

Meet the Face of Foothills 2019

Written by BU MELISSA LARSEN PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHAD JOHANNSON, SHOT AT THE BREXLEY. HAIR AND MAKEUP BY ALLISON PYNN. STYLING BY MELODY SANCHEZ.

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After 120 days of competition, casting calls and rounds of online voting, AZFoothills.com's ninth-annual model search concluded with four special young women receiving the designation of Face of Foothills over 500 other entrants (there was even a tie for the main title!) Here, get to know the Face of Foothills winners, and, as their dreams come true, they offer words of wisdom for other girls who have a wish for the future.

Face of Foothills: Laura Helton, 21, Peoria

@laurahelton

Why did you decide to pursue modeling? After overcoming many obstacles to where I am now, my goal was to model in attempt to gain a platform and use as an outlet of expression. Mental illness is probably one of the most misunderstood, stigmatized and complex things out there. I want to be a lighthouse and that is why I want to pursue modeling. Changing the mental illness stigma, showing transparency and connection as a human to people all over is the literal reason why I began to model in the first place.

What experiences do you hope to have as a model? Traveling. I want to have more cultural experiences and find myself in the cities and people I meet. I cannot wait to meet more creative people. I hope to grow more and more by the challenges modeling brings. I enjoy overcoming my fear of vulnerability and pushing my inner-self in front of the camera.

Which models do you look up to? Josephine Skriver, Meghan Roche and Cara Delevingne. Super approachable, unassuming, down to earth and funny.

What are your hopes for the future? I really hope that whatever I'm doing is helping others and fulfilling my soul. I hope I create a platform that gives me a voice and ultimate opportunity and freedom to speak and write on the behalf of my purpose of mental health.

What advice do you have for young girls who want to pursue their dreams? It all starts with you. Any mountain in front of you represents something great. Reflect to your purpose and find a reason to climb, not a reason to stay still and dwell in its stagnant nature. Mountains don't move; you do.

Face of Foothills: Mel Rodriguez, 28, Scottsdale

@MELALICIA

Why did you decide to pursue modeling? Growing up I've always been super photogenic, and I had a passion for photography. This passion turned into modeling, and it simply made me happy. Expressing myself through images has been an adventure. I've continued to pursue modeling because I love everything about it: meeting new faces, traveling, projects, the makeup and glamour and capturing that perfect photo.

How would you describe your style? I'm a mixture of multiple different styles: edgy/rocker, tomboy, elegant, trendy, sporty and glamour.

Which models do you look up to? Adriana Lima and Ashley Graham.

What do you do in your free time? I love the outdoors, and I'm a little bit of an adrenaline junkie so you can easily catch me hiking, snowboarding, biking or skydiving. I love to travel and experience new places and people. Fitness and sports are a lifestyle for me, and I enjoy doing that during my free time as well.

What advice do you have for young girls who want to pursue their dreams? Never give up. Your goals and dreams should scare you a little but excite you a lot!

Teen Face of Foothills: Sydnee DiMascio, 18, Scottsdale

@sydneedimascio

Why did you decide to pursue modeling? Since I was very little, I have always wanted to pursue modeling but until recently haven't had the opportunity or confidence. Now that I'm older, I feel I would regret it if I didn't go for my dream.

What experiences do you hope to have as a model? In the future, I hope to walk in Phoenix Fashion Week and New York Fashion Week. My biggest aspiration is to walk in the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show as a Victoria's Secret Angel.

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How would you describe your style? My style is very unique and eclectic. I absolutely love different styles, although my favorites are modern, sophisticated and girly.

What advice do you have for young girls who want to pursue their dreams? Go for it! I always say that modeling is my dream but never went for it. Now that I have, I am over the moon. Even if it doesn't work out, at least you have no regrets and know that you gave it your best shot.

Junior Face of Foothills: Tenley Elysse Anthony, 6, Scottsdale

@tenley_dancer

Why did you decide to pursue modeling? My mom initially pursued modeling with me after several friends and dance instructors recommend that she do so. So, we tried it out and, after a few jobs and several photoshoots, I was hooked and absolutely loved doing it!

What experiences do you hope to have as a model? I'd love to model someday for a major dancewear or activewear company.

How would you describe your style? Super varied! I absolutely love looking glam and sparkly some days; other days, I prefer a laidback swag/street style. I also love to incorporate dancewear pieces into my outfits.

Which models do you look up to? My No. 1 right now is Jenna Dewan. I can totally relate to her because she, first and foremost, is a dancer. She is so talented and has been blessed to be able to use her talents in movies and on TV and now modeling for and designing for Danskin dancewear. She is #goals, for sure!

What advice do you have for young girls who want to pursue their dreams? Don't quit doing what you love because of your friends. I see this all the time, and I hope that I can be strong enough and disciplined enough to stay my course rather than to do something just because my friends are doing it. Do you! And be willing to work hard for what