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Fwd: AIRSS Announces Partnership With Miss Illinois Organization

1 message

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>
To: Nicole Blodgett <nblodgett@panaschools.com>

Fri, Sep 13, 2019 at 8:17 AM

September Board Meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools** <execdir@airssedu.org>

Date: Thu, Aug 29, 2019 at 6:30 PM

Subject: AIRSS Announces Partnership With Miss Illinois Organization

To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>

ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS

COMMITTED TO THE RURAL ADVANTAGE

Miss Illinois
*Ariel Beverly*AIRSS Announces
Partnership With Miss
Illinois Organization

MACOMB -- Miss Illinois 2019 Ariel Beverly and the Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools have joined forces to advocate for increased access to arts and general education in Illinois schools.

Miss Beverly began her reign as Miss Illinois after being crowned in June at the state competition in Marion. Beverly, who grew up in East Moline, is a former high school art teacher who recognizes the important role that arts education plays in young people's success. The overarching goal of her reign as Miss Illinois is to have at least one arts education teacher in every school.

With that goal in mind, Beverly and the Association of Illinois Rural and Small

Schools (AIRSS) will be working in tandem to raise awareness of the needs of rural schools across the state. As the only statewide organization focused on promoting and enhancing education in rural and small schools, AIRSS gives identity, voice and recognition to schools and communities from every part of Illinois.

"It's a great opportunity for both of us," says David Ardrey, executive director of AIRSS, about the partnership. "Ariel will be able to raise visibility for her arts in education platform, and it will help us raise awareness of our focus on all issues facing rural schools."

Miss Illinois's goal to increase arts in education throughout the state fits well with the goals of AIRSS, Ardrey says. "Rural schools have less access to all education; not just the arts, but upper level math, science and foreign language."

There are more than 500 school districts in Illinois represented by AIRSS, Ardrey says. Of the 102 counties in the state, 101 have at least one rural district, as defined by federal and state guidelines (Cook County being the only one without).

AIRSS is a passionate advocate for rural schools and furthermore the rural way of life. "We fight the sometimes negative image of rural people being from the sticks," Ardrey says.

In noting that all but one of Illinois' counties has a rural district, Ardrey argues against any perception that this is "just a downstate problem. It is not, there are rural schools statewide." Just under half a million students in Illinois attend a rural school, he says. "This partnership gives us the opportunity to connect with Ariel and what she's doing," he added, regarding Beverly's arts in education platform. "It's a natural fit."

This matchup is poised to increase awareness of the need for Illinois to provide students access to comprehensive educational programs. Beverly is launching a tour across the state in September to visit with school and political leaders and to participate in events at schools and local festivals. She is challenging Illinois state classrooms to compete for an opportunity to win \$1,000 in art supplies by creating their own works of art.

During her #IncludeTheArts tour, Beverly will be distributing thousands of blank postcards for students to create their own masterpiece. AIRSS will facilitate the distribution of these postcards to the more than 500 rural school

districts in Illinois.

Beverly plans to personally deliver the cards to Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker at the end of National Arts in Education Week which runs September 8th through 14th. This campaign intends to spark a discussion about the importance of art education in schools as well as the positive impact it has on young people.

Also, at that time she will announce the classroom with the winning submission. The winning classroom will receive a \$1,000 grant to be used for art education supplies. Beverly hopes to make this an annual event.

For further information about the AIRSS organization, contact David Ardrey at execdir@airssedu.org.

To contact the Miss Illinois organization to help arrange an event or for further information, visit includethearts.com, or www.illinois.org. Follow her on Facebook (Miss Illinois), Twitter (@MissAmericaIL), and Instagram (@MissAmericaIL)



ASSOCIATION OF
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SMALL SCHOOLS

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Our mailing address is:

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9/17/2019

Pana Community Unit School District #8 Mail - Fwd: AIRSS Announces Partnership With Miss Illinois Organization

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