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Title: Miss Hawaii's Outstanding Teen

Body Positivity

According to Dosomething.org, only 5% of women naturally possess the body type often portrayed by Americans in the media. With young people glued to social and mass media, the “perfect” celebrities we constantly see have resulted in unrealistic expectations of beauty. My social impact initiative is about cultivating a culture of body positivity. Body positivity is more than just embracing your body shape. It also includes the acceptance of all physical features like skin color, skin texture, body markings or hair types. Beauty should never be validated by the number of likes, comments, or followers. I want to teach inner confidence and celebrate our “imperfections” that make each person uniquely beautiful!

The pressure to be perfect has had a negative effect on young people that include low self-esteem, mental health issues and worse, self-harm. According to a 2020 study by the non-profit site Common Sense Media, up to 50 percent of first and second graders already do not like some aspect of their body. I am fortunate to have a family who always told me how beautiful I am, and I believe it! Nonetheless, I am still human and have days when I feel low because of a zit, a bad hair day, or feel bloated. Body positivity is a mindset and a lifestyle. Just like a sport or craft, to be successful requires consistent effort, education, and awareness.

As Miss America's Outstanding Teen, I first plan to increase the idea of a body positive culture through social media. Let's be honest, to hit my target audience requires a bit of social media time for me too! Filters and staged photos are cute, but I currently use my Instagram to show what teens typically *don't* see; the process, the imperfections, the rejections, and the bad days. With my silly personality and experience in media arts, I showcase realistic beauty and entertaining ways that I deal with insecurity - positive affirmations, meditations with my crystals, laughing, journaling or even just talking my feelings out loud.

Secondly, my nine-year passion for dance has been an effective tool for spreading body positivity. Being a dancer helped me gain confidence while performing, and over time that self-confidence carried into my everyday life. Being a dance choreographer since the age of twelve, I now inspire others to use dance for self-discovery and body confidence too! Before the pandemic, I created a summer school tour and taught free dance workshops to elementary age kids. My teaching centered around having fun, exploring movement, and owning the bodies we are blessed with. I look forward to kickstarting a live tour again as Miss America's Outstanding Teen and continuing to teach online dance classes that has potential to reach a worldwide audience. Over the pandemic, my online dance classes have been performed by students all around the world. I feel so grateful that my dance moves make people happy.

Lastly and importantly, I want to partner with major companies, executives, and c-suite leaders. Support from mainstream and corporate America is necessary to help fix the unrealistic beauty standard they created for decades in ads and media. With open conversations, training programs and heightened awareness, it will increase diversity, female leadership, and a body positive culture in the corporate world. For the next generation, seeing is believing. Companies have a responsibility to show a wide range of representation to give our youth hope to succeed!

As a passionate minority female leader and the next Miss America's Outstanding Teen, I am excited to further my message of Body Positivity during my year of service. I promise to be transparent in my personal journey so all people can relate and practice self-confidence together. RuPaul, says it best, “If you can't love yourself, how you gonna love somebody else?! Can I get an amen up in here?” Amen!



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Signature/Date