photograph in the book for reference only.

Q: How should I submit my photograph?

A: We prefer that you submit it electronically through e-mail to MissMarylandUSA@msn.com or send it on a CD-rom via regular US mail. When you e-mail or save your photo to disk, please make sure you include your first and last name and that the file is in JPEG format and is big enough to print. It must be at least 300dpi in resolution and 5 x 7 or larger in size. Please remember that the quality of your photograph in the book and on the website is directly related to the quality of the photo you submit to us. Small, low resolution photos will look blurry when printed. Your photograph will be featured on our website in color and in the program book in black/white. Please submit your photos in color and we will convert them to black/white for the program book. If you are mailing a printed photograph, we prefer it to be a 5 x 7, although we will accept an 8 x 10 or 4 x 6. The smallest size accepted is 3 x 5. Only color photos are accepted and your first and last name must be printed on the back as you wish it to appear in the program book. Printed photographs will not be returned. Please see your checklist for your individual due date.

Q: How do I get a page in the back of the book with my picture in it?

A: These are called "Spotlight Ads" and are separate from your Sponsorship or Sponsor Listing. More information will be sent to you regarding these ads at a later time.

Q: One of my sponsors would like to put an ad in the program book. What should I tell them?

A: Business ads are given to businesses that are sponsors of the pageant as a whole and who donate items or services of at least \$500 towards the prize package for our winners. If they are interested, please have them contact the Pageant Office directly. Sponsors may wish to instead submit a Spotlight Ad on your behalf and you may give them the order form once you receive it in the mail.



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Q: How do I submit my sponsors' names so that they are listed in the program book?

A: You will use our website submission form. See page 12 for instructions. We do not take the names listed on your sponsorship checks. Anyone who does not submit a listing on-line will have "Friends & Family" listed by their name.

Q: Will I receive a copy of this year's program book as well?

A: Yes, all contestants will receive a complimentary program book as a souvenir. Additional books may be purchased by friends and family on pageant weekend.

PAGEANT WEEKEND:

Q: What happens on each day of pageant weekend?

A: There is an overall description of the weekend events listed on our website. Go to www.missmarylandusa.com and click on Maryland. Once you are on the main state page, choose "Pageant Weekend" and then "Schedule." You will also receive a detailed schedule of events at the pre-pageant orientation seminar. As an overview, preliminary interviews will be held on Friday, preliminary swimsuit and evening gown is on Saturday, and the final competition and crowning of the new winner is on Sunday.

Q: What time do I need to arrive on Pageant weekend?

A: Your arrival time will depend on where your last name falls in the alphabet. If your last name begins with the letter "A" or "B", you will be one of the first to arrive for registration. Your individual arrival time will be assigned to you at the pre-pageant seminar along with the weekend schedule of events. Arrivals for the MISS contestants begin at 3pm and will continue until 6pm that evening.

Q: What time will my preliminary interview be?

A: We do not schedule individual interview times; only arrival times. After you have finished checking in at the registration tables and have had a chance to get ready; you will be put into queue for your interview.

Q: Whom do we room with?

A: You will have the opportunity to pick a roommate prior to the pageant weekend. If you do not select one, we will pair you up. You may only room with another contestant. You are not permitted in any one else's room, nor is anyone permitted to enter yours – even family members. Only chaperones will be allowed to enter contestant rooms.

Q: I have two friends that I want to room with. Can we all share the same room?

A: We will only put 3 contestants to a room upon specific request. All 3 contestants must agree to share together.

Q: May I bring my own hairdresser and make-up artist?

A: No. If everyone brought their own personal staff, we would not fit in the hotel! There will be a team of professional make-up artists and hair stylists present for the pageant. You will have an opportunity to meet them and discuss pricing and specific styles before the pageant weekend. Additional information will follow closer to the pageant weekend.

Q: Will there be a photographer and videographer present at the pageant?

A: Yes. Detailed information will be provided to you at the pre-pageant seminar about their services and products.

Q: May my friends and family stay at the hotel?

A: Yes. Your friends and family may also reserve rooms at the same hotel, but you may not stay with them. We have made discounted room rates available for them. Additional information is also enclosed in this packet regarding discount pricing and room availability.

Q: Can my friends and family come to the Preliminary and Final Competitions (Saturday and Sunday)?

A: Yes. They may purchase tickets for either or both nights.



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Q: How can I buy tickets and how much are they?

A: Tickets will be on sale at the pre-pageant seminar for contestants and their family only. After the seminar, tickets will next be on sale during pageant weekend and at the door prior to each show. Detailed information will be sent out early Fall with more information and pricing.

Q: May my friends and family watch rehearsals?

A: No. All rehearsals are closed to the public, meaning for contestants and pageant staff only.

Q: I am over 21 years old. Will I be able to enter the hotel's lounge during off-times?

A: Once you register on Friday until after the Final Competition on Sunday, you are our responsibility. No contestant may wander in the hotel unchaperoned or enter the hotel's lounge/restaurant/bar areas. Smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages are not permitted during pageant weekend regardless of age.

Q: May I leave the hotel after I compete and then come back for the next competition?

A: No. Every contestant must stay at the hotel from Friday through Sunday. You may not leave the hotel for any reason. Interviews will be held Friday, preliminary judging will be on Saturday and the final competition and crowning will be Sunday. In between competitions all contestants will rehearse. Your presence for the entire weekend is mandatory.

Q: Will I be able to get my scores or ranking after the pageant has ended?

A: The MISS USA state preliminary pageants currently use the "mention-system" of judging. (See "Judging Procedures" – on page 19 for a more detailed explanation.) Because of this, not everyone will have a specific score or ranking. Additionally, since the Miss Universe Organization recognizes all State Finalists as winners, they do not allow any of the judges' scoring or information to be released.

Q: Will I have the opportunity to ask more questions?

A: Yes. We will be holding a pre-pageant seminar on Saturday, September 24, 2011, for all contestants where we will go over the pageant weekend in detail and will be able to answer other questions you may have at that time. There is no cost to attend and while this seminar is not mandatory, we suggest that every contestant try and be there; much will be reviewed. More details including the time of this seminar will be announced later, but typically the afternoon session is for the Teen contestants, and the evening session is for the Miss contestants. You will receive notice of all details in the mail in plenty of time.

Q: I have left a message with Pageant Headquarters; why has no one gotten back to me?

A: We try to return all calls by the next business day. Sometimes our phones experience heavy call volume and it is hard to return all calls immediately. Please do not leave repeated messages. We suggest that you call back until you speak with a pageant staff member or to get a quick question answered, the best way is through e-mail.

Additional questions not answered here?

Call 401-228-7019 or E-mail us at MissMarylandUSA@msn.com

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