



**Cassandra
Orefice**

Miss Clark County
Outstanding Teen
participates in
pageant today

Battle Ground teen competes in state pageant

By **MIKE BAILEY**
Columbian staff writer

Battle Ground's Cassandra Orefice will compete in the Miss Washington Outstanding Teen Pageant this weekend in Auburn with a personal goal of a top-five finish.

Along with meeting her personal goal, the 16-year-old is feeling some pressure to win. If she does, it would be the third

time in five years a representative from Clark County has captured the state crown.

Past winners include last year's Miss Clark County Outstanding Teen Genay Tucker of Vancouver.

Orefice, who was crowned Miss Clark County Outstanding Teen 2008 in April, joins 13 other contestants, ages 13 to 17, at the pageant today and Sunday at the Auburn Performing Arts Center.

The winner will be crowned Sunday at the conclusion of the finals that begin at 8 p.m.

The winner advances to the national Miss America Outstanding Teen Pageant Aug. 12 through 16 in Orlando, Fla.

Orefice was a novice of the pageant system when she signed up to compete for Miss Clark County Outstanding Teen.

"The night before auditions for

the pageant, a friend came over to the house who was going to audition," Orefice said. "She talked me into doing it, too. We came up with a dance routine real fast that night."

Now with a title in hand, Orefice has refined her talent.

"I've had a lot more time to practice this time," she said.

She'll dance a lyrical ballet to Natasha Bedingfield's "Un-

written" in the competition this weekend. Her platform is expanding a Clark County youth support group statewide.

Orefice, a home-schooled sophomore, will enter the Running Start program at Clark College next year.

MIKE BAILEY can be reached at
mike.bailey@columbian.com
or 360-735-4510.