



MEDIA CONTACTS: Perse Hooper, perse.hooper@gmail.com, 858-337-6404

Donna Hoyt, donna_infr@hotmail.com, 406-338-7684

www.infr.org

Indian National Finals Rodeo

Ready-for-Release #9 --- MISS INDIAN RODEO

Barrel racer Amanda Kay Not Afraid is about ready to turn in her tiara and climb down from the saddle after representing the Indian National Finals Rodeo as Miss Indian Rodeo in a year-long reign that has taken her to rodeos and pow wows across the Western United States and Canada.

Says the 20-year-old: "I hope I've paved the way for young Crow women (or any Native woman) as a role model. Everywhere I've traveled, little girls have come up to me, in awe that I am Miss Indian Rodeo, and say they want to be just like me when they grow up." Her advice to those who might aspire to follow in her footsteps, "You can achieve your goals if you put your mind to the task."

As the 2014 First Lady of professional Indian rodeo, Amanda Not Afraid (a member of the Whistling Water clan) has combined beauty, talent, and brains to represent the rodeo world in her official capacity. "I am a self-driven Native woman," says the Black Lodge Falls, Montana resident whose ultimate career goal is to work on her reservation or some place in Indian Country in the field of diabetes awareness and prevention. She studied community health at the University of Montana after earning an associate degree in the same field at Little Big Horn Community College.

A life-long cowgirl who learned how to sit in a saddle before her first birthday, her drive and determination were evident in the competition to be named Miss Indian Rodeo. "It was tough," she says. "There were six other competitors in the running and any one of them would have made an excellent INFR rodeo representative. We competed hard for 3 days and people told me I was both consistent and strong throughout the pageant and competitions. Being crowned was a memorable experience that I will always hold close to my heart."

As the official ambassador for the Indian National Finals Rodeo, she will relinquish her crown during this year's week-long competition, November 4-8, at South Point Equestrian Center in Las Vegas. "I'm not sure how I will feel once I pass the crown on to a new Miss Indian Rodeo," she says. "Probably a combination of relief, happiness, and sadness."

She hadn't even considered competing for the title until her aunt initially suggested she try out, an idea that picked up steam within her circle of family and friends. "It became a chorus of encouragement as family members offered their support, so I started practicing and studying the materials, preparing myself for the competition."

Candidates are judged on a point system from personal interviews with pageant judges, a formal speech, an essay on being a positive role model for the INFR, a presentation in traditional tribal regalia, and a demonstration of actual horsemanship. "I didn't win any of the categories, except for the speech part, and the horsemanship winner has frequently taken home the crown, so I was shocked when they announced my name based on a total points system."

Photo: Amanda Kay NotAfraid

