

'American Idol' Cast-off MK Nobilette Hopes to "Be a Good Role Model" for the LGBT Community



By Louisa

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MK Nobilette made headlines early on during this season of *American Idol* when she became the first openly gay contestant. Of the attention on her sexual orientation instead of her singing skills, she says, "I was definitely a little taken aback at first, but I get that it plays a role. I'm a singer, and I'm also gay. I felt like it was important to address that. I'm very proud of it and open about it."

Although her time on the show has ended, she's hopeful that she can continue to be a source of inspiration for other members of the LGBT community. "I want to be a good role model for other queer people who are afraid to come out or think they can't do something as big as *American Idol*. I really hope I influence a lot of people."

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One person who she's certainly inspired is her girlfriend Casey Ellis, who is also a singer. "It was great to have her on my side for all of this. It was really great," the California native said of her partner who she calls "wife" on her Twitter profile.

For same-sex couples struggling to find their place in the world, Nobilette encourages them to talk to their loved ones. "And just be proud of yourself. Remind yourself that, no matter what happens, you still have you, and that's the most important thing."

So what's next for the singer? First, she'll be going home to San Francisco to spend time with her family and friends before heading out on the *American Idol* summer tour with the other top 10 contestants. There's no doubt she'll be taking her newfound gumption with her on the road: "Before *American Idol*, I was still a performer and a singer, but I never thought that being a musician was an achievable goal for myself as a career. I think, through this process, I realized that's the only thing that I want to do. I'm definitely going to make that happen."

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For the remaining contestants battling for that number one spot, she has this piece of advice – something that she learned from judge Harry Connick Jr. "Just really sell

yourself," she says. "Live every performance like it's your last and really make sure that you want to be there, exactly like Harry said. Prove to the judges that you deserve to be on that stage."

You can catch Nobilette on the American Idol tour this summer. In the meantime, keep up with her on Twitter @Mknobilette.