Vancouver woman headed for Miss America pageant

Jacquie Brown’s mother lives in Yacolt

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Publisher Emeritus

Jacquie Brown, who attended eight schools in nine years in the Vancouver and Evergreen school districts, will compete for the coveted title of Miss America Sat., Jan. 15, in a program televised from Las Vegas, NV.

Brown, who won the title of Miss Greater Vancouver in an October 2009 pageant, makes no secret of the instability that complicated her teen years. In fact, it’s an important part of her quest for Miss America celebrity.

Brown, 22, is the daughter of Judy Ford who now lives in Yacolt. She only met her biological father, Richard Heine, earlier this year even though he lives in Vancouver. Brown says she was the product of a “one night stand” when her mother was 18 years old. Her father was never part of her life.

Shortly after Brown was born, her mother met David Jacobus and the two were together until splitting up in 1996. Even though Judy and David never married, they had a son together. Brown calls David Jacobus “Dad.”

At age 16, Brown moved out of her mother’s home and has been on her own ever since. She got roommates and an apartment and worked as a waitress to pay her bills while continuing in high school. Work cut into her high school activities, but she managed to appear in school musicals. And she was in the honors program. She graduated from Evergreen High School in 2007.

Brown then took a year away from education and worked to save money. In addition to waitressing, she worked as an extra in movies filmed in Portland. While she does not appear in the movie “Management” starring Jennifer Aniston, her car is shown in the film. And she got paid.

Brown then started Clark College while continuing to work. Brown also became interested in pageants.

In 2007, she entered the Miss Clark County/Miss Greater Vancouver pageant, the steppingstone to Miss Washington and Miss America, and came in as third runner-up. She was also named Miss Congeniality in that program.

As a runner-up, Brown qualified for another pageant called the “sweeper” program where

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Brown has set her sights on a career in communications or broadcasting, but has not ruled out trying her hand at singing professionally. Her advice to young people? "Think positively with positive affirmation. Trust in your abilities. You can accomplish goals if you want them bad enough."

Brown believes she can help young people. "They can hear from someone not that much older than they are. They can find it within themselves. They can set goals, smaller goals leading to larger goals."

"I didn’t choose how I grew up," Brown said. "I am devoted to youth mentoring," said Brown. "I would not be where I am today were it not for the people who gave their time to mentor me. I have the responsibility to devote my self to ensuring that children know they can overcome the most immense obstacles. I mentor because of my childhood and I try to inspire them to believe in themselves and that there is hope. My passion is filling children’s lives with kindness, friendship and unending support. I feel blessed to be a part of children’s lives and to witness their growth."

Brown believes that positive role models provide guidance and tools to change lives. "It is important to encourage the youth in our community to be confident, make healthy choices and pursue their ambitions," she said.

In addition to her mother, father and step-father, Brown has other relatives living in Clark County, including grandmother Barbara Brown of Vancouver; uncle and aunt Becky and Robert Turner of Vancouver; great uncle and great-aunt Byron and Lila Jacobson, also of Vancouver. Vancouver resident Lois Elaine Smith-Zoll serves as Scholarship Development Director for the Miss Washington organization. She has been with the Miss Washington and Miss America organization for 45 years.

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