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## Chansler competes in state DYW competition

By Brooke Brown [bbrown@caseynews.net](mailto:bbrown@caseynews.net)  
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Madison Chansler during round 2 at the Distinguished Young Woman of Kentucky con  
Photos by By Chris Zollner

Casey County High School senior Madison Chansler recently competed in the state Distinguished Young Women competition in Lexington on Jan. 7-8.

Chansler previously won the Distinguished Young Woman of Casey County competition on Sept. 11, which allowed her to compete at state level. At the Casey County competition she also

won the overall fitness, the scholastic award, and the Spirit of the Distinguished Young Woman award. She earned \$1,700 total in scholarship awards.

Chansler competed along with 27 other girls, all from different parts of Kentucky.

“It was a very different experience than what I thought it was going to be,” Chansler said. “All the girls were very welcoming and supportive throughout the whole program and competition.”

During her stay in Lexington, Chansler said the girls visited a local middle school and taught the students about the “Be Your Best Self” program through the competition. She said there are five elements to the program: be healthy, be involved, be studious, be ambitious, and be responsible.

“We try to encourage other young women in our communities to ‘be their best self’ in areas like school, physical fitness, and social participation,” Chansler said. “It’s a program that we all related back to throughout the week.”

At the state competition there were three separate shows. Chansler said almost half the judging is already done before the show begins. Their transcripts and test scores are sent in for the scholastic category before the competition. Interviews were completed the Thursday before the competition as well. Chansler said the judges score the participants based on poise and confidence for self expression. The judges score fitness based on an overall fitness level.

Claire Martin from Clark County won the Distinguished Young Women competition this year. Although Chansler did not place at the state competition, she believes she made lasting memories through the whole experience.

“To me, the most important thing was being able to represent my community,” she said. “It felt great being the face of Casey County. Also, I love being able to educate young women in communities other than mine that the Distinguished Young Women program isn’t just a pageant. Even if you play sports and aren’t seen as a ‘girly girl’ you can still do it.”

Madison is a senior at Casey County High School and plans to attend Western Kentucky University when she graduates. She wants to major in Biology with a focus on pre-med. She is grateful she had the opportunity to compete in the Distinguished Young Women competition, both local and state.

“The scholarship money will help me a lot in college,” she said. “And the friendships I’ve built will last a lifetime.”