



Local Contestant Platform Statement Instructions

This is your opportunity to explain to the judges what your chosen platform is and why it is important for the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Organization to embrace this platform. In addition, it should explain how your platform will further the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Organization "brand" to the public.

It is important that these instructions are followed, even when using the preformatted page included. Any items incorrectly submitted that do not meet the criteria may be submitted to the judges without an opportunity to correct.

1. Go to the word processing program of your computer.
2. Start a "new" document.
3. Set margins for 1" on all four sides. The font style may not be any smaller than "10" and no larger than "12" point type using the Times New Roman font style.
4. With the justification set for left, type "**Name:**" in bold. Following the colon (:), hit the space bar twice. Then, type your name.
5. Then, move to the next line and type "**Title:**" in bold. Following the colon (:), hit the space bar twice. Then, type your state title.
6. Double space down. Set your justification to "center". Then type in **bold and underline** the title of your Platform.
7. Double space down. Write what you feel is critical for the judge's to know about your platform and why it is necessary for you to have the job of Miss America's Outstanding Teen to promote this issue. What you write will be what the judges know about your platform, your role in successfully dealing with this issue, and the role the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Organization may play in your plan.
8. This essay **may** include some of the following items (this is not to be meant as an exhaustive list):
 - A clear definition of the platform and the specific issues you wish to address
 - A plan on how you have or will create awareness of the platform
 - The way in which you have or will change attitudes regarding the issue
 - The way in which you have or will change behaviors related to this issue
 - The way in which your platform issue will move the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Organization forward
 - Your media plans
 - Your marketing strategy
 - How you propose to fund your ideas/plans
 - Any significant accomplishments you have made in regard to your issue
9. At the bottom of the page, set the justification to the right. Type a line of 26 spaces. Below that line, type Signature/Date and after printing **sign and date the document**. If you forget to sign and date, we will need to return the document to you as it cannot be accepted without your signature. Thank you.

It is important that you sign and date the document as shown in the attached sample prior to submitting

Name:
Title:

(Type Platform Title)

Signature/Date

Name: Deborah Smith

Title: Miss River Valley's Outstanding Teen

Celebrating Inclusivity

It is imperative that our nation face and embrace its cultural diversity. While many people have talked about this issue, I believe that most of them have only paid lip service to the true necessity of what needs to be addressed related to including all the family members at the table. There is a false truth in merely accepting and tolerating cultural diversity. I intend to prove that in order to accept and understand people of other cultures, we must be willing to step out of our own personal cultural comfort zones and identify the origin of their prejudice. I will specifically focus on three areas: Children, Communities, and Businesses.

Currently, the term "Cultural Diversity" is well known in the halls of institutions of higher learner and, perhaps, even in the public school classroom because of the need for educators and learners to be politically correct. But in order for us to make a true change in attitudes and behaviors of Americans, we must move beyond talk and into action and change in public policy.

I plan to continue motivating the media and to partner with the National Conference for Community and Justice. This organization has chapters in every major city in the nation and, in many cases, those chapters have community leaders involved who can, with encouragement and challenging, bring this issue out of hiding and into the public light in each of those communities.

Obviously the media and the NCCJ already exist. However, what is lacking is a lightning rod to draw attention to this issue. This is where I could step into the lead as Miss America's Outstanding Teen. What better role is there for a national titleholder than to be an agent of change in organizing our nation to accept our differences and to create an environment that values each person on individual characteristics rather than on stereotypes or assumptions?

Miss America's Outstanding Teen should not be seen as just another pretty face. Yes, she should be attractive, and yes, she should attract the leaders of the future to pay attention to her. Our country's ethnic make-up is changing rapidly and our citizen's fear of terrorism can explode already existing, but deeply hidden prejudices. I want to be the leader that our country needs to continue tackling this issue.

Signature/Date