

## ARTS & PEOPLE

# LIVING

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Features Editor Bruce Steele, 232-3898 or [bsteele@citizen-times.com](mailto:bsteele@citizen-times.com)

Responsible high school graduate Christina Maxwell, of Fairview, is the national winner of the Distinguished Young Woman competition. She's familiar to many local musical theater fans for her many roles in high school and community theater. [tinyurl.com/3zv4t2n](http://tinyurl.com/3zv4t2n)

# EMPOWERED

Christina Maxwell — Distinguished Young Woman of America — explains her title

By Casey Blake, [cblake@citizen-times.com](mailto:cblake@citizen-times.com)

**H**aving nabbed the national title last week of Distinguished Young Woman of America — the contest formerly called America's Junior Miss — recent Reynolds High graduate Christina Maxwell, 18, is beaming with her new-found celebrity status.

But despite her striking classic beauty and the competition's conclusion with a rain of confetti and tearful waves, Maxwell is anything but a tear-wetting chick.

Indeed, there's no tears and no sash — just a dignified, Olympic-size medallion on a ribbon. And the only time Maxwell is likely to turn off her signature smile is when the Distinguished Young Women program is mistakenly referred to as a pageant.

"I wouldn't say it turned me into people think I'm a pageant queen, but that's a common misconception," she said. "It just isn't that."

"For one thing, she noted, the competition has no swimsuit portion.

"It's not a beauty pageant — I just can't possibly say that enough," she said. "It's about

**CHRISTINA MAXWELL**

Age: 18  
 Home: Asheville  
 Occupation: Current Distinguished Young Woman of America and soon-to-be full-time student at the University of Michigan's musical theater program.  
 Education: High School: Reynolds  
 Family: Mother and father, Brian and Karen Maxwell, and brother, Cal Maxwell, 15

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### Injured longboarder is on the mend and a mission

**W**hen I write about those who have suffered life-changing injuries, I like to follow up and see how they are doing.

Jeffrey Reckford, 17, and a student at Brevard High, was nearly killed in a longboarding accident May 17 after crashing into a bad patch of road and hitting his head without his helmet.

Reckford, a member of a crew of friends from the area who call themselves the Brothers, was wearing helmets. Jeffrey suffered a traumatic brain injury and a spinal cord injury. Trish Byers, his mother, he might not survive. And if he did

**IF YOU GO**

**What:** Thrash Brothers Jam, a benefit concert for Jeffrey Reckford, survivor of a longboarding accident.

**When:** 7 p.m. July 25, White Horse Black Mountain.

**Who:** Performers include Aaron Laf'ace, Thrash Brothers Band and DJ Chico, and the band More. There will also be a raffle and silent auction, but the primary purpose of the concert is to raise money for the family, to educate the public about longboarding safety and to encourage helmet use.

**How much:** \$15, \$10 for those with helmets.

Reckford, 17, was recently killed in a longboarding accident in May and has now organized a concert to promote helmet use. [tinyurl.com/3zv4t2n](http://tinyurl.com/3zv4t2n)

live, they said he was looking at one to three years in rehab, but he is improving rapidly. The basics such as feeding and dressing himself.

One of the most rewarding aspects of working up on people is observing their progress. If they're making some small, steady progress, some will make Jeffrey in one of those who easily could have died, might have spent years in rehab, but is improving well, all things considered.

"He's doing pretty good," said

Pink, who with her husband, David, and son, Willow, Jeffery was discharged June 12, from Carolinas HealthCare Hospital, much of it spent in the intensive care unit.

"Jeffrey's still cognitively in there," Trish said. "He's hyperresponsive to sound and touch, but he's been more affected somehow from the brain damage."

While a portion of his skull was removed to prevent further swelling of his brain, Jeffrey must wear a helmet most of the time. He may need to do more work or so to replace the shell of his skull with synthetic bone.

"He's still really tired and fatigued," Trish said. "He needs

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