**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Brielle Bryan, Miss Thurston County 2019, Shares “HOPE” for our Local Community**

Olympia, WA – Philanthropy has always been a part of Brielle Bryan’s life, even before she knew what the word meant or how to spell it. Brielle’s parents, Mark and Kris Bryan, have supported the community with their philanthropic work as part of Bryan Chiropractic Center for over 30 years, and enlisted Brielle to help collect annual donations to the Salvation Army, the Thurston County Food Bank, and more recently Animal Services in Olympia. Kris Bryan explains “We’ve always made it a part of our business to support the community we serve, and we want to instill the same connections in our children”.

This connection to community has inspired Brielle throughout her young adult life. In her early teens, Brielle interned for two summers with Houston Kraft, a motivational speaker and leadership trainer who worked with students at schools across the country, with curriculums to create more compassionate cultures in schools and communities. Brielle has also supported local non-profits through the Dance to Make a Difference Charity Gala for the past 5 years. It was through the gala in 2018 that Brielle was first introduced to Family Support Center of Sound Sound’s (FSCSS) Camp HOPE America – Washington program, which works with children and youth who have witnessed domestic violence and experienced trauma. “At last year’s charity gala, I performed in ‘Helping Hands’, which was choreographed and dedicated to FSCSS.” Brielle adds, “As a dancer and choreographer, I try to communicate stories and emotions to the audience through my performance and choreography, and ‘Helping Hands’ was definitely impactful for all of us who worked on it. We also learned more about the program through the video FSCSS showed at the gala, and I got a chance to work directly with the campers when Studio West Dance Academy hosted a Hip Hop Dance Party and asked me to co-teach the class. We had so much fun hosting the party and talking with the campers. All of this really solidified my resolve to support the Camp HOPE America - Washington program even more.”

Brielle’s opportunity to support Camp HOPE America - Washington came by way of another pressing task in Brielle’s life this past year – her search for colleges and scholarship programs post high school. Brielle shares “The Miss Thurston County Scholarship Program helps local young women achieve success through community service, leadership, and educational funding. I really connected with the mission of the organization, and its emphasis on community service. Through workshops on written communication, public speaking, and presentation skills, the program has taught me valuable life lessons that I will be able to use in my college years and beyond. As a dancer, I’ve always been comfortable presenting myself in front of an audience, but the program has helped me find my voice. In the past year, I’ve had a chance to reflect on the values that are important to me, and I feel more empowered than ever to take the initiative to make a difference in my community.”

This past October, Brielle was crowned Miss Thurston County 2019. During Brielle’s tenure, she will volunteer and bring awareness to FSCSS’s Camp HOPE America - Washington program. Brielle will start with a donation drive for camp supplies at her high school. Brielle will support FSCSS with her performance and donation drive at the 11th Annual Dance to Make a Difference Charity Gala on February 23, 2019. She also plans to coordinate two events for campers in the spring: a Hip Hop Dance Party at Studio West Dance Academy and an Evening at the Ballet during the production of Coppelia on April 18-20 at The Washington Center for the Performing Arts.

Where does Brielle find time for school work, college applications, dance classes and rehearsals, and fulfill her duties as Miss Thurston County 2019? “It’s been a whirlwind, and I’ve had to prioritize and be very organized to get everything I need to do done. But it’s all worth it. I feel blessed and lucky to be in a position where I can make a positive impact and be a role model in my community.”

To learn more about the 11th Annual Dance to Make a Difference Charity Gala and purchase tickets, visit <https://www.washingtoncenter.org/event/dance-to-make-a-difference-11th-annual-charity-gala/>. This year’s gala will take place on February 23, 2019, and all net proceeds will be donated to Homes First and Family Support Center of South Sound.

To learn more about the Camp HOPE America - Washington program, visit <http://fscss.org/camphopewa/>. This year’s camp will take place during the week of July 1-6, 2019. The program is seeking volunteer camp counselors ages 18-24, kitchen helpers to prepare meals, snacks, and treats onsite, and donations of camp supplies. Volunteer forms and a list of needed supplies can be found at the above link.

To learn more about the Miss Thurston County Scholarship Program, visit <https://www.missthurstoncounty.com/>. The Miss Thurston County Scholarship Program is an official preliminary to the Miss Washington and Miss America programs. Brielle will represent Thurston County at the Miss Washington Pageant on June 28-29, 2019.

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