

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISS ILLINOIS 2009 RETURNS TO ALMA MATER

Current reigning Miss Illinois Erin O'Connor, a 2006 graduate of Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School, returned to her alma mater on Monday, October 12 to speak at the school's Character Counts! assembly and visit with former teachers and students.

Mother McAuley adopted the Character Counts! Program last year as a uniform way to promote good judgment and ethical living. Character Counts! is a national character education movement designed by the Josephson Institute that integrates six pillars of character into the existing curriculum. The six pillars are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The Miss Illinois Scholarship Program is an advocate for the Character Counts! Program and Erin often visits schools to speak on the attributes of the program. The assembly was sponsored by McAuley's student council and included music, skits and testimonies about the six pillars of character.

During the assembly, Miss Illinois also spoke about her personal platform, Skin Cancer Prevention, to the more than 1500 students in attendance. Erin has devoted herself to promoting the dangers of skin cancer since her mother's death from Melanoma in 2007 and works as an advocate for the American Cancer Society.



Miss Illinois Erin O'Connor with Dr. Christine Melone, President/principal

After the assembly, Erin spent the day visiting with her former teachers and sitting in on many of the classes she took as a student. Erin also joined the A Cappella Choir's rehearsal since she was a member of the choir while at McAuley.

Erin will be competing in the Miss America Pageant in Las Vegas on January 30, 2010.



(Left to right) Junior Hannah Gibbs of Evergreen Park, Emily Rahman of Beverly, Miss Illinois Erin O'Connor and Diane Haberkorn of Oak Lawn during Erin's visit to Mother McAuley.



Miss Illinois Erin O'Connor (center) visits with McAuley students in the Theatre I Seminar class. Erin took several theatre classes and performed in many of the school shows while she was a student at Mother McAuley.