

Nathan Rikard returns from contest . . .

FHS grad mixes college, modeling

An interest in drama and theater, as well as a supportive teacher, led Nathan Rikard of Fairfield, 18, from drama classes at Fairfield high school to acting and modeling competitions in Florida a couple of weeks ago.

Nathan placed as category finalist in the adult male commercial model contest of the Actor Model and Talent Competition, held in Orlando, Florida June 30 through July 5. He has been contacted by several agencies who hope to represent him.

Rikard, who graduated last month from Fairfield high school, says he took drama for four years in high school, and was in each fall production, and always liked it. He participated in the UIL One-Act



FAIRFIELD GRAD Nathan Rikard returned from a contest last week with prospects for a modeling career.

Play for three years, earning an award his senior year.

But this year, his drama teacher, Senor Wright, told the students about the AMTC competition in Dallas and urged Rikard to go and compete.

"I like the acting thing, I won't get anywhere with it—just do it in high school," Rikard says he thought at the time. "So, I decided, what have I got to lose?"

He couldn't get to the competition until the last day, and when he got there, one of the AMTC staff asked if he was there for the modeling competition. Rikard said no, but the staff member told him he really should compete in modeling.

"I was like, okay,"

Rikard says.

The next day, the student received a call from AMTC saying they liked him a lot and would he return to Dallas. He went back, auditioned more, and the modeling representatives told him they would like him to attend the Florida competition. They also told him not to cut his hair.

Knowing a trip to Florida could be expensive, Rikard discussed the options with his parents, Bob and Cynthia Rikard, who urged him to make the trip.

"I worked to earn money and we had fundraisers to help pay my costs," Rikard says. "If it wasn't for my mom and dad and all they did, I wouldn't have been able to go."

Rikard says the talent scouts helped him prepare for the Florida show with work sessions and photo shoots. He and his parents left for Florida, and he says they hardly had time to sleep until they returned to Fairfield.

"It was six days filled with multiple seminars and competitions continuously and simultaneously for 13 hours a day on average," says mom Cynthia.

Some 900 contestants age four to 60 years were broken down into categories according to their age, gender and physical statistics. Each contestant accumulated points toward awards.

Rikard competed in spokesperson, monologue, cold read, scene read, photography and swimsuit.

"That got me to the gym," Rikard laughs.

His category was "adult male commercial model", the most populated category. "We were extremely surprised when Nathan was called as a category finalist, especially considering that he only competed in two of the five events available for point accumulation," Mrs. Rikard notes.

Celebrities attending the AMTC competition included Tyler Perry, and Jamie Fox from the Transformer movies, as well as Twentieth Century Fox officials.

Part of the competition is interviews with talent scouts and modeling agency representatives. Of the five agencies Rikard met with, four have expressed an interest in representing him. One of the agencies represented Miley Cyrus, America's Top Models and several current musical groups.

"The whole thing was an experience I cannot describe," Rikard says. "I met cool people and the music was phenomenal."

The organization supports faith, family and education, so Rikard plans to keep to his college schedule, and work with the agencies on his breaks. He is enrolled for the fall semester at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville with a scholarship from the drama department that is nearly a full ride, Rikard says. He is one of only a few who will pursue all three arts: music, theater and graphics.

"I'm really excited about starting school," he says.

Grandson of Gynne and Harold Massey of Fairfield and Maxine and Don Rikard of Lampasas, Rikard also enjoys guitar, paintball and skateboarding, and says he'd like to try his hand at competing again in improv, music and stand up.

"The competitions felt very natural," Rikard says. "I wasn't too nervous."

"What we experienced and what we learned was worth it all," says Mrs. Rikard. "We are very proud of Nathan."

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