

**She's on Path to Be a Top Gun or
Cancer Researcher –
But First She Wins the Miss
America Crown**



Madison Marsh is not only the current Miss Colorado—she's a Harvard student and a U.S. Air Force 2nd lieutenant who has earned a coveted spot to train as a fighter pilot.

But on Sunday night, the 22-year-old was gunning for the Miss America crown, an event that now features high pressure interviews on stage and a fitness competition—and she won it all.

“Pageants are changing and one of the ways is in what being physically fit means to women,” the Arkansas native explained.

“For me, it's great because I need to stay physically fit and in the gym for the military, so it already coincides with pageant training.”

As a young girl, Madison had a love of science and a dream to be a pilot and astronaut. Her parents encouraged her dreams, sending her to Space Camp when she was 13, where she met astronauts and fighter pilots.

At 15, she started flying lessons earning her pilot's license two years later and then began to work towards her goal of becoming a cadet in the Air Force Academy.

She also wanted to try competing in pageants as an extracurricular activity.

“My cousin had competed in pageants for a long time, and one of the big things about it that I love is the community service aspect and the focus on public speaking.”

Just before graduating from the Academy and being commissioned as an Air Force Officer, Ms. Marsh was crowned Miss Colorado in May 2023.

Harvard student and Air Force 2nd Lt. Madison Marsh is the 2023 Miss Colorado, posing at the USAFA vs. U.S. Army football game at Denver (SWNS photo released)

“It was very surreal,” said Madison, who is quick to address preconceived notions and stereotypes about modern beauty pageants and their contestants.

“The Miss America organization is all focused on what you can provide for the community through your social impact, making sure that you have a stellar resume, that you’re good at public speaking, that you can connect with people, and are empowered to lead in other ways that’s not just about you.”

As Miss Colorado, Marsh enjoyed talking with other young girls about being a pilot and sees it as an opportunity to dispel stereotypes that exist about military women. Now, as Miss America, she has unlimited opportunities to do more.

She will also work with the Dana Farber Cancer Institute and a professor from the Harvard Medical School to research early detection of pancreatic cancer.