

A long relationship

TROY, America's Junior Miss program enjoy fruitful partnership

The relationship between Troy University and the America's Junior Miss scholarship program is a natural one.

The relationship, which dates back to the late-1970s, pairs a successful institution of higher learning looking to recruit the best and brightest students with a program that attracts the best and brightest young women.

Brenda Campbell, director of graduate admissions, said the thrust of the America's Junior Miss program is providing scholarship opportunities to young women and that is where the University enters the equation.

"The students who are former junior miss title holders who come to TROY tend to become some of our most involved students," Campbell said. "Not only are they intelligent and talented, but they also become leaders. The last two winners of the Freshman of the Year award (Mary King and Aderonke Olaleye) have been former state junior miss winners."

Four former state junior miss title holders are currently enrolled at TROY: Mary King of Connecticut; Andrea Roberts, Iowa; Aderonke Olaleye, Maryland; and Alicia Westmoreland, Nevada.

Through the years, TROY has been a temporary home to many state junior misses and they all agree there time here was a wonderful experience.

"I consider my time in Troy and at the University as some of the best times of my life," said Dotty Jo Brown-Davis, Georgia's Junior Miss 1984. "Thanks to the America's Junior Miss program and then-Gov. George Wallace, I was able to graduate from an incredible University with little or no financial stress on my family in Valdosta, GA. It didn't hurt that I met my husband, Robby Davis, at TROY either. That marriage has lasted almost 20 years."

Mary Kim Elkins Johnson, Ohio's Junior Miss in 1987, said she was proud that the University is such an active supporter of the Junior Miss program.

"The support Troy University has shown over the years by providing full scholarships to the state Junior Miss winners is invaluable," said Johnson, who earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from TROY before earning her law degree from Capital University Law School in Columbus, Ohio. "The education I received from TROY through the scholarship program was invaluable. It provided me a spring board to obtain my law degree, which enabled me to reach my current career goals. TROY's support of the program continues to be important for the young women participating in the program. It provided me with great opportunities, and I wish the same for other young women aspiring for successful, fulfilling careers."



Troy University currently has four former state junior misses among its student body. From left to right are: Aderonke Olaleye, former Maryland Junior Miss; Andrea Roberts, former Iowa Junior Miss; and Alicia Westmoreland, Nevada's Junior Miss. Not pictured is Mary King, former Connecticut Junior Miss.

Today, Johnson lives in Cleveland, OH, and serves as director of Fluid Power Tax Strategy for Eaton Corporation.

Jennifer Martin Bernheim, a former Rhode Island Junior Miss, still considers the opportunity to come to TROY a life-changing experience.

"Winning the Rhode Island Junior Miss program and taking advantage of the full four-year scholarship offered by Troy University changed my life," said Bernheim, who now makes her home in Branford, CT, with her husband Eric and teaches public relations courses at Quinnipiac University. "While studying at TROY, I did realize how fortunate I was to attend on scholarship; yet years later, I know better how truly blessed I was to have such an amazing experience, academically and socially. I promote Troy University and the Junior Miss program frequently and always look for ways to give back to both organizations to demonstrate my appreciation."