



**SoYoung Kwon
Miss Washington 1991**

SoYoung Kwon, Miss Washington 1991, represented the city of Seattle in the Miss Washington Pageant and went on to become a top ten finalist at the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City. She played Mephisto Waltz by Franz Liszt on the piano for her talent. As the first and to date only Korean-American Miss Washington, her platform was celebrating cultural diversity.

Married for almost 16 years, SoYoung and her husband have a lively 9 year old daughter, Sophie. They live in Seattle and are enthusiastic Husky and Seahawk fans.

Active in civic and community affairs, SoYoung serves on the Board of Directors of the Seattle Symphony and continues to be involved with MAO by serving on the Executive Board of the Miss Washington Scholarship Organization. SoYoung has a bachelor's degree in Classics from the University of Washington, a Juris Doctor from the Willamette University College of Law, and a Master of Laws from University of Washington School of Law. SoYoung is a corporate attorney and business executive with nearly 20 years of experience in the insurance and technology industries.

Miss America Impact Statement

"As a relative newcomer to pageants, I entered the Miss Seattle Pageant in 1989 with some trepidation. As a small Asian American woman, I didn't see myself reflected in the program at that time. However, I decided to compete to earn scholarship to further my education."

"I was crowned Miss Seattle on my third try. Each time I competed, I learned more about myself and how to communicate and connect with other people. This was an important lesson for me since I was shy and had a reserved demeanor. But more importantly, I learned a lifelong lesson to always strive for opportunities and challenges even if I thought they were beyond my reach. After all, if I can compete at Miss America, I can do anything!"

"In the Miss America program, I also found my community. I was overwhelmed by the love and support I received from the MAO volunteers, many of whom are lifelong friends and second "moms and dads ." Further, I am in touch with many of the women with whom I competed at Miss America. In fact, Carolyn Ladd, Miss Oregon 1991, is my best friend and was my maid of honor at my wedding, and we both continue to volunteer our time and donate money to the Miss Washington Scholarship Organization. My memories of my MAO experience are some of the most cherished and enduring and I am so grateful to the many volunteers and the program who supported me!"

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