

## Karen Lee Grybowski Interview

1. Can you tell me your name, hometown, major(s) and minor(s), and what year were you crowned?
  - a. Karen Lee Grybowski, New Castle, PA. I have a BS in Health and PE and Master of Education in Administration of Education. Both from SRU.
2. What was your biography while you are in college? What activities were you involved in at SRU?
  - a. I was a health and PE major I was on the dance team, The Rocklettes. One of the original Rocklettes. I was in a sorority, Alpha Xi Delta.
3. What did being a homecoming queen mean to you then?
  - a. It was a great honor!
4. What does being a homecoming queen mean to you now?
  - a. It's still a great honor!
5. How did you end up running? Were you nominated or did you decide to run?
  - a. I was nominated through my Sorority, Alpha Xi Delta.
6. Did you campaign at all?
  - a. No campaigning that I can remember.
7. Before the election, what did you think your chances were?
  - a. I did not really think about it much, but had nerves as anyone would.
8. Was there any stigma around your ceremony or campaign?
  - a. No stigma that I knew of.
9. Generally a positive experience?
  - a. It was. It really was very positive.
10. Why do you think you won?
  - a. I had many awesome friends: in my sorority, at other sororities, on the Rocklettes dance team, band members, and friends on the football, basketball, and baseball teams. I kinda think that's why I won.
11. What did your family think of your victory?
  - a. Oh they were so happy and proud! My parents, my sister, one of my aunts and cousins all came to the game to cheer me on!
12. What was the hardest part about the whole process?
  - a. The first thing that came to my mind was everyone wishing me luck because then you're in the fish bowl in a way. It's not always easy in that position.
13. Has your life changed in any small or large way?
  - a. It was a positive effect for me. When you are voted homecoming queen what does that mean? Does it mean that you're popular? Does it mean that you're attractive? Does it mean that people like you? It helped my self-confidence. Even though I was voted into this position I didn't have a whole lot of self-confidence. I may have seemed like I did. But I was shy in my own way. People might think that

someone who wins something is not shy but sometimes you have your moments when you're shy as well. It gave me a new found confidence and put a huge smile on my face. I was grateful to everyone, my professors as well. I loved and love SRU.

14. Did your election have positive or negative influences on your college experience?
  - a. Oh I think it was a positive experience. You know Slippery Rock was a very positive experience for me all the way around. I loved my time there. I got a great education, I liked all of my professors and had good relationships with them. It was a very positive experience for me.
15. Did it affect you after college?
  - a. So many of our experiences bring us to where we are today. Becoming homecoming queen was a great experience and contributed to where I am today. It was such a positive experience. Becoming homecoming queen helped me in my future work as well. I taught high school PE for a while then moved into the modeling industry, first as a model, then as Director of Scouting and New Faces for several Top Modeling Agencies in NYC. Homecoming queen helped me understand the importance of community, personality, kindness, and support. Being given this honor helped build my self-confidence, which gave me the push to help empower other women with support, help, and kindness when needed. Being homecoming queen gave me great memories and it still puts a smile on my face when I think of my time spent at SRU. I am proud, if someone asks about my college years, to say that I was homecoming queen of Slippery Rock University!
16. Have you come back for later Homecomings?
  - a. Unfortunately, no. I worked and still do in the Fashion/ Modeling Industry. Fall is a Big Travel Season.
17. Would you be more inclined to come back if there were a ceremony honoring Homecoming Queens?
  - a. I was thinking this year would have been a good year to come back as it marked 45 years since I became homecoming queen. But I'd like to come back. I also have homecoming on my calendar for next year, God willing!