Miss United States Elizabeth Safrit enrolls in Duke University’s MURDOCK Study

Safrit joins more than 11,400 volunteers in a medical research study based at the North Carolina Research Campus

KANNAPOLIS, N.C.—April 30, 2015—When she returned to her hometown after competing in the Miss World pageant in London, one of the first things Kannapolis native Elizabeth Safrit did was enroll in Duke University’s MURDOCK Study.

“I joined the MURDOCK Study because it’s a great opportunity to make a difference, not only here in Kannapolis and Cabarrus County but all over the country and even the world,” said Safrit, the reigning Miss United States. “Just a small bit of your time could help find cures for diseases. You could be that person that holds the key to a cure.”

Safrit joins more than 11,400 volunteers in a medical research study based at the North Carolina Research Campus.

Safrit, who is the daughter of former North Carolina Research Campus President Dr. Lynne Scott Safrit and Kannapolis City Attorney Wally Safrit, recently shared the 2015 Heart of Grace Award with her mother. The honor is bestowed by Pfeiffer University to celebrate women who embody the spirit of servant leadership.

At the Miss World Pageant, Safrit earned the honorary title of Miss World Americas because she had the highest score of any contestant from North America or South America. Now, as both Miss World Americas and Miss United States, Safrit is traveling the globe to promote causes like Save the Children.

While she advocates for the future of children around the world, Safrit is also advocating for the future of medicine by becoming one of more than 11,400 people enrolled in the Duke-MURDOCK Study.
Duke researchers and their collaborators need health information and biological samples—small amounts of blood and urine—as they work to reclassify disease using advanced scientific technologies available at the North Carolina Research Campus. The biological samples are stored in a state-of-the-art facility in Kannapolis, and scientists are using the specimens to help identify links across major diseases and disorders.

“Making this decision to come in today and just giving a small little bit of your time, it really could benefit our future in terms of medicine and in terms of finding cures for diseases,” Safrit said. “You could be saving your future child one day, or saving a future family member.”

Safrit used the MURDOCK Study’s new online enrollment service, which she said was “easy and effortless.” Online enrollment begins at www.murdock-study.org by clicking the “enroll now” button.

With Safrit’s busy travel schedule, she had delayed enrolling in the MURDOCK Study. But completing the online enrollment form took only about 20 minutes and saved time during her visit, Safrit said.

“It was so easy,” she said. “I had put it off because I’ve had such a hectic schedule, but my mom kept telling me it’s so easy, just do it. It won’t take longer than 10 minutes.

“I finally had time, and she was right it. It took no time at all, it was so easy, so effortless, and I’m excited that I made a difference today.”

At the Miss World competition, Safrit placed in the top 3 out of 122 contestants. She also won the multimedia competition, placed in the Top 10 in the interview competition, Top 20 in sports and Top 3 in talent.
A 2010 graduate of A.L. Brown High School, Safrit previously held the titles of Miss Kannapolis USA, Miss Charlotte USA and Miss North Carolina United States.

During her reign, Safrit will promote many causes including Rock The Vote and Save the Children, which represent her greatest passions—children and United States elections. Rock The Vote is a nonpartisan organization that encourages young adults to register to vote.

“With a very important election year coming up in 2016, I hope I can spend the rest of my reign in 2015 encouraging young voters to sign up and participate and get excited about elections because it’s really the best way to make a difference and voice your opinion in our country,” she said.

Safrit’s coming months are filled with travel, appearances, volunteer work and advocacy, and her reign will take her to dozens of locations around the globe. But she describes her unique job in simple terms: To represent the United States to the best of her ability in everything she does, including taking about 30 minutes to enroll in the MURDOCK Study.

“When you love your job and you’re passionate about it, you don’t mind dedicating so much of your life to it,” she said.

Duke launched the MURDOCK Study in 2007 with a $35 million gift from David H. Murdock, founder and developer of the Research Campus. The study’s name stands for Measurement to Understand the Reclassification of Disease Of Cabarrus/Kannapolis. Adults living in 20 zip codes including Cabarrus County, Kannapolis, China Grove, Landis and other portions of Rowan, Stanly and Mecklenburg counties can enroll.
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MURDOCK Study

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