



DIANE SAWYER: A WOMAN EMPOWERED

How does a shy and insecure girl from Glasgow, Kentucky become one of the most respected news journalists of today? Passion and curiosity, was a significant factor for our featured celebrity from the hills of Kentucky, Diane Sawyer. Born into a family where education and world events were just as important as breathing, Diane Sawyer's mother was an elementary school teacher and her father, a judge and prominent local community leader. They were a family that escaped the clutches of the poverty-stricken Appalachia. Sawyer's family ties dating back decades to Appalachia, would solidify a strong bond for the proud people of facing many challenges. Those challenges would bring her back for several news stories about impoverished Appalachia, including, "A Hidden America: Children of the Mountains". In an article from the Los Angeles Times Sawyer was quoted saying, "You don't have to go many generations back before we were up there fighting our way through those passes and trying to make our way down the mountain like everybody else," said Sawyer. "I'm always so moved by the bravery and the vitality of these essential American fighters. And now they've got a battle that they aren't winning." Sawyer was talking about the overwhelming battle of poverty, one she still works hard to expose and change. The Sawyer family moved from Glasgow to Louisville, Kentucky. Soon, Sawyer's insecurities would fade into the distance through an event she would have never guessed would have happened. In her senior year of high school, Sawyer won first place in the annual national "America's Junior Miss" scholarship pageant. She won because of her sense of poise and for her essay comparing music of the South and the North during the Civil War. Winning was an honor, but the idea of traveling around the country and making public speaking appearances was terrifying

for her. However, this experience taught her to think on her feet and do it with poise and grace. These qualities would soon become an asset to Sawyer's journalistic style. After graduating from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, Sawyer moved briefly back to Kentucky as a weather forecaster in Louisville and then was promoted to general assignment for the news. After a short time, she moved to Washington D.C. and worked as an assistant to the White House deputy press secretary. Sawyer was first assigned to writing press releases and then wrote drafts for President Nixon's public statements. She remained in the Nixon administration through his resignation and also helped him write his memoirs, published in 1978. Years later, Sawyer was suspected of being Deep Throat, the source of leaks of classified information to journalist Bob Woodward during the Watergate scandal. She was one of six people to receive a public denial from Woodward. In 1978, Sawyer joined CBS News as a reporter; It wasn't long before her journalistic talent was noticed. She was promoted to 60 Minutes newsmagazine, ranked among the top five most-watched shows in the country. The rest is history. In 1989, Sawyer moved to ABC News to co-anchor Primetime Live, co-anchor 20/20 in 1998 and Good Morning America in 1999. In 2009, Sawyer became the anchor successor to Charles Gibson, who retired from ABC World News. Diane Sawyer has become empowered through her ties with family, heritage and her curiosity and passion to learn. All which have helped to mold her as a journalist, a news anchor and as a woman. Diane Sawyer always signed off at the end of her nightly broadcast with "I'll see you right back here tomorrow night." The meaning could be many things, but perhaps it means, Diane will be there asking the challenging questions and seeking the answers, every day.