

Dr. Michelle Clough
(Super Model)

Ever since Michelle was four years old, she had a deep passion for fashion. At a young age, she knew exactly what she wanted - two fashionable looks that would reflect her personal style. Michelle discovered a traditional tweed coat and a fake fur eskimo winter coat that she adored. Her mother purchased the tweed coat for her, but when Michelle requested the second coat, her mother refused, not wanting to spoil her daughter. However, Michelle was determined to have that second coat. One day, while her mother was at work, she convinced her father to take her to see the coat. Of course, her father couldn't resist and bought the coat for her.

Although Michelle's mother wasn't pleased, she didn't want to raise a spoiled child. However, her father enjoyed giving his daughter clothes within certain limits. To teach her the value of money, Michelle was frequently wheeling and dealing to support her own passion for fashion.

From an early age, she developed a keen eye for being a wise shopper. Growing up with her grandparents, who themselves had lived through the Great Depression and understood the value of a dollar, she was taught well. Together, they would spend hours gardening, harvesting wheelbarrows full of fresh produce, and even take a dip in the pool to cool off on hot days.

She has experience in public speaking and has delivered speeches on a variety of topics. One of her areas of expertise is showcasing models of all different sizes, shapes, ages, and medical challenges. She has spoken at conferences, workshops, and community events on this topic, engaging audiences with her insights on the importance of inclusivity in the fashion industry. She has also delivered speeches on other topics, such as youth empowerment and celebrating diversity. In each speech, she aims to leave her listeners with actionable insights that they can apply in their own lives.

In the absence of her grandparents, she spent time with her father, who would take her to job sites and teach her the trades. There, she learned to perform crucial tasks that would prove invaluable throughout her life, equipping her with practical knowledge for managing properties and navigating the world of business. Michelle gained a wealth of wisdom from these experiences, which have equipped her with life skills that she proudly puts to use today.

Michelle has quite the resume when it comes to modeling and pageantry. Interestingly, as a baby, she even filled in as the Gerber baby! Her parents received a letter from Gerber stating that she bore a striking resemblance to the iconic Gerber baby. Michelle then attended Barbizon modeling school before embarking on a new adventure as an AFS exchange student in Finland. During her time in Finland, she proudly represented the United States.

From that point on, she attained her independence by living away from home, which prepared her for college. Her aspirations were to acquire

education and make a significant impact in her industry. She accomplished her four-year degree in three years and directly proceeded to a graduate program.

By her early 20s, she had already earned all of her advanced degrees and had enrolled in advanced classes at multiple colleges to quench her thirst for education. Working at the Hopkin Center in the costuming department for the first play about AIDS, *Normal Heart*, she became a trailblazer in her field, designing various costumes and dedicating countless hours to research at Baker Library during her time at Dartmouth College.

Despite being a size zero, she always modeled with great success. In Los Angeles, she managed to catch up with Paula Brown, who had previously worked to promote plus-size women.

When Michelle was smaller in size, she worked in a plus-size clothing store. One day, a co-worker asked her how she could possibly know how to fit sizes 18 to 26, which shocked her. Michelle confidently replied that she knew about shapes and sizes, and how to fit them. However, it wasn't until after Prince's birthday party in New York that she truly experienced pain. Upon returning to her flat, she had a slip and fall that required recovery from a serious injury.

For an extended period of time, Michelle refrained from walking, leading her to become a plus-sized individual. Her friend, Brad Waite, who worked as a camera guy for *Inside Edition*, suggested that she try modeling as a plus-size, and so she took up the offer. Later on, with

the help of Dr. Sherman, who performed liposuction on her ankle, and Dr. Minkoff, who removed a dislodged plate and pins, Michelle's condition improved.

Due to a pin protruding from the front of her ankle and a plate pressing against the side, she experienced difficulty and pain while walking. Although her surgeon assured her that everything was fine, that was not the case. Only after seeking out the top doctors in their respective fields did she ultimately find the relief she needed.

After Michelle regained her ability to walk, she found herself grappling with the emotional scars of having been isolated for so long. Once a focused and accomplished woman, she now struggled to move forward and reclaim the years of pain and immobility. Despite standing outside the tents of fashion week, she couldn't bring herself to go in, feeling unworthy and disconnected. In a moment of despair, she called her friend Adam and broke down in tears. Despite his reassurance that she belonged there, Michelle felt unable to enter without bringing someone in a wheelchair along with her.

When my friend, who uses a wheelchair, attended fashion week, it marked a momentous occasion. Being the first wheelchair user to attend, I was determined to make sure she had a complete experience. However, we encountered some obstacles in accommodating her wheelchair. Fortunately, Fern Mallis, a prominent figure in the fashion industry, came to our rescue and assisted us in making the necessary arrangements. Thanks to her, my friend was able to relish in all the delights that fashion week had to offer.

Cobblestones lined the pathway and amidst them sat a charming woman in an electric wheelchair. Maneuvering on such rough terrain was no easy feat. In the bustling Bryant Park, the lobby was abuzz with various booths and exciting events. It was here that Michelle made a firm decision to accompany her newfound friend through the glamorous world of fashion week.

Michelle was constantly on the move, running from one show to another without any breaks. Her dedication to attend as many shows as possible during Fashion Week was her primary focus. However, her friend expressed that she didn't share the same enthusiasm and didn't want to attend every show. Michelle was puzzled by her friend's perspective at the time.

Without considering the possibility that her friend might not share the same level of enthusiasm for attending all the shows, she became so focused on making up for lost time that she lost sight of her friend's desires. Although she reassured her friend that it was fine, when she ventured back to the tents alone, she still experienced a lingering sense of purposelessness.

Only when Fern Mallis began inviting more people in wheelchairs did she finally feel welcomed again. Dr. Clough played a significant role in this by designing a runway show at the Manhattan Center during

Fashion Week that featured the first-ever wheelchair-bound model, who even got engaged during the finale of the show.

Michelle demonstrated her commitment to inclusivity in the fashion industry by featuring a variety of sizes, shapes, and people with medical challenges in her runway show. Notably, Mimi Windell, who went on to become the face of Chic Jeans, graced Michelle's runway in her 80s. Michelle's unwavering determination to promote diversity and representation in fashion has rightfully earned her the title of an advocate for positive change.

Throughout her modeling career, she has consistently walked the walk and talked the talk. When asked about her experience modeling at click modeling agency for Warnico and JCPenney, she expressed her affection for all aspects of it. However, she humbly acknowledged that she is not the true embodiment of a model. Rather, she believes that the real models who make a significant impact are those who fit bras for women who have undergone breast cancer.

Rather than using herself as a model, she consistently chose to educate others on topics she felt were crucial. To her, providing solace to a woman who had lost a breast or breasts was more honorable than merely fitting them for a bra based on their size. Additionally, Michelle was recognized for her television program and her Column she created entitled Moments In Fashion where she showcased fashion families and models without make up. and for frequently making stops to nourish homeless individuals she encountered on her travels.

Her tireless backing of individuals in need, coupled with numerous conversations with young women and men in her field, has imbued them with her insightful words and positive self-image. This has motivated her to become an agent of change through her actions.

She has delivered speeches to numerous groups and has even instructed water exercise at all the major clubs in NYC, most notably at the Colony Club. Here, she awarded gold medals to her exceptional students and would always encourage them by saying, "You are the best and all champions."

She's been a member of the debate ball committee and has served on multiple other ball committees, including the Polish, Russian, and Venetian balls. In addition, she walked alongside Jersey Jackson and supported his youth initiatives. Along with countless organization including the achilles club which she helped raise money for wheel chairs.