

Hamilton awarded P.E.O. STAR Scholarship

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Recent Long Beach High School (LBHS) graduate Andria Hamilton has been selected to receive a \$2,500 STAR Scholarship from the P.E.O. Sisterhood, an international philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting women's educational advancement. She was recommended by P.E.O. Chapter B of Long Beach. Hamilton is the daughter of Josh and Danielle Hamilton of Long Beach.

Established in 2009, the P.E.O. STAR Scholarship recognizes exceptional young women in their final year of high school who plan to pursue postsecondary education in the United States or Canada. Recipients are chosen for outstanding leadership, academic excellence, extracurricular involvement, community service and strong potential for future success.

Organization representatives say Hamilton exemplifies the spirit of the STAR Scholarship through her remarkable achievements and service. A scholar-athlete who ranks near the top of her graduating class, she has been honored at the Superintendent's Awards each of her four years of high school and has earned numerous academic distinctions. She was recently selected for the LBHS Hall of Fame.

Hamilton's involvement at LBHS includes serving as captain of the LBHS Dance Team, participating in track and cross country and being a member of the LBHS Band. She has also been active in numerous organizations, including the National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Bearcat Buddies, Co-Op, Peer Mediation and Women in STEM; and she attended Girls' State, where she was named "Distinguished Citizen." She also excelled as a dual enrollment stu-



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Andria Hamilton

dent, earning college credits, all while also maintaining a part-time job.

Beyond campus, Hamilton has contributed to her community through her work with C.A.M.P. Awesome, Gulf Coast Buddy Sports and other civic groups.

"Andria is a quite accomplished young lady. She is well respected and is a wonderful asset to her school and our community," said Gail Donald, Chapter B STAR Scholarship Committee Chair.

Hamilton will continue her studies at Dartmouth College in the fall. She plans to major in chemical engineering and continue her running career at the collegiate level.

Founded in 1930, Chapter B of Long Beach is Mississippi's second-oldest P.E.O. chapter and includes nearly fifty members. The P.E.O. Sisterhood, established in 1869, has supported more than 129,000 women in pursuing their educational goals, awarding over \$462 million in scholarships, grants, awards and loans. With more than 5,400 chapters across the United States and Canada, P.E.O. remains one of North America's oldest and

most impactful women's organizations.

To learn more about P.E.O., visit www.PEOInternational.org or PEOMississippi.org.

MID to begin fortifying homes on Mississippi Gulf Coast

Special to Long Beach Breeze

The Mississippi Insurance Department (MID) is set to begin fortifying homes along the Mississippi Gulf Coast through the Strengthen Mississippi Homes Program (SMH).

Senate Bill 2409, passed during the 2026 Legislative Session, allows the MID to administer the program designed to help homeowners install stronger, storm-resistant roofs. The program supports upgrades to FOR-TIFIED Roof™ standards, which are designed to better withstand high winds, heavy rain and severe weather.

SB 2409 takes effect July 1 and allows the MID to partner with other agencies to administer funds. The Mississippi Windstorm Underwriting Association (MWUA), or "wind pool" as it is commonly known, is providing \$2 million to be administered by the MID. Recipients will receive up to \$10,000 in grant money. These funds will be provided to mitigate primary, single-family, owner-occupied residences. Grant recipients must be currently insured through the wind pool and have been insured by the wind pool for three consecutive policy years prior to being eligible.

Other homeowners who are not insured with the wind pool will be eligible in the statewide rollout anticipated to take place in early 2027. Ad-

ditional information will be provided on the MID website later this year.

In the meantime, the MID is continuing to build the systems needed to expand this grant program across the state. An advisory board has been created, and members have been named. The program is funded with fees collected from insurance companies – not taxpayer money. Those

fees will be collected beginning July 1, with full funding anticipated by spring 2027.

For any questions, contact the MID at 1-800-562-2957.

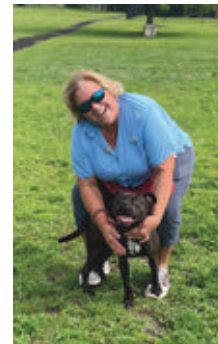
Additional information can also be found at www.mid.ms.gov by clicking "Mitigation Program Information."

House Bill 1911, which is the Mississippi Insurance Department's funding bill for Fiscal Year 2027, allowed the MID to receive up to \$15 million in statewide funding to provide grants for homeowners who qualify for the program. Unfortunately, due to a typo in House Bill 1911, the MID will not have spending authority for these funds until such time as the Legislature reconvenes and can address the issue. That is expected in early 2027. House Bill 1911 incorrectly referenced "contingent upon passage of Senate Bill 2406" which was a State Aid Road Bill that died in Committee on February 3, 2026.



Rotary Club volunteers at Humane Society

All photos Special to Long Beach Breeze



Special to Long Beach Breeze

Recently, several members of the Rotary Club of Long Beach, along with community members, volunteered at the Humane Society of South Mississippi. They spent the morning walking dogs, and were also able to donate much needed dog food, toys, blankets and towels. Additionally, club members gave a monetary donation from their recent Bingo Night proceeds.

The Humane Society of South Mississippi (HSSM), which is a non-profit organization, is the largest animal welfare organization in the state of Mississippi, offering pet adoptions, a foster program, return-to-owner efforts, spay/neuter and wellness services, a volunteer program, pet transports, youth initiatives, a food pantry and pet retention program, an on-site thrift store, and more. In 2025, HSSM cared for nearly 6,000 homeless pets in house and impacted 16,363 animals in the community.

For more information about HSSM or to sign up to volunteer, call 228-863-3354.