

Sophia Bush

Saving the World in 2011

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Actress Sophia Bush doesn't play a superhero on TV, but she's living as one in real life. From a young age, Bush knew it was important to have the courage to fight for something—even if it wasn't easy.

Growing up in Pasadena, Calif., the 28-year-old actress said she was fortunate to have led a charmed life. She graduated from a small prep school before attending the University of Southern California. In the midst of all that, she landed her signature role of wild-child-turned-polished-young-woman Brooke Davis on the hit television drama *One Tree Hill*.

In addition to portraying Brooke, Bush has starred in several films including *John Tucker Must Die* and *The Hitcher*, as well as sat in the director's chair for an episode of *One Tree Hill*. But perhaps her most important role is that of a true-life activist, dedicating her time and effort to an endless list of causes, including Global Green Gulf Relief and The Art of Elysium for critically ill children. Plus, she's never afraid to blog or Tweet about issues such as marriage equality and animal rights.

"What's more amazing to me more than starring on the show, being able to direct episodes or working on film is the fact that I have a platform," said Bush. "I have a reach and particularly for me, it's incredibly important to set a good example for young people. I think that we should be really grateful for the comforts and successes that were granted to us and use those things to help and support others."

Bush said she had a simple but fun high school experience

"Everyone says your 20s are the most formative time in your life, and I would certainly say that is true for myself."

that made her want to get into big things at USC, where she was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma, several clubs and the honors program.

"I was doing a lot of creative advancing of my social life experience, but also working my ass off because that was what I was used to," said Bush. "I'm a person who really thrives under pressure. I do better the more I have on my plate."

It was that pressure that led Bush to pursue journalism, public relations and advertising in addition to being in theater classes in college. She admitted, "I just find the whole world totally fascinating through commercials. They're my favorite, favorite thing that shows on TV all year."