

**Name:** Michelle Ley

**Date of Birth:** July 2nd, 1998

**Title:** Miss Five Boroughs

**Hometown:** Wilmington, Delaware

**Education:** The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music  
Mount Pleasant High School Graduate of the International Baccalaureate Program

**Platform Issue:** Student Act: Promoting and Providing Activism Opportunities

**Scholastic/Career Ambition:** To graduate from The New School with high honors and pursue a Masters Degree in Vocal Pedagogy

**Talent:** Broadway Vocal / "What I Did For Love"

**Scholastic Honors:** \$25,000 annual Dean's Scholarship Recipient; Awarded the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, earning a semesters worth of college credits in my final year of high school; Tri-M Music Honor Society officer; All-State Choir, First Chair

**Leadership Roles:** Founder of [www.student-act.org](http://www.student-act.org); Raised \$5,000 in donations for the Hadassah Hospital in Israel; Taught a volunteer music class at Serviam Girls Academy; Speaking engagements with children at several elementary schools about confidence and goal achievement; Tutored beginner Spanish students in an after school program; Performed at The Happiness Project for Music and Mental Health, raising awareness for mental health issues; Organized vocal and piano concerts for Ronald McDonald House, and multiple assisted living homes; Collected 250+ socks for the Joy of Sox Charity- clothing homeless citizens

**Accomplishments:** Published album of my original music on iTunes and Spotify; Miss Delaware's Outstanding Teen 2015; Performed the National Anthem at the 2017 Miss America's Outstanding Teen Pageant; Wide array of performance experience at venues such as the World Café Live in Wilmington and Philadelphia, The Duplex in NYC, and The Ladybug Music Festival; Performed the National Anthem at dozens of community events, such as the American Cancer Society, Ronald McDonald House, and Hospice 5K's, and The Blue Rocks Games; Youngest person in the history of the Keith McNally Group to be hired for my job position

**Interesting Facts:** Proficient in numerous instruments including piano, guitar, ukulele, xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, hand percussion, and alto recorder; Donated hair twice to Locks of Love; Originally arranged and performed music was showcased in-front of Grammy academy members; College letter of recommendation written by former state Governor Jack Markell; Senior superlative was most musically inclined

**Employment:** Full time student at The New School; Maître' D at Morandi, popular restaurant in the West Village

**How has the world you come from shaped your dreams and aspirations?** I began taking private voice lessons at the age of thirteen. My instructor always pushed me to my absolute limits. When I was young I didn't realize why, but soon tears and failures turned into hours of practice and accomplishments. Fears and worries became dreams and confidence. A young girl turned into a hardworking woman focused on her dream of becoming a professional artist. My teacher taught me an unbreakable work ethic that I am extremely thankful for and hope to carry with me for the rest of my life

**Of all the ways that you could succeed in life, why have you chosen to succeed in the Miss America Pageant?** I am most passionate about activism, my work with youth, performing, and my education. I am blessed to have found the Miss America Organization, which marries all four, and is formulated to include areas of competition that encourage me to be successful in various capacities. I embody what it means to be a Miss America, through the way I better the world around me, while simultaneously working to achieve my personal goals

**What social issue, other than your platform, will have the greatest impact on your generation and why?** Depression and other mental health disorders have become increasingly problematic with my generation. While we need to work on ending the contributing factors to these detrimental disorders, we also need to educate parents, colleagues, and friends on the proper way to help people that are suffering. It is important to remember that words can stay with a person for many years, and it is not safe to tell someone with a mental disorder to just "shake it off" and "be happy"