



# STUDENT LIFE

Mariah Schiaretti, page designer

## Not just another pretty face: Miss Hawai'i contestant lives to help others

By Mariah Schiaretti,  
staff writer

She has beauty and brains, plus the drive to compete with 30 other beauty queens in the 2010 Miss Hawai'i Scholarship Pageant next June. Jalee Kate Fuselier, senior international relations major, was first runner up in the 2009 Miss Hawai'i Competition and gained so much from it that, she said, she wants to do it again.

"The whole experience was a lot of fun," Fuselier explained, "but it's definitely a growing experience too." She added, that the application process is long but well worth it, including a 10-minute interview with a panel of judges, a platform essay, and submission of a polished resume exemplifying academic and community experience.

"I know it's helping me with my future career and public speaking engagements," she said.

The Miss Hawai'i Organization Scholarship Pageant offers more than \$500,000 in cash scholarships and tuition grants to contestants in the state. Nearly 150 women compete in 19 local pageants



(Top) Senior Jalee Kate Fuselier will compete for the crown in the 2010 Miss Hawai'i Organization Scholarship Pageant. (Below) Fuselier in Africa.

that lead to the Miss Hawai'i Competition, the official preliminary to the prestigious Miss America Pageant.

The basis of the Miss Hawai'i Organization is community service. In the 2009 pageant, Fuselier won the Academic Award, the Miracle Maker Award from the Children's Miracle Network for which she raised \$4,000, and the swimsuit preliminary.

Community service is not new for Fuselier. In fact, she looks at it as a way of life. At 14 she raised enough money to go with her church to Europe

to help the less fortunate. Fascinated with making a difference in people's lives, Fuselier fundraised every year so she could travel and volunteer overseas every summer.

In addition to her mission trips, Fuselier traveled with the Up With People program while studying at HPU and studied abroad in France last fall. By the time she turned 21, the young philanthropist had been to 21 different countries, had raised about \$35,000 for community service projects, and is already working on her next project for the 2010 pageant.

Fuselier's Miss Hawai'i platform is called "Ready for the Real World," a program by America's Promise, a national organization started by Colin Powell that works towards giving young people opportunities such as a good education, mentorships, and a chance to serve in their communities.

Fuselier is working on a program that will teach teens about how to manage and save their money. Called the Financial Literacy Awards, it gives teens a savings bond as a reward for essays they write on

community service. Money for the bonds comes partly from Fuselier's own pocket and is matched by local businesses and community members.

"If we each give a little bit," Fuselier said, "then these kids can watch something grow."

"This program is to help our young people to have the education and resources to invest their money, to know when to save and spend, and what a savings bond is. [These are] practical things that I feel are important to get our young people ready for the real world."

In addition to working on her Miss Hawai'i platform, Fuselier mentors elementary school girls once a week in an after school program called Dream Academy, at Haleiwa Elementary school. Fuselier started the mentorship program five years ago with the help of community members. The girls get together to learn and practice for arts and crafts and put on talent shows together.

"It's a great way for them to have an older kid or an older role model to look up to," Fuselier said. "We're seeing girls who

were in first grade when the program started, and now they're mentors, so it's great to see these girls grow up to help others."

Fuselier admits that she doesn't spend too much time thinking about how she could win the crown in 2010. "Just everyday life helps me in preparation for Miss Hawai'i," she said, adding that her education helped her interact with the judges. "Just going to HPU and learning and discussing issues with my professors, working with friends and children in everyday situations, gives me opportunities to incorporate everything I've learned. My practice is in my everyday life, and when I have that mind set, preparing for the competition is less stressful and more fun."

Fuselier recently won the



Web photo

title of Miss North Shore and will be competing for the Miss Hawaii title in June 2010. "This is a goal I've had for a few years now. After being Miss Hawai'i Outstanding Teen 2005, I saw how much more of an impact I could make with a title like that, the credibility that comes with it," she said.

"I feel like I have something to share and I want people to listen. I want our young people to see how important it is that they be ready for the real world, that they pursue their dreams, and a higher education. Just going for things that they believe in."

Fuselier added: "Having the title of Miss Hawai'i will broaden my reach and make all the things that I have done even bigger."