

# America's Leaders

## A Beautiful Story Of Learning And Achievement

by Rebecca Stone,

Miss Teen US Continental.

(NAPSA)—My elementary school teachers may have a hard time believing I am now the reigning Miss Teen US Continental.



**Rebecca Stone**

Introverted and extremely frustrated by school, I wouldn't talk or raise my hand. The situation was painfully familiar to my uncle—and tests done at his urging determined that, like him, I

have severe dyslexia. My parents ensured I was provided with accommodations that included recorded textbooks from Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic® (RFB&D).

The change was dramatic. By middle school, I was an outgoing, self-confident teenager entering talent and dance competitions. By the time I graduated high school in 2002, I owned and operated my own dance studio, was a tutor for special needs children and, as Miss Teen Florida US Continental, had earned a college scholarship.

Although I feared exposing my dyslexia during my early years of competitions, I credit a recent decision to make RFB&D and learning disabilities my national platform with helping me earn the title of Miss Teen US Continental. My main message to others, especially teenagers, is, "If you have a dream, don't let anything stand in your way."

I know how important educational success is to acquiring the independence and self-confidence it takes to make dreams come true. I also know that for many students with dyslexia and other disabilities, educational success means more than motivation and intellect. Sometimes it means finding the right accommodations, like recorded textbooks.

RFB&D is a national nonprofit organization that makes textbooks and educational materials accessible for nearly 117,000 students who have disabilities that make reading challenging or impossible. Today, RFB&D maintains a collection of more than 93,000 textbooks in every subject area and grade level from kindergarten through post-graduate school. These books, recorded by highly trained volunteers, are available as RFB&D's Classic Cassettes™ and now, as RFB&D's AudioPlus™ digitally recorded textbooks on CD. Unlike standard books that are on tape, RFB&D's recorded textbooks include not only text, but also detailed descriptions of all graphic elements within a book, including photographs, illustrations, charts, maps and graphs.

In homes and classrooms around the country, RFB&D makes a difference in the lives of students with disabilities. For more information about RFB&D's unique library and services, visit [www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org) or call toll-free, 1-866-RFBD-585.