

Miss Hospitality

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Media Contacts: Marlo Dorsey

VisitHATTIESBURG, Director of Marketing and Communications

mdorsey@hattiesburg.org, 601.498.1098

Jennifer Parsons

Miss Hospitality Pageant Coordinator

mshosp@hattiesburg.org, 601.408.4300

Booneville's Emma Grace McGrew Crowned
Mississippi's 2017 Miss Hospitality

HATTIESBURG (July 24, 2017) — Mississippi's 2017 Miss Hospitality was crowned Saturday evening at the Saenger Theater in downtown Hattiesburg. Emma Grace McGrew from Booneville, MS was selected as the program's winner following two-days of pageant competition, which included interviews, individual speeches, and on-stage questions during the evening gown portion.

Now in its 20th year in Hattiesburg, the statewide pageant's winner helps to promote economic development and tourism in Mississippi by participating in local, regional, and statewide events that showcase Mississippi's attractions and industries.

This year's winner, Emma Grace McGrew, is a recent Booneville High School graduate. She will study biology at Northeast Mississippi Community College this fall before continuing her education at Mississippi State University with plans to attend the University of Mississippi Medical Center to pursue a doctorate in dentistry. McGrew is a Booneville Hall of Fame member and a Mississippi Scholar.

"William Falkner told us that to understand the world, you must first

understand a place like Mississippi. I also believe that to understand the virtues of charity, brotherly kindness, honesty, integrity, and humility, you must first understand a place like Mississippi. Our state is home to an incredibly rich history and even more incredible people. Mississippi is so much more than a place--it is a home, beckoning all to feel of its warm kindness and gentle majesty. I am absolutely overcome with gratitude to be able to serve such a magnificent place and body of people as Mississippi's Miss Hospitality 2017," Miss Hospitality 2017 Winner McGrew said.

Miss Hospitality's top five contestants were:

Miss Hospitality 2017, Emma Grace McGrew, Booneville, MS
Taylor Phillips, first alternate, Neshoba County, MS
Haley Simmons, second alternate, Pike County, MS
Brittany Lee, third alternate, Laurel, MS
Jennifer Gray, fourth alternate, Jackson, MS

Miss Hospitality Program Coordinator Jennifer Parsons works with local pageant directors, contestants and sponsors throughout the year to present the weeklong pageant in Hattiesburg. Contestants participate in various service projects during the week, along with teambuilding and leadership activities.

"Now in its 68th year, the Miss Hospitality program offers young women the opportunity to showcase their love of Mississippi by helping to promote economic development and tourism. The reigning Miss Hospitality travels throughout the state sharing goodwill and speaking with various organizations to share Mississippi's business advantages, cultural assets, and tourism offerings. Emma Grace McGrew will join a great group of talented young women who have served Mississippi in this capacity. We are looking forward to a great year with Emma Grace," Parsons said.

For more information on Miss Hospitality, visit www.misshospitality.com or the program's Facebook page.