



MISS AMERICA'S
Outstanding Teen

Taylor Fitch

A life-changing moment occurred when 17-year-old **Taylor Fitch** heard her name called as **Miss America's Outstanding Teen 2009**. The "little sister" to the Miss America Scholarship Organization, this not-for-profit program has made available more than \$2 million in college scholarships nationally to young women from 13 to 17 years of age. The title has given Taylor a nationwide vehicle to promote causes that are important to her. This year, Taylor will travel the country not only representing the organization, but her platform "**Overcoming Physical Challenges: Heart, Mind and Hands.**"

Inspired by her mother's career as a Pediatric Physical Therapist, Taylor wanted to get involved with helping children with special needs. Taylor believes "**that every child has a dream and aspirations no matter their physical state but unfortunately, in today's society, this utopian idea is not often tangible**", said Taylor so she works to speak out and speak up about special needs children, emphasizing their assets to society. Merging three key factors to achieving ultimate success, Taylor encourages society to love these children (Heart); to believe in them and their capabilities (Mind); and to personally become involved in their lives (Hands).

Combining her love for running and community service, Taylor has encouraged numerous 5K race organizers to allow children with special needs to be included as race participants. She's developed **Taylor's Team** and invites all to join in the fun!

Representing the state of South Carolina, Taylor Fitch won more than \$30,000 in college scholarships at the MAOT Competition in August 2008. She also received the academic award earning her additional scholarships. She plans to pursue a degree in forensic pathology upon completing high school in 2009. She's already taken a step in the right direction by participating in school science fairs. In May 2008, Taylor competed against 1,500 students from 51 different countries in the Intel International Science fair with her project "Aim to Write", focusing on the correlation of hand-eye coordination and handwriting skills. She placed fourth in the Behavioral and Social Sciences category.

Currently a senior in high school, Taylor is very involved in her school and community. She is a member of her high-school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes Leadership Team, Junior Civitans, National Honor Society, Senior Beta Club, Peer Assisted Learning Tutoring program, Student Council, Junior Leadership of Anderson, and the Senior Competitive Team at Dancer's Edge. Taylor has been dancing since she was three years old.

You can learn more about Taylor at www.maoteen.org.

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