

OLIN-SHAE DE LA CRUZ – BRYANSTON, SANDTON, GAUTENG

Name: Olin-Shae De La Cruz

Region: Bryanston, Sandton, Gauteng.

Age: 27 (March 29, 1994)

Occupation:

I obtained a higher certification in journalism in 2014, from City Varsity in Cape Town. I then went on to study a Bachelors in Business Administration degree and in Media Operations Management from Boston Media House. Throughout my years of studies, I worked in marketing which led to the start of my own business called Swish.



Previous beauty competitions or pageants you have entered:

Miss SA 2017, placed in Top 26; Miss SA 2020, placed in Top 15.

Why did you decide to enter Miss South Africa 2021 and why do you deserve to win this title?

I love what the platform stands for. Providing women with an opportunity to believe in themselves and what they are passionate about for them to then connect, share and be change agents of that message to ripple throughout the country and potentially the world. I believe I deserve this title because I have shown resilience. Through every defeat I have not forgotten the "why" and I have continued to work on myself to come back stronger always choosing bravery as an example to others to never give up but to rise and grab opportunities.

Tell us about your biggest disappointment and how you bounced back from it.

Not trusting my own intuition but rather listening and choosing to take the advice of others too often and the result being not what I truly wanted. I bounced back from this by focusing. Consciously choosing to show who I am, and having faith that my ideas are good enough which resulted in me being more content whether the outcome was good or bad.

What do you think is the biggest problem facing young people today?

The youth are facing so many battles, both internally and externally, and it can all become overwhelming and lead to self destruction. Managing issues such as childhood trauma, bullying and no self-confidence on top of other factors such as lack of education and unemployment.

Who are your role models?

My family. Also, in terms of inspiration, everyone going after their dreams, breaking boundaries or contributing to help others such as Zozibini Tunzi, Barack Obama, the individuals at Johannesburg Dream Centre and God.

Tell us a bit more about your family?

Both of my parents were previously married and had children before they met each other but I am the only child from their marriage. My father Dennis De La Cruz (81) was a member of the tri-cameral parliament but is now retired. My mother Karin Ford (55) works in the car rental industry. I have two sisters and two brothers from my father – Carolyn and Cameron are twins aged 59. My other sister Jacqui is 55 and brother Juan (44) is a doctor.

My brother from my mother's side, Avin (35) works as a restaurant manager and owns a tutoring company.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy seeing my friends and family, volunteering, working out, reading and walking my dog, Simba.

What is your single biggest achievement?

Obtaining my degree. When I saw my brother graduate with this medical degree it really inspired me just to get that picture with the graduation regalia, to make my parents and myself proud.

In what way do you think beauty pageants are still relevant today?

Beauty pageants have moved away from just being about beauty, towards showcasing an all-rounded woman who embodies beauty, brains and compassion. It's relevant in that it provides platforms for woman to grow, achieve, speak up and be change agents in their communities. These women inspire a generation and encourage others to believe in their power to make a difference.

What is your message to young girls and young women in South Africa?

May my choice of bravery inspire and encourage them to never give up on what they believe they can achieve, contribute and become. They will encounter challenges but it is temporary, have faith that God will lead them to overcome and rise above everything that has been put on them.

What do you love about South Africa?

That it is my home. Every time I land when having been abroad there is an unmistakable energy which cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

What is one thing you would like to change about South Africa?

The educational system. I want the youth to be learning and gaining more usable and relevant skills for today's world; to leave school feeling equipped to start a venture in their own capacity should they be unable to find a job to provide for themselves and improve their community.

2020 and 2021 have been extraordinary years and difficult for people around the globe. Do you see any positives in what has happened in the past 18 months?

Being optimistic, I do see positivity in difficult times. Change is not easy and, in this case, we were all forced to accept the change. It has forced us to focus on our lives. They say we grow in uncomfortable spaces; I have grown and I am grateful for the challenge. Some have been challenged more than others but I pray their faith has strengthened and that things will turn around for the better.

If you won the Miss South Africa crown and was able to meet one person, who would it be and why?

My church councillor Hanlie. She was the catalyst to my growth in this past year and helped me to deal with internal battles I was having with myself and that I didn't even know I had buried so deep. Once I let it go, I was free. I'm sure she would be so proud of me and I know we will pray together for the year ahead.

What is the one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

I enjoy watching Disney animation films and, on the flip side, crime documentaries.

What is the No 1 piece of advice that you would give to your younger self?

Speak up and address any problem that you may be struggling with internally. Unknowingly, things we do not address affect us in our adult lives and can have consequences and be painful to face when older. Practise speaking up. Be free to be your best self.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

Describe yourself in three words:

Adventurous, creative, determined

What's the best advice you can give in exactly four words?

Work on being yourself

Who's your favourite designer and why?

The individual who will design me my first ever designer outfit, as it would be sentimental having a personalised piece and having worked together in bringing our ideas to life.

You have to give up one of these? Handbags or shoes?

Handbags

What is one thing that we would not know about you just by looking at you?

I have a hidden/not so hidden tattoo that says: "Faith"

What would be your dream holiday?

Taking my family to experience the magic of Disney World followed by a Disney Cruise.

If you could have any superhuman power, what would it be?

Read and understand any book in five minutes

What are you reading?

Living Beyond Your Feelings by Joyce Meyer

What music are you listening to?

Trendy pop music

What are your favourite TV shows?

I recently discovered *RuPaul's Drag Race*. I am obsessed

What is your favourite meal?

Braaivleis

Who is your local and international celeb crush?

Trever Noah, he is local but killing it internationally. It's of major admiration than a crush.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Besides cheese and carrot cake, maybe long hot bubble baths.

Social media tags:

- Facebook: Olin-Shae De La Cruz
- Instagram: Olin_shae_cruz
- Twitter: @OlinShae