

Mrs Universe is First Nations woman

A Cree woman from Alberta who married into Six Nations has won the title of Mrs. Universe 2015.

Ashley Burnham, maiden name Callingbull, won the prestigious title in Minsk, Belarus on Saturday and has been a worldwide trending topic on social media ever since.

She's already courting notoriety after she made a post on Facebook on Monday that Prime Minister Stephen Harper must be voted out, which resulted in some criticism from the social media sphere she was being "too political." But she fired right back and said she was going to use her voice during her reign and not just sit back and "look pretty."

She originally hails from the Enoch Cree Nation west of Edmonton and is an actress, model and motiva-



Mrs Universe, Ashley Burnham lives at Six Nations with her husband.

tional speaker. She currently lives on Six Nations with her husband.

As a former finalist in the 2013 Miss Universe Canada contest, when she was then Ashley Callingbull, she

noted that she grew up in poor conditions and faced difficulties in childhood, including physical and sexual abuse, that she finds difficult to talk about.

By the time she reached the

age of 10, she had consecutively won all of Enoch's princess crowns.

Burnham appears in Blackstone, a television show that airs on APTN, Showcase and Maori Television

in New Zealand.

"I'm really overwhelmed right now," Callingbull said in an interview. "My phone is blowing up. Everything is blowing up. I love it."

The Mrs. Universe 2015 Facebook page says the topic for this year's event was "Domestic Violence and Reflection Over Children."

Burnham said in her bio for the 2013 Miss Universe Canada contest that she never had the perfect childhood everyone dreams of.

"I had an incredibly difficult childhood and was raised mainly by my mother and grandparents," she said in the bio. "My mother, as strong as she is, raised me to be grateful for what I have and showed me all the love in the world."

"Things that occurred in my childhood were incredibly

painful and it is very hard to discuss. It was difficult to grow up the way I did, but it made me appreciate everything I have and most importantly made me the strong woman I am today."

Burnham was also chosen Miss Canada for the Miss Friendship International Pageant in Hubei, China in September, 2010, and represented Canada at the Queen of the World Final held in Germany 2010 and at Miss Humanity International in Barbados in October 2011.

She graduated from the television program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton and is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree focusing on drama and acting/television.

With files from The Canadian Press