



Southwestern Middle School Teacher Crowned Mrs. Educator 2023

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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PIASA/ST. LOUIS - Southwestern School District teacher Andrea Moore has been crowned Mrs. Educator 2023.

The Miss American Diamonds 3rd Annual First Responders & Educators Pageant invited teachers, police officers, firefighters, paramedics, EMTs and nurses from across the nation to compete for the crown on July 14 in St. Louis. Moore, who teaches English at Southwestern Middle School, took first in the educators' portion and third in the talent competition. She plans to spend the prize money on supplies for her classroom.





“It was just all about making us feel important and like we are meaningful in our jobs,” Moore said. “It was a neat pageant, but what was really cool about it was it was Christian-based, which was awesome. They just had a really unique way of honoring workers, so I really felt like, win or lose, that we were all there to be honored.”

Contestants competed in four categories, with an introduction, interview, on-stage question and elegant wear. Moore also participated in the optional talent competition and placed third. She worked with her daughter to choreograph a dance to Cyndi Lauper’s “Girls Just Want to Have Fun.”

The pageant was held at the [ZACK](#) arts facility in St. Louis. Other winners were Casey Hessler (Emergency Medical Service), Jennifer Lee Ann Howard (Healthcare) and Kristle X (Law Enforcement). First responders in the audience, including Moore’s husband, were honored with a pin.

Moore encourages other educators to get involved in the pageant next year. She also noted her appreciation for Barbara James, the pageant’s director, and James’s work to honor the contestants.

“She does such a phenomenal job at organizing it and really focusing on, it’s a pageant, but we’re honoring you today and we’re grateful for your service and what you do for your schools and your communities,” Moore explained.

That being said, Moore is excited to share her win with students. When students learn about her experiences in pageants, she explains to them that these contests go beyond physical beauty, an idea that seems to resonate with many of her middle schoolers.

“It’s not just about beauty. It’s about the person inside and the drive to do it and get out there and be your best self,” she said. “It’s helped me stay fit. It’s given me something to do outside of the classroom to be my best self. So I kind of explain that to them. There’s more than just getting on stage and looking pretty.”

In her free time, Moore has been writing grants to bring more technology into her classroom. She’ll likely use the pageant’s prize money to buy a few 3D pens for her students to try out. She added that she just put in her five-year retirement notice, so the Mrs. Educator 2023 title feels even more poignant.

“It’s going to be really hard to top this pageant,” Moore said. “Pageants are a hobby to me...It’s just something fun I do on the side. I try not to take it too seriously. But this one really touched my heart a lot when I won this title.”

For more information on the Miss American Diamonds Annual First Responders & Educators Pageant, including how to get involved, you can visit their [official website](#) or [Facebook page](#).