

THIS IS ME

INTERVIEW WITH SAMARA WELBOURNE
SUNSHINE COAST MISS WORLD AUSTRALIA ENTRANT

1 What's your favourite time of day?
Sunset, because we live in an apartment overlooking the Kawana marina. I can watch the sun setting over the boats and the mountains and it reminds me of how lucky I am to live in such a beautiful part of the world.

2 What excites you?
My community work excites me because it makes me feel good that I am able to make a difference to people's lives. When I was younger I did free fairy house workshops at local libraries and I loved the joy it brought to children and their parents. Last year I finished the Bali library project and now this library – which was only meant to give the gift of literacy to one village – is changing the lives of people in 20 villages. I had some amazing Sunshine Coast partners in this project and I think we all feel a great sense of excitement and achievement at the difference we have been able to make. This year I have been participating in Beauty With a Purpose with Miss World Australia and fundraising for Variety Queensland. This has been hard work but exciting because of all the new experiences I have had and the amazing people I have met, especially the Sunshine Coast children supported by Variety Qld.

3 Favourite sport?
I love running but I'm going to say surf lifesaving as I get to run, swim and save lives as a volunteer at Mooloolaba Beach. It's an amazing sport and I can't recommend it highly enough for all children who live on the Sunshine Coast.

4 Best childhood memory?
Moving to Bali at 14 for two years. It opened my eyes to the world and the life some people live in developing nations. It has made me the humanitarian I am today. I

used to walk out of my front gate and see little kids playing in the dirt with a rock and plastic cup and they were still so happy. It made me see the world differently. I also spent many weekends out in remote villages, helping build houses or toilets or wheelchair ramps for people with disabilities, so I saw what tourists don't see – the hardship that people in rural areas in developing nations live in.

5 Where were you born?
My birth began at Buderim Private Hospital but because I was eight weeks early, mum was rushed to Brisbane, where I was born a day later. But I still consider myself to have been born on the Sunshine Coast as I have lived here all of my life.

6 Where would you like to holiday?
Well, in three weeks I will find out if I'm a top-five finisher in Miss World Australia and if I am, I get to spend 10 days in the Maldives and Dubai, which would be a most fantastic trip. But otherwise, I would holiday in Bali as it's my second home now and I can go back to the library and help teach English to the village children.

7 Cats or dogs? Do you have a pet?
I love both. My first word wasn't Mum or Dad but Nanon, how I said my dog Nelson's name.

8 Who are your heroes?
My hero is anyone who has overcome diversity in life. I really admire Turia Pitt, the mining executive and adventure racer who was basically burnt alive but is now a motivational speaker. Through my entry in Miss World Australia and my work with Beauty With a Purpose fundraising for Variety Qld, I have been lucky enough to meet five-year-old Alex Picken. Alex is one of the Sunshine Coast



children supported by Variety Qld. He was born with cerebral palsy, so he can't communicate like you and I. He uses an eye gaze technology computer, but he is one of the most humorous, bright kids I have ever met.

9 Dream job?
I'm not sure yet, but I love my humanitarian work so maybe the United Nations. I also love partnering with business, promoting projects and travelling, so working with the Department of Foreign Affairs as a diplomat is definitely appealing.

10 What will you be doing in 10 years?
In 10 years I see myself as having finished a uni degree in business and hopefully working in my dream job.

11 What is the best thing about living on the Sunshine Coast?
The ocean. For me, I couldn't live anywhere without the ocean. If I'm feeling stressed the ocean is the place I go to.

To be considered for this feature, email your answers to weekend@scnews.com.au