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Rockville resident crowned Ms. Wheelchair Maryland

Judith Hruz |

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Denise Thomas, a Rockville resident, was crowned Ms. Wheelchair America during a dinner gala at the Hotel in Bethesda in November.

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She has already started in on her goal of being a voice for people with disabilities who use wheelchairs.

“I plan to get involved in as many community activities as possible and to show who have disabilities, particularly those who use wheelchairs,” she said.

She volunteered at the county's Goodwill Thanksgiving Dinner and is making a health and fitness expos in the area.

Thomas started volunteering with the program several years ago. “It was really other women with disabilities to be professional women and have a voice in their

she said.

Thomas said she was surprised to be named this year's winner.

“I was excited. I didn't think I would win,” she said. “It was a very fun experience. It was almost like an experience. You really feel like a celebrity.”

During her reign, Thomas will travel the state promoting her platform, advocating for safe and reliable on behalf of individuals with disabilities.

This summer, Thomas will represent Maryland in the Ms. Wheelchair America 2009 competition in R