

# **East Alton's MaKenzie Cheyene Garland is set to take part in MISS TEEN USA® STATE PAGEANT**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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EAST ALTON - An East Alton-Wood River sophomore student has her eyes set on a run in the MISS USA®/MISS TEEN USA® STATE PAGEANT.

MaKenzie Cheyene Garland, daughter of Garry and Kassie Garland, has been selected to participate in the state pageant set for Sept. 1-4 in Normal at the Braden Auditorium.

The contest contests of active wear or swimsuit, evening gown, and personal interview. The pageant has two age divisions, and the winners will represent our state in the 2019 MISS USA® and MISS TEEN USA® Pageant. MISS USA goes on to compete in the MISS UNIVERSE® Pageant. The MISS USA Pageant system stresses good morals, physical fitness, communication skills, social awareness and community involvement.

MaKenzie is currently a sophomore at East Alton/Wood River High School where she hopes to become an orthodontist after her college education. MaKenzie is active in her community through her volunteer work and has recently started collecting items to continue helping the homeless in our area as the cold winter months come closer. She said she hopes to make at least 500 of the “Community Cares” bags to hand out.

MaKenzie said everyone in the world matters and any of us could be in the same position at any time.

“Loss of a job, unexpected expenses, illness, or even a house fire is all it would take and a lot of us would be right there too,” she said. “So many people barely make enough to pay the bills each month, so maybe rental insurance wasn’t an option for someone. If they were to experience a fire it would leave them with absolutely nothing and nowhere to go. No one should have to live on the streets and I wish I could give them a place to go, but for now I’m at least going to try and make them smile, even if only for a second.”

MaKenzie hopes to at least, give some hope so they know that people do understand and they care. This is a start she says but eventually she would like to see more done to help these people get back on their feet.

MaKenzie said she plans to take them around with her mom and brothers to places the homeless are known to frequent during the day and if she can get enough together, she was hoping to give each of the area police officers a box of these bags to keep in their patrol cars and hand out when they see someone in need.

If anyone would like to help support Makenzie you can:

1) Go to the Miss IL USA platforms website at

<http://www.warriorsforross> and vote for MaKenzie Garland/Miss Madison County to help push her through to the top 15 at Labor Day weekend's State Pageant! Warriors for Ross is a organization that collects toys and other items for children staying long-term in hospitals.

Or

2) If you'd like to donate to MaKenzie's "Community Cares" bags you can message her Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/we.love.makenzie.garland/>

**Items being collected for the Community Cares program are:**

- Socks
- Ziplock bags
- Granola bars
- Nutrigrain bars
- Snack packs of chips/cookies etc.
- Kleenex
- Girly Bathroom Products
- Hot Hands/Hot Feet/Hot Body
- Lighter
- Pop-top cans of soup
- Plastic-ware
- Moist Towelettes
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Toilet paper
- Travel size toiletries
- Gloves
- Hats
- Ear muffs
- Tylenol
- Mini 1st aid kits
- Soap
- Razors
- Nail clippers
- Book bags
- Solar rescue blankets
- Deodorant
- Small water bottles

- Chapstick
- Laundry detergent (travel size)
- Instant oatmeal
- Garbage bags (to stay dry from ground)
- Ponchos
- Reusable microwave heat pads
- Single serve pudding/fruit/applesauce/etc.
- Just add water foods...i.e....mac-n-cheese, hamburger helper micro packs etc.

Makenzie Garland can be reached through her FB page or through her mother at 618-767-0782