



Mesa girl to display skateboarding talents for reality-TV audience

Posted: Sunday, June 20, 2010 3:00 am | Updated: 12:36 pm, Mon Jun 21, 2010.

Hayley Ringle, Tribune |

Alana Smith will show off her skateboarding skills starting Monday in the Disney show, "Next X," which spotlights young, amateur athletes who could be the next extreme sports stars.

The Mesa 9-year-old has been skating for two years. She will attend her second year at a private Mesa school, Kids That Rip, where she gets skateboarding training along with typical school subjects.

Alana was spotted by an ESPN executive at the McDowell Mountain Ranch Skate Park. ESPN, which is owned by the Walt Disney Co., is a partner in the show's production.

Alana and her mom, Ryonna Smith, were flown out for the week-long filming last month at a skate park in Santa Clarita, Calif.

"I think she learned her passion for skateboarding has made her available to live out her dream and work with professional skaters," said Smith, who has three younger daughters. "It was an amazing opportunity for her."

Alana spent the week skating, getting interviewed, and learning new tricks from professional skateboarder Bucky Lasek, one of Alana's favorites. The athletes had no idea they would be learning from pro athletes.

"He has cool tricks, insane back flips and is super nice," Alana said.

Alana was featured on the show with another skateboarder and two BMX bike riders. The kids were given their own wardrobe stylist and trailers where they could play video games and eat snacks.

"The best part was skating with my new friends and having a relay race around the whole park," Alana said. "It was also cool learning tricks from Bucky. The whole thing was the best."

The young athletes will be shown in six 11-minute shows that will air weekly, ending with a half-hour show in August on the Disney XD channel.

At the end of the show, one of the athletes who learned the best tricks will perform at the nationally-televised X Games 16, which run July 29-Aug. 1 in downtown Los Angeles, said Eric Covert, vice president of creative contents and production of brand marketing for Disney Channels Worldwide.

"The goal of the show is to show kids who believe in themselves," Covert said. "With the right kind of guidance and encouragement, they may have what it takes to achieve their dreams to their highest level."

Alana is the first female skateboarder featured on the show, which is in its second year. Alana was chosen for the show because of her "great" enthusiasm for skateboarding, Covert said.

"She hasn't done it that long, and yet she is so great," Covert said. "She is trying to take it to the next level, and you pick up on that right

away.”

Alana said she learned from the show that “if you work hard, people will notice your talent, and you can live out your dream.”

Alana wants to be a professional skateboarder, and hopes that one day she will be known as a good skater, not just a good female skater.

This summer, Alana will attend a skateboard camp in California, go wakeboarding and jet skiing on Lake Powell, and will watch the X Games live.

Alana already has lots of advice for aspiring skateboarders. “Always keep your head high and never give up on a trick you’re trying,” she said. “I accomplish everything I try, even if it takes me awhile.”

“Next X” will start airing Monday on the Disney XD premium channel. Check local listings or visit www.disneyxd.com.

More about **Smith**

- **IMAGE:** [Robert Brinton and Scott Smith](#)
- **IMAGE:** [Scott Smith](#)
- **ARTICLE:** [Mesa vows to generate own funding to keep Cubs](#)
- **ARTICLE:** [Smith: Mesa has options to keep Cubs](#)

© Copyright 2010, **East Valley Tribune**, Mesa, AZ. Powered by **Blox Content Management System** from [TownNews.com](#). [[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)]