

## More Than Just A Pageant Beauty

Written by Sara David

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**Mai-Lea started in pageants in her hometown in Toronto, Canada. Now as a mother of three, full of smiles and energy she is preparing herself for Ms. America in April.**



"Pageantry started later in life for me, I started in the teen category when I was in college. I started with Ms. Teen Toronto and I won it, so I went on for Ms. Teen Canada which I did not win that but I thought, it's ok."

From there, Mai-Lea went on and started cheering in high school and college. Her time was spent mostly with cheer along with student government.

When 2007 hit there was a Mrs. World Canada competition and Mae-Lea decided to try pageantry once more and won!

"So then I went on to Mrs. World in Russia and stayed there for three weeks with the pageant. In the end I placed in the top ten."

The winter cold in Russia did not slow her down Mai-Lea said they got to do some amazing things, considering they were there for a short three weeks.

"We ended up promoting the 2014 Olympics in Sochi. And for almost two weeks straight we did like a mini-Olympics and competed against each other which was a lot of fun." Sochi, Russia ended up winning the spot for the 2014 Olympics.

As for Mai-Lea now, she takes advantage of her title and sash and does everything in her power to be an advocate and public speaker for preventing domestic violence.

"I experienced domestic violence for 12 years of my life and with my title, more and more organizations are allowing me to help out."

In advising young girls, Mai-Lea said, "I've seen many girls who have met the wrong person who end up being very controlling. And after some time those girls no longer have a dream. Don't lose who you are. You're going to meet boys along your journey in life but be sure to know that person 100%."

"Follow what's important to you and that special someone will be there along the way. Also, speaking from experience, follow the hard road now and eventually you will smooth sail later on in life."



*Photos courtesy of Mai-Lea*

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