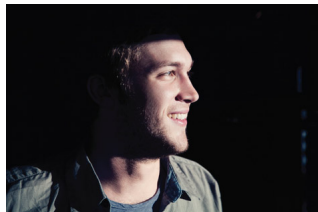


Get to Know Phillip Phillips

Written by Elizabeth Liberatore

At The Outlets at Anthem presented their Eleventh Annual Lighting of America's Tallest Fresh-Cut Christmas Tree this winter, AZFootHills.com got to know the most recent "American Idol" winner, Phillip Phillips.



With a record of 132 million votes, Americans crowned Phillips as their newest idol on May 23, 2012. The sweet and soft spoken 22-year old could not and still cannot grasp his record-breaking victory. "I didn't think I stood a chance against Jessica [Sanchez]. [When my name was called] I had no idea what was going on. I didn't even know what to play as the closing song. All I wanted to do was sit down and just breathe," Phillips explains.

Prior to his Idol days, Phillips did everything a typical 20-year old at the time would do. He grew up in the small town of Leesburg, Georgia, attended school at Albany Technical College and ate some of his all-time favorite foods like chicken and chips and salsa. "I am a big time foodie. I figure since we all are going to die one day, we might as well die with a happy stomach," he laughs.

While working at his family's pawn shop, hanging out with friends and his girlfriend (sorry, ladies) and attending school were Phillips' main priorities, music would eventually enter this young man's life. "Everyone in my family sings and plays an instrument. Music just runs in our blood." Phillips first picked up a guitar at 14-years-old and began singing and songwriting by 18—only three years prior to auditioning for "American Idol."



Fans of Phillips can thank season 10 contestant, Casey Abrams, for giving the musician the incentive to try out. "'American Idol' was always more of a poppy show, which is why I never cared for it until Casey Abrams joined." Similar to Phillips' preferred genre of music, Abrams brought a lot of jazz and old-school rock to "American Idol". "He is a great musician and [I appreciated] the different melodies he brought to the show," he continues, "Casey was a huge reason I thought to audition in the first place."

Over a year ago, Phillips was singing and strumming some tunes in his Georgia home. Now, his coronation song, "Home," has sold more than 4 million copies and was featured in NBC's coverage of the Olympics, various commercials, film trailers and TV shows. Additionally, Phillips released his debut album, *The World from the Side of the Moon*. The album caters to all things eclectic; from funk to jazz and some acoustic songs. "I artistically challenged myself both musically and lyrically with this album. I hope I achieved something successful for my fans' to enjoy." Phillips sure did achieve his goal since the album was an instant hit. It debuted at No. 4 in the Billboard 200 with sales of 169,000 copies. When asked about his instant success, Phillips looked nothing short of truly flabbergasted and thankful. "It's crazy. I'm so glad that people enjoy [my music]. Overall, it's just an amazing feeling."



So what would Phillips be doing if it weren't music? His sweet and sincere personality make him the perfect candidate to work with children. Whether it is teaching music or helping kids with school work, Phillips would love to be some type of assistant teacher in a classroom. "I am kind of awkward with people my age and tend to get along better with younger kids. Kids just want to have fun and so do I—I guess I'm still a little kid at heart in that respect," Phillip admits.

Phillips has achieved many triumphs within his 22 years and fans can expect many more as his time in the music industry progresses. Many musicians today focus more on their flawless facade rather than their lyrics. Phillips is anything but your typical record-signed artist. His real life

Get to Know Phillip Phillips

Written by Elizabeth Liberatore

experiences and southern charm are poured into every ounce of writing and performing he does. His biggest piece of advice to aspiring musicians is to just go for it. "Know what artist you want to be and stick to that. Do not give in to what other people want to make you. Be you always."

For additional information visit: <http://www.phillipphillips.com/>.

Three fun facts about Phillip Phillips:

What artist/band gives you inspiration? "There is a lot. Tool, Eric Clapton, Mumford & Sons and so many more."

What's a fun fact about yourself that many don't know? "I have a mole in my eye."

What are you looking forward to most as this journey of yours begins? "Keep music out there and keep writing music. Tour, live life as much as possible."