

Clinton's Stanteen heading to Miss Mississippi pageant

By Carole Kelly

Entering a preliminary contest in January has led Madeline Stanteen of Clinton to the Miss Mississippi pageant in Vicksburg. Stanteen is Miss Jackson 2019, and she will be competing at the event June 19-22.

For the contestants, nearly fifty young women, the week will begin June 15 with a party at the Ameristar Casino in Vicksburg, with registration on June 16, the day that signals the official beginning of the competition.

"I decided to enter the preliminary on a whim," smiles Stanteen. "I had planned on getting back into the system after taking a break from my year of competing for the Miss Mississippi's Outstanding Teen title in 2015."

She went on to explain that a busy summer and a friend's wedding set for June 22, the final night of the competition, had eliminated her from being able to participate. Then the wedding date was moved, the scheduling conflict disappeared, and she was able to compete. Looking for the next local competition, she competed in the Miss Brandon pageant this past January, where four titles were awarded. She decided it would be a great experience and a chance to wear some of the dresses that she had for the occasion in her closet.

"I had no idea of the journey I was in for," said Stanteen, who has been preparing for Miss Mississippi since the day she won the Miss Jackson title. The first months saw paperwork to complete and an orientation weekend, then concentrating on a talent and working on her social impact statement. Wardrobe decisions also needed attention. With the school year completed, the preparation became full time. She goes to mock interviews twice a week and has the opportunity to meet with several different people who specialize in specific parts of the competition.

"There are four different aspects," she explained, "talent, evening gown, social impact statement, and onstage and private interview." She admits to enjoying all the points but claims inter-



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Madeline Stanteen of Clinton will participate in the Miss Mississippi pageant later this month in Vicksburg.

view as most likely her favorite.

"I love having a conversation with people I have never met before and immediately dive into difficult questions. We can be asked a wide range of per-

sonal, political, and opinionated questions. Before you step into that room, you really have to decide who you are and what you stand for."

She then asserts the need to be confi-

dent with that decision.

"The judges are trying to get to know you and want you to succeed, so it is not a scary eight minutes if you are confident in yourself."

Stanteen says there are few times that all the candidates are together before the week in June. They were together on orientation weekend in February, when everything the candidates for the Mississippi crown need to know is detailed before the actual competition.

"It is the time when we pick our candidate number and prelim group. It is also when everyone meets, forms friendships, attends business meetings, rehearsals and the teen princess crowning," she explained.

The blond, blue-eyed Stanteen is 5'4" tall, and she will be wearing a white evening gown in the competition. She will sing "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries" for the talent competition.

Stanteen has completed her sophomore year at Mississippi College, where she is studying worship leadership with a plan to work in church music ministry upon graduation. She is a part of Worship Collective at Mississippi College, the campus worship band which leads in chapel every week and has released two albums of songs written by members. She is a member of Kissimee social tribe and will serve as Follies co-chair next semester. A member of First Baptist Church in Clinton, she is very involved in the music ministry there, directing the youth praise team, singing in the church choir and leading on its praise team.

Spare time is a rare commodity for Stanteen, who loves to run, watch Netflix and listen to podcasts when she finds the time.

Among her cheering section for the competition will be her parents, Cassie and Kenny Stanteen, and her sister, Emma Grace. Family from Texas will also be present for the event, along with many of her friends.

Says her mother, Cassie, "We are proud of her, and we have always encouraged her to do her very best in everything she does. We tell her to be a light, to be true to herself."

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