

## Kate Marie Grinold

### This Miss America Hopeful Hails from the Hill

BY MICHAELA DOYLE



Kate Grinold at a Children's Miracle Network fundraiser

For a small subset of young women, pageantry is a way of life. They compete in beauty pageants for years with the ultimate goal of becoming Miss America, the beacon of pageantry. The coveted title holds significance as a testament to years of hard work and perseverance, not only on the beauty pageant circuit, but in all aspects of a well-rounded and productive life. In the first Miss America pageant in 1921, Miss Washington, DC won the crown. Kate Marie Grinold, 23, hopes to follow in her footsteps and bring the crown back to the Hill.

Unlike many of her fellow Miss America hopefuls, Grinold will be representing the District in the 87th annual Miss America contest after only 10 months of pageant experience; "I worked very hard, and just because I didn't grow up competing in pageants doesn't mean my life didn't prepare me for it," she explains. Learning poise, strength and confidence from being a trained ballerina for most of her life, she plans to perform a classical ballet piece for the talent portion of the competition, in addition to competing in the evening wear, swimsuit, and on-stage question categories.

Grinold graduated from George Washington University in May with a degree in International Affairs. Since then, she has been working for Innocents At Risk, a nonprofit organization working to stop the trafficking of women and children. As a result of her work with and strong belief in Innocents at Risk and her support of the Polaris Project, one of the largest anti-trafficking organizations in the US, Grinold chose human trafficking as her Miss America platform. In choosing her platform, she explains, "I thought, what hasn't been addressed? What hasn't been brought to Miss America? What don't people know? What don't people want to talk about?"

Grinold has lived in DC for 10 years. She moved to Capitol Hill with her family when she was young and fell in love with it. After graduating from GW, Grinold couldn't stay away; she moved back onto the same street she grew up on near Eastern Market. She loves the tight-knit community found on the Hill.

In the final weeks leading up to the competition on January 24, Grinold will be working hard to prepare her "mind, body and wardrobe" for the pageant. Due to her rigorous competition preparation schedule, she will not be able to work after December 19, and because of this, she asks that her fellow Capitol Hill residents consider sponsoring her.

*To donate money in support of Grinold's journey to the Miss America competition, visit her blog at [www.kmgmiss-dc2008.blogspot.com](http://www.kmgmiss-dc2008.blogspot.com), and click on the PayPal link in the top right corner. For more information on Grinold, visit [www.kateMGrinold.com](http://www.kateMGrinold.com). The Miss America pageant will air live from Las Vegas on Saturday, Jan. 24 at 8pm on TLC. ★*