



NORTH CAROLINA

Azalea
Festival

78TH PRINCESS SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT

March 14th, 2026 · 7:30 PM
Sarah Graham Kenan Auditorium

2025 NORTH CAROLINA AZALEA FESTIVAL PRINCESS



Mia Volety



Scholarship Pageant Program

Singing of the National Anthem	Miss NC Volunteer, Emma Katherine Warren
Introduction of Contestants	Contestants
Introduction of 2025 NC Azalea Festival Princess	Mia Voley
Introduction of Mistress of Ceremonies	Mia Voley
Introduction of Judges	Michelle Braxton Currin
Welcome from the 2026 NC Azalea Festival President	Michael Franklin
Evening Gown Competition	Contestants
Entertainment	Thalian Association Youth Theatre

Intermission – 15 minutes

Recognition of Visiting Queens / Past Princesses

Announcement / Questioning of Semi-finalists	Mia Voley
Entertainment	Miss NC Volunteer, Emma Katherine Warren
Announcement / Questioning of Finalists	Michelle Braxton Currin
Farewell from the 2025 NC Azalea Festival Princess	Mia Voley
Presentation of Kathy Koonce Grimes Congeniality Award	Michelle Braxton Currin
Presentation of People's Choice Winner	Michelle Braxton Currin
Presentation of Top Sales Award Winner	Michelle Braxton Currin
Presentation of McKinley Lanier Community Service Award	Michelle Braxton Currin
Announcement of Renaissance Dental Studio STEM Scholarship Winner	Michelle Braxton Currin
Announcement of Runners-Up	Michelle Braxton Currin

Coronation of the 2026 North Carolina Azalea Festival Princess



Emery Amelia Behm

*You will always be
our Princess!*

*Love,
Mom, Dad, & Josie*



I miss you so much and I can't wait to see you! You really are the best sister ever. I love you and I hope that you will join me at UGA for college.

So Proud Of You!
♥ *Hailey*



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MY DARLING. YOU SHINE.

HEIDI JO

A girl knows her limits, but a wise girl knows she has none.

GOD

IS WITHIN HER SHE
WILL NOT FAIL.
-PSALM 46:5

She is clothed in
strength and
dignity and she
laughs without
fear of the
future.
-Proverbs 31:25

She didnt climb the mountain to be seen, she climbed it
to be reminded of what she is capable of.

Thank you to our Committee

Scholarship Pageant Co-Directors:

Kande Collins & Amy Queen

2026 Scholarship Pageant Committee:

Kim Kristof – Front of House Coordinator

Terry Collins – Set Design

Christy Hicks – Production Coordinator

Mandy Anderson-Ille – Judges' Coordinator

Betsy Cromartie – Contestant Coordinator

Kim Kristof – Contestant Coordinator

Tammy Pruden – Contestant Coordinator

Thank You to our Encore & Major Sponsors:



Mistress of Ceremonies MICHELLE BRAXTON CURRIN



Michelle is a native of Goldsboro, NC. She is a graduate of Meredith College. Michelle has performed from New York to New Orleans and throughout the Caribbean. Michelle is a two-time talent winner and 1st runner up to Miss North Carolina in 1991. She made her theater debut on the Main Stage here in Wilmington at Thalian Hall. She loves volunteering, performing and traveling. She currently resides in Fuquay Varina with her husband Ronnie Currin. She's thrilled to be here with you tonight as your Mistress of Ceremonies.

2026 Scholarship Awards

Princess	\$6,250
1st Runner-Up	\$3,000
2nd Runner-Up	\$2,300
3rd Runner-Up	\$2,000
4th Runner-Up	\$1,500
STEM Scholarship Presented By Renaissance Dental Studio	\$2,000
People's Choice	\$250
Top Salesperson	\$250
McKinley Lanier Community Service	\$250
Miss Congeniality	\$250

A LETTER FROM THE 2025 NORTH CAROLINA AZALEA FESTIVAL PRINCESS

Mia Volety



Good evening, and thank you all for being here tonight to support the 18 incredible, talented young women competing tonight! They have worked so hard over the past 11 weeks to prepare, and I couldn't be prouder of each and every one of them.

The practices leading up to pageant night last year were my favorite part of the process, and watching this year's contestants grow in confidence, form genuine friendships, and step into their own has been so rewarding. Additionally, I hope you all can join us for the 2026 Azalea Festival from April 8th to the 12th!

When I was born, my parents asked my sister what she thought my name should be. As a four-year-old and the world's biggest Princess Diaries fan, she didn't hesitate to respond with "Amelia Thermopolis, but she'll go by Princess Mia."

My father, who is from India, hoped I would have a Sanskrit name, one that honored our culture. So my parents found a way to do both. They named me Amulya, and just as my sister wished, I grew up as Mia, or, to those closest to me, Princess Mia.

When my junior year rolled around, and I had the opportunity to compete in the 77th Azalea Festival Scholarship Pageant and become a real princess in our own community, I jumped at the chance.

Although my family has always enjoyed attending the Festival, and I served as an Azalea Festival Ambassador during the 2024 Festival, this role allowed me to see it from a completely different point of view. For the first time, I witnessed the months of planning, dedication, and behind-the-scenes work that make this celebration possible, and it deepened my appreciation for all the hardworking volunteers who pour their hearts into keeping a tradition that makes Wilmington Wilmington. So thank you to every volunteer who keeps the Festival running year after year!

One of my favorite parts of the year was traveling to different parts of the state and learning about each town's unique cultures and celebrations.

I had the privilege of getting to know visiting queens and members of the Queens' Court this year, and through them, I gained a deeper understanding of how women in pageantry are redefining what it means to wear a crown. Watching them use their platforms to inspire change and uplift their communities taught me the responsibility that comes with the crown. More importantly, this year showed me what it truly means to be a role model, to lead with kindness and show younger girls that you can be confident and ambitious while also acting with compassion.

I want to thank my wardrobe sponsor, Camille's of Wilmington, for always dressing me to be my most fabulous self; Mrs. Mandy, my crown mom, who guided me through this entire experience and made every appearance something I truly looked forward to; Mrs. Kande, Mrs. Amy, and Mrs. Christy for their tireless work preparing us to put our best foot forward during pageant practices and throughout Festival week; all the board members, Festival staff, and photographers for a fantastic year filled with unforgettable events; the 2024 Princess, Minh Vu, for always being an incredible role model; and of course, my amazing court—Perry, Claire, Lauren, and Maya—for always being in my corner.

I'd also like to thank my friends for their unwavering support and for constantly encouraging me to step outside of my comfort zone. And last but certainly not least, I want to thank my mom, dad, and sister for always encouraging me to dream big, try my best, and for supporting me every step of the way.

I never expected to compete in a pageant, especially as someone who once avoided public speaking, but choosing to step outside my comfort zone proved to be one of the most meaningful decisions I've made. This year challenged me to grow as a leader, to carry myself with confidence and poise, and to better understand the responsibility that comes with representing a community.

What began as a childhood nickname became a real opportunity to serve Wilmington, and it has truly been an honor. Thank you for trusting me with this role.

Forever and always, I am proud to be your 2025 Azalea Festival Princess, Mia Volety.

North Carolina Azalea Festival

PAST PRINCESSES

1949 Marguerite Todd (Fornes)	1975 Lynne Marie Williford	2001 Jamie Deaver (Ferguson)
1950 Barbara Hatcher (McDonald)	1976 Dean Herring (Bowen)	2002 Hannah Manson (Mynhier)
1951 Evelyn Bergem (Lofin)	1977 Leigh Hobbs (Murray)	2003 Ashley Patterson (Nunez)
1952 Mary Catherine White (Gregory)	1978 Dee Dee Ward (Wright)	2004 Claire Williamson
1953 Mary Francis Davis (Worrell)	1979 Jackie Everette	2005 Jannell Upton (Dunaway)
1954 Nancy Bates (Martin)	1980 Lisa Pridgen (Tise)	2006 Michelle Poulos (Woo)
1955 Libby Beck (Cameron)	1981 Julie Teachey (Teague)	2007 Lauren Smith (Hill)
1956 Mary Frances All (Forester)	1982 Laura Welch (Butcher)	2008 Joshlynn Starling (Justad)
1957 Jukie Seaton (Patterson)	1983 Lori Weeks (Boltdt)	2009 Zelle Brown (Wiggins)
1958 Linda Kelly (King)	1984 Maria Paige Truitt	2010 Abbey Starling (Nobles)
1959 Nancy Stovall (Horton)	1985 Holly Mayo (Borden)	2011 Hannah Smith (Bowen)
1960 Frances Wood (Loughlin)	1986 Susan Skelton (Gough)	2012 Julia Lovett
1961 Marty Allgood (Furr)	1987 Patricia Parker (Stone)	2013 Paxton Webster (Salke)
1962 Helen Raney (Pinckney)	1988 Amy Wolfe (Lovelace)	2014 Tori Mathew
1963 Fredi Crisp (Smith)	1989 Angela Fipps (Boone)	2015 Haleigh Somberg
1964 Wanda Caines (Johnston)	1990 Amy Lennon (Queen)	2016 Lilly Kays
1965 Kathy Seitter (Swango)	1991 Stacie Nicole Davis	2017 Emma Grace Wright
1966 Donna Bordeaux (Little)	1992 Amy Linette Davis	2018 Grace Tippet
1967 Susanne Burns (Smith)	1993 Stephanie Dawn Bilodeau	2019 Claire-Emma Britt
1968 Sarah Mason	1994 Bonnie Warren (Palsa)	2020 Brooke McIntyre
1969 Janet Evans (Farrior)	1995 Sarah Ronan (Buchanan)	2021 Brooke McIntyre
1970 Cheryl Fleishman (Issacs)	1996 Nicole Simcoe (Baller)	2022 McKinley Lanier
1971 Paula Davis (Noell)	1997 Elizabeth Harris (Carroll)	2023 Avery Braithwaite
1972 Connie Kearney (Coble)	1998 Lauren Yerby (Bolick)	2024 Minh Vu
1973 Debbie Fountain (Fugazy)	1999 Danita Davis	2025 Mia Volety
1974 Wende Fox (Lawson)	2000 Melanie Brooks	

Tonight's Entertainment

EMMA KATHERINE WARREN

Emma Katherine Warren is a freshman at East Carolina University, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance with a concentration in classical and operatic singing. Her passion for music has shaped her life from an early age and continues to guide her academic and professional journey. Emma Katherine is an active member of the ECU Chamber Singers and serves in the ensemble and choir at First Presbyterian Church. She has performed in full-scale productions with Opera Wilmington, appearing in *The Magic Flute* and *Tosca*, further deepening her love for storytelling through operatic performance. Throughout her singing career, performing the National Anthem has become one of her greatest honors. She has been invited to sing at the North Carolina Azalea Festival Parade, the Azalea Festival Queen's Coronation, UNCW Basketball and Baseball games, Honor Flight send-offs, the World's Championship Horse Show, and numerous equestrian events across the country. In addition to her musical achievements, Emma Katherine is a two-time World Champion equestrian. Competitive riding has been a defining part of her life, teaching her discipline and resilience. The dedication required in the arena mirrors the commitment she brings to the stage. A proud graduate of John T. Hoggard High School, Emma Katherine also completed coursework at Cape Fear Community College during her high school career, demonstrating both academic drive and determination. In 2025, she competed at Miss North Carolina's Teen, earning double preliminary awards in both Evening Gown and Talent. Today, she proudly serves as Miss North Carolina Volunteer and will represent her state as she vies for the prestigious title of Miss Volunteer America this June.

Violet Derry

“Whether or not you believe in fairy tales, every girl is a princess to somebody.”



Good luck Violet! We are so proud of our smart, strong, athletic princess!

LOVE

MOM, DAD, NONI, NOPI AND GAVIN

*Good luck to all
our girls!
We are so proud of you!
Love, Kande and Amy*

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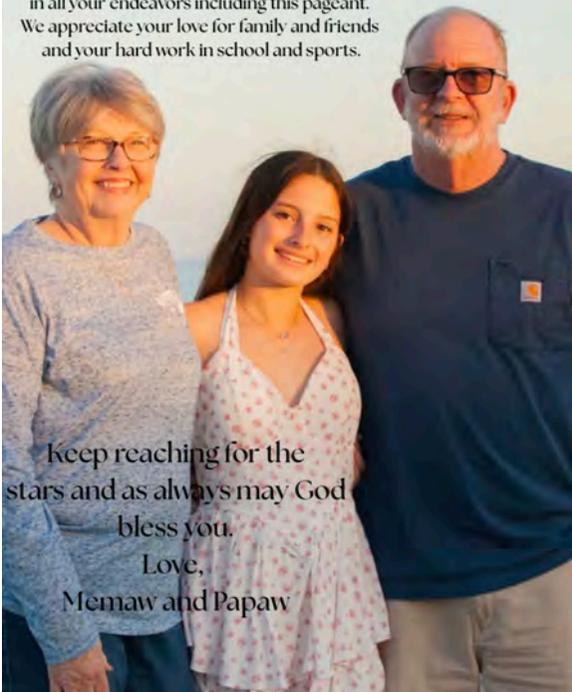
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To our sweet *Caylei*

We love you more than you know and our wish for you is happiness and success in all your endeavors including this pageant. We appreciate your love for family and friends and your hard work in school and sports.



Keep reaching for the stars and as always may God bless you.

Love,
Memaw and Papaw

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A LETTER FROM THE

President

On behalf of the North Carolina Azalea Festival and its Board of Directors, I am honored to welcome you to the 2026 North Carolina Azalea Festival Princess Scholarship Pageant this evening. Tonight, we will crown the 2026 North Carolina Azalea Princess and give away more money in scholarships than any other pageant in the State except Miss North Carolina.

As President of the North Carolina Azalea Festival, I am incredibly proud of each of the young women competing tonight. These outstanding participants exemplify far more than grace and poise; they are leaders, scholars, and ambassadors who contribute meaningfully to their schools, organizations, and communities. Each contestant embodies the beauty, character, and spirit that define the very heart of the Azalea Festival.

This evening holds particular significance, as the young woman crowned will become the 78th Azalea Festival Princess, serving as the Festival's sole year-round representative and recipient of the Beverly Anne Jurgenssen Scholarship Award. This distinction honors excellence, commitment, and service, highlighting the Festival's enduring dedication to promoting education and leadership among young women.

This pageant celebrates the best of our Festival's core traditions: service, scholarship, community pride, and the promise of future generations. The young women on stage tonight embody these values, underscoring why this event is a cherished part of our Festival's legacy.

A huge thank you to our Major and Encore sponsors for their generous contributions: Atlantic Union Bank, Blade & Bow, the City of Wilmington, Coastal Kia, the Hotel Ballast, Liberty & Plenty Distillery, New Hanover County, New Hanover Printing, the North Carolina Education Lottery, Novant Health, Rent-A-John, Stella Artois and Wicked Weed of Adams Beverages, Truist, and the U.S. Army. Your generous contributions make events like this possible.

I invite you to join us from April 8th through the 12th as we celebrate the sights, sounds, and traditions that make the North Carolina Azalea Festival so special.

Thank you for joining us this evening and for supporting these remarkable young women. Please enjoy the pageant, and welcome to the 2026 North Carolina Azalea Festival.



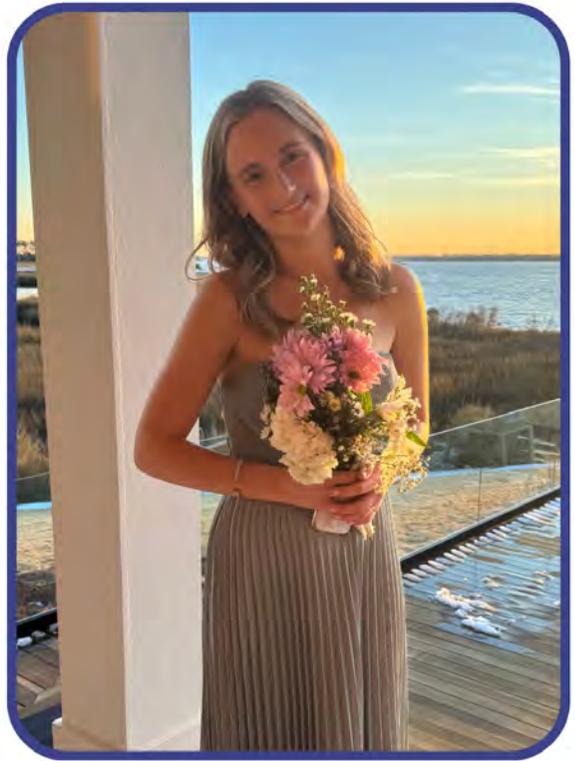
Warmest regards,
Michael Franklin, 79th
North Carolina Azalea
Festival President



Good Luck, Emery!

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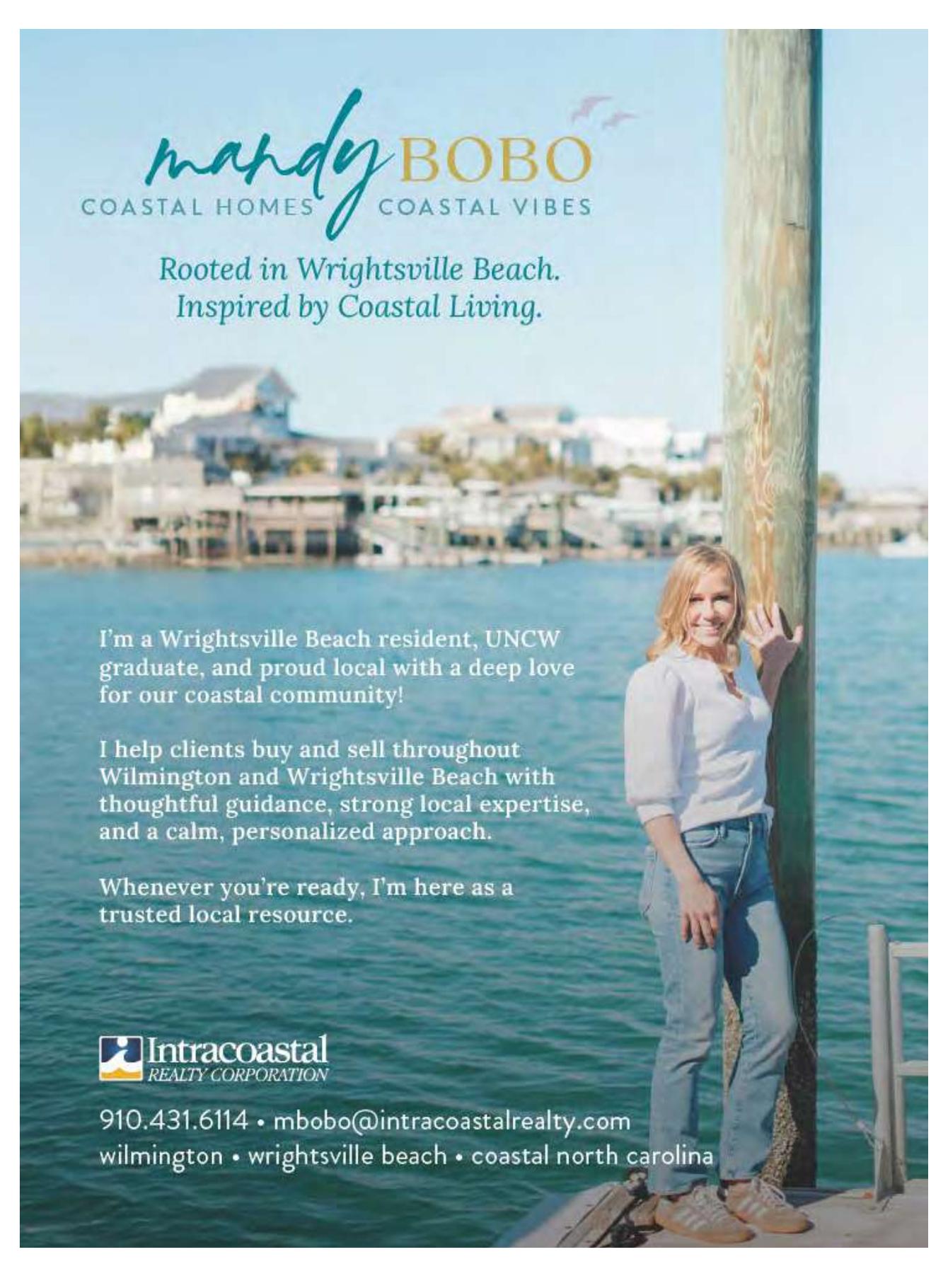
SUPPORTING MY COUSIN

Zoei Smith

**Candidate for the
2026**

AZALEA FESTIVAL PRINCESS

ROD WADDELL



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GOOD LUCK
VIOLET!



ALL OUR LOVE GRANDMA & GRANDPA DERRY

Best Wishes to
Zoei Smith

Azalea Festival Princess Candidate
2026



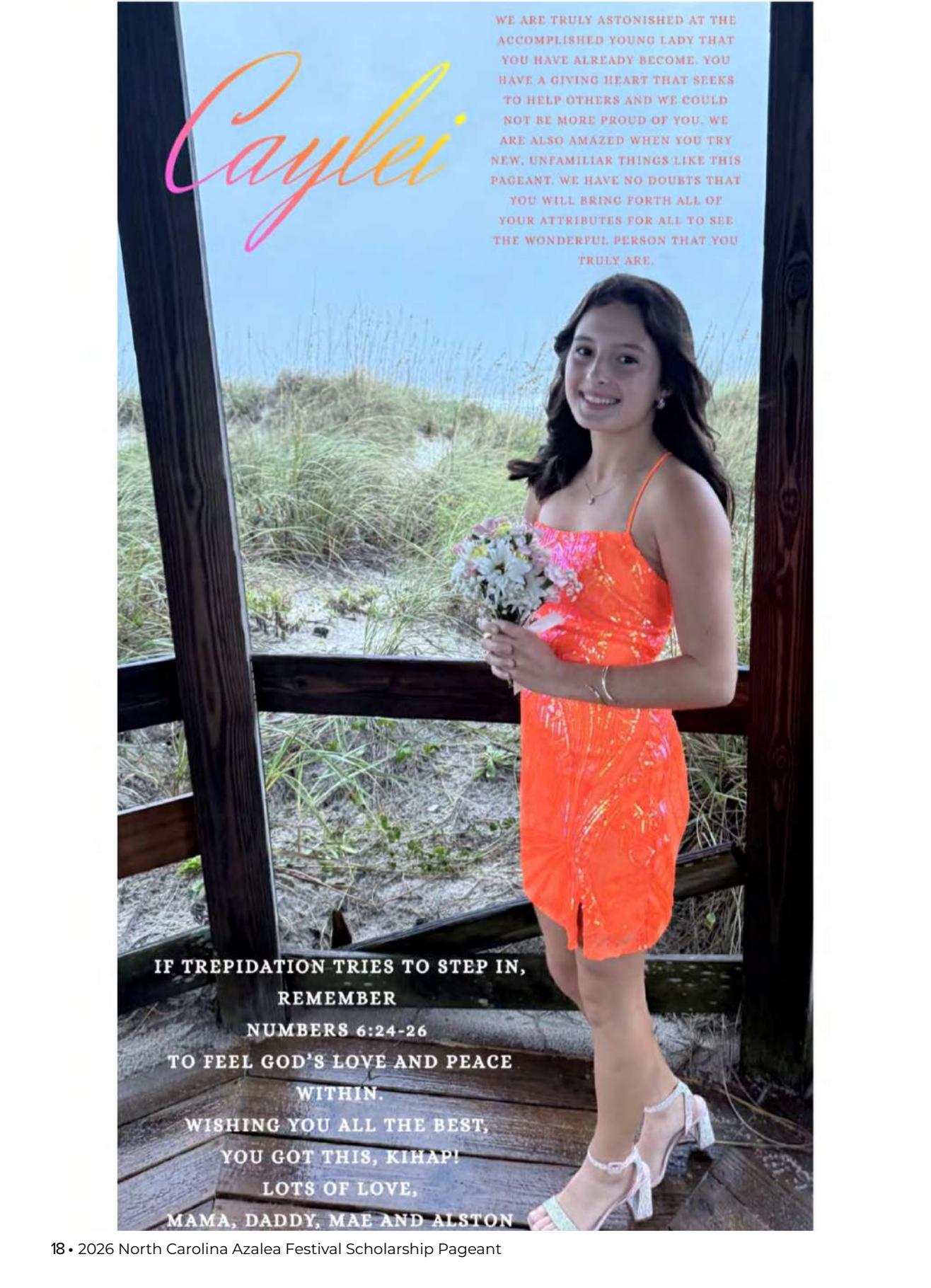
Gwendolyn Waddell Burrell (Aunt)
Attorney At Law
(919) 889-9306
gburrelllaw@yahoo.com

We are so proud of you our beautiful and sweet Lilyanna.
You have and will always be our princess!



Love,

Grandma, Pop-Pop and Grammie,
Mark, Julia, Vada & William



Caylei

WE ARE TRULY ASTONISHED AT THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY BECOME. YOU HAVE A GIVING HEART THAT SEEKS TO HELP OTHERS AND WE COULD NOT BE MORE PROUD OF YOU. WE ARE ALSO AMAZED WHEN YOU TRY NEW, UNFAMILIAR THINGS LIKE THIS PAGEANT. WE HAVE NO DOUBTS THAT YOU WILL BRING FORTH ALL OF YOUR ATTRIBUTES FOR ALL TO SEE THE WONDERFUL PERSON THAT YOU TRULY ARE.

IF TREPIDATION TRIES TO STEP IN,
REMEMBER
NUMBERS 6:24-26
TO FEEL GOD'S LOVE AND PEACE
WITHIN.

WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST,
YOU GOT THIS, KIHAP!
LOTS OF LOVE,
MAMA, DADDY, MAE AND ALSTON



Good Luck
LILYANNA SCHREIBER!



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Reginald E. Waddell

Best Wishes
Zoei Smith

and



Patricia A. Waddell

On your quest for Azalea Festival Princess 2026

OUR JUDGES

◆ *for the Evening*

SUNDAY ALLEN - CHIEF ◆

Sunday Allen is an educator and history lover who hails from Elizabethtown, NC. After a career working as a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and as a high school history teacher, Sunday retired in 2024. Not yet ready to fully leave the classroom, she joined the staff at a local charter school and is in her second year in the seventh grade! Social Studies and Middle School Theatre fill her school days now. Sunday is an alumnae of the Miss North Carolina Scholarship Pageant - she served as Miss Pender County and Miss Spivey's Corner during her college days at UNC-Chapel Hill. Sunday and husband Dan recently celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary.

KEITH BRANCH ◆

Keith Branch is a native of North Carolina and is a 1986 graduate of North Carolina State University with a BA in Accounting. After working with the North Carolina State Auditor's office for 10 years, Keith started the Allstate Insurance agency in Clayton, North Carolina, which he sold in 2015 after 17 years in business. He retired in 2022 as the Life Sales Manager for Erie Insurance for the state of North Carolina and is currently providing insurance consultation. Keith is a past elected member of the Johnston County Board of Commissioners and Johnston County Board of Education in North Carolina, where he served as an elected official for 10 years. Keith also served as President of the Clayton, North Carolina Chamber of Commerce twice. Keith is a Chief judge in the Miss North Carolina Miss America organization where he has judged for the last 15 years. Keith has also judged in the Alabama Distinguished Young Women's organization for three years. Keith previously served on the Miss Capital City/Clayton/Cleveland Scholarship Committee in North Carolina for approximately 9 years, where Nia Franklin, Miss America 2019, was one of the committee's prior queens. A neat fact about Keith is that he served as the Master of Ceremonies the night that Scotty McCreery won his very first talent event as Clayton Idol. Scotty won American Idol the next year and Keith is mentioned in Scotty's autobiography. Keith and his lovely wife, Sandra, have been married for 5 years and they currently reside in Clayton. Combined, they have three daughters, Dana, Kaylee, and Lindsay. Sandra and Keith are also Lolli-Pop to their 3-year-old granddaughter, Charlotte and 6-month-old Thomas.

DR. BILLY SAMPSON ◆

Dr. Billy Sampson, DNP, FNP-C, is a healthcare professional and nursing educator with over 18 years of experience spanning emergency medicine, urgent care, family practice, home health, nurse leadership, and academic instruction. He earned both his Master of Science in Nursing as a Family Nurse Practitioner and his Doctor of Nursing Practice from Frontier Nursing University in Kentucky, where he developed a strong foundation in evidence-based practice and patient-centered care. A native of Lumberton, North Carolina, Dr. Sampson currently resides in Charlotte, North Carolina, with his son, Landan. He serves as an Emergency Medicine Nurse Practitioner with UNC Health Southeastern and is also a Nurse Practitioner with the North Carolina Department of Adult Corrections. In addition to his clinical roles, he contributes to healthcare leadership as a Board Member for Freedom After Hours Urgent Care in Charlotte and serves as a Visiting Professor with Chamberlain University, where he mentors and prepares future nurses for professional practice. Dr. Sampson is an active member of the American Nurses Association and the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. He is deeply passionate about improving healthcare access for underserved populations and remains committed to advancing both community health and professional excellence through education, leadership, and service. Beyond healthcare, Dr. Sampson is dedicated to youth mentorship and leadership development. He has proudly served as a judge for the Miss North Carolina Organization for the past two years and has judged several local pageants throughout Robeson County. He also recently judged the University of North Carolina at Pembroke Talent Show, further demonstrating his support for student achievement and performance excellence. Dr. Sampson is honored to be part of the North Carolina Azalea Festival Princess Scholarship Pageant and looks forward to celebrating the confidence, talent, and leadership of this year's outstanding delegates.

MAYA BRYANT ◆

Maya Bryant is a first-generation college graduate with a Masters in Communication, Maya leads marketing and communication strategies while serving as an adjunct instructor in higher education. She has held the titles of Miss Garner's Outstanding Teen 2012, Miss Zebulon 2018, where she placed Top 15 at Miss North Carolina, and Miss Dunn 2021. Maya's creativity has earned her four Clío Entertainment Awards, and she has contributed to major Broadway productions, including MJ the Musical, Kimberly Akimbo, Jaja's African Hair Braiding and Disney's Aladdin. With an unshakable belief in the power of storytelling and service, Maya continues to inspire others to pursue their passions fiercely. She has earned numerous honors, including Bronze and Silver Medalist Awards for the Duke of Edinburgh's Young American's Challenge and the Girl Scout Silver Award.

DR. NATALIE OSTRANDER ◆

Dr. Natalie Ostrander is the Secondary Math Coordinator for Onslow County Schools, where she supports, serves, and strengthens math education for students, teachers, and administrators through Instructional Services with curriculum and instruction. Outside of work, Natalie resides in Surf City, NC, where she and her family enjoy the coastal lifestyle. She is also a proud pageant mom to the reigning NC Jr. Rhododendron Queen. Natalie knows the pageant world inside and out—she's been a contestant, titleholder, entertainer, auditor, and judge. When she's not busy with work or her oldest daughter's schedule, Natalie enjoys spending time with her husband and two girls. They love to travel, visit theme parks, and are always up for trying new foods.

LIL JON



THURSDAY,
APRIL 9, 2026

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We are so incredibly proud of you
Lilyanna!

You are such a driven, confident,
kind, and beautiful young woman
who shines in everything you do.
Your sweet spirit goes far beyond
the stage. We're cheering you on
and can't wait to see you light up
the stage!

Love,
The Wilharm Family

2026 NORTH CAROLINA AZALEA FESTIVAL

Contestants

Good Luck to all of tonight's contestants!



Caroline Underwood



Heidi Jo Fritz



Caitlyn Cowgill



Drew Wyatt



Cailyn Freeman



Jacqueline Crawford



Emery Behm



Violet Derry



Ella Stephenson



Reagan McWhorter



Ella Lynch



Caylei Davidson



Lauren Coyle



Nina Goulart



Eva Brown



Zoei Smith



Lilyanna Schreiber



Emma Steele

BEVERLY ANNE JURGENSEN

Scholarship Award

On July 31, 2004, Beverly Anne Jurgensen passed away. Miss Jurgensen's passing has left a void in the North Carolina Azalea Festival family that will never be filled. In memory of the tremendous person that Miss Jurgensen was to the community and the North Carolina Azalea Festival, the young lady crowned Princess tonight will receive the "Beverly Anne Jurgensen Scholarship Award."

The Azalea Festival Officers made the decision to name the Princess' scholarship award in memory of Miss Jurgensen because of her astounding 49 years of devotion and service to the North Carolina Azalea Festival. In 1992, Miss Jurgensen became the first female president of the Azalea Festival. Prior to 1992, Miss Jurgensen served as the secretary of the Azalea Festival for an incredible 25 years from 1965 to 1990. During this same period, Miss Jurgensen also served as house manager of the Azalea Festival. After watching the first Azalea Festival parade in 1948, she served as a celebrity

escort for the Festival the following year. In 1950, Miss Jurgensen became the first parade messenger. Even after completing her term as president of the 1992 Azalea Festival, Miss Jurgensen continued to serve as a member on the Festival's Board of Directors from 1993 to 1996. For the Azalea Festival's 50th anniversary in 1997, Miss Jurgensen was instrumental in compiling a historical compilation of the event's first fifty years.

In addition to her remarkable contributions to the Azalea Festival, Miss Jurgensen worked in her family's trucking business, ultimately becoming a partner and general manager for 22 years. After parting from the trucking industry, Miss Jurgensen worked for approximately 28 years as the Director of Human Resources for the Wilmington Star-News. Miss Jurgensen was the first female member of the Lower Cape Fear Personnel Association and eventually became its first female president.

Despite her long hours of work in her career and for the Azalea Festival, Miss Jurgensen still found the time to serve on the boards of many civic and community organizations including the City of Wilmington Safety Advisory Board; American Red Cross; Employment Security Advisory Board; Family Services Board; Beta Sigma Phi sorority; and, the Hospitality Board for New Hanover Regional Medical Center. Miss Jurgensen was also an active member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

It is the hope of the Azalea Festival's Officers and Board of Directors that the young ladies participating in tonight's pageant, and those in future years to come, will strive for success in all aspects of their lives. There is no better example and role model of a wonderful and successful life than that of Miss Jurgensen. The North Carolina Azalea Festival will always remember Beverly Anne Jurgensen for her love and dedication to the community's continued well-being, and to her success in life as a person and as a professional.

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Best Wishes to
ZOEI
SMITH

AZALEA
FESTIVAL
PRINCESS
CANDIDATE



NANNY & JILL



Special Thanks

We would like to thank the following businesses or individuals for their support in the production of tonight's event, as well as those during this year's North Carolina Azalea Festival:

First Baptist Church – for providing meeting space each week for the contestants.

John Davis & Adam Gilbert Films - for taking pictures during the pageant and Festival.

Hampton Inn Medical Park – for housing the judges this weekend and for hosting the private interviews.

Azalea Festival Board of Directors and staff – for their support of this pageant.

Susan Gough, Christy Hicks, Sam Highsmith, Janna Lennon, Al O'Briant, and Mia Volety - for their assistance with Mock Interviews.

Christian Ferrante and the staff of WWAY TV3 - for producing the Princess Farewell and Evening Gown bio videos.

Jack Upton – for photographing the girls' head shots for the People's Choice Contest and tonight's program and for doing the official portrait of the 2026 Princess.

Scharlotte Eby and Jackie Casey - for being our auditors.

Chase Fulton- for producing the video of tonight's production.

Todd and Mandy Anderson-Ille for donating crown box.

Diane Collins of Diesel Parts of Carolina, LLC – for sponsoring the parade float for Princess and Court during the Azalea Festival.

The Thalian Association Youth Theatre and Emma Katherine Warren for providing our entertainment this evening.

Michelle Currin for emceeing tonight's event.

Mandy Anderson-Ille for providing lunch and transporting our judges.

Bluewater Restaurant for hosting Judges' Dinner.

Camille's of Wilmington for providing attire for our Princess throughout her reign and for dressing our entertainers this evening.

The staff of Kenan Auditorium – for printing our tickets and for providing their assistance in making this event run smoothly for the contestants, Directors and the audience!

Dr. Sarah Pless of Renaissance Dental Studio - for the generous STEM scholarship for one of our contestants.

Our wonderful back-stage crew: Christy Hicks, Tammy Pruden, Betsy Cromartie and Kalyn and Kim Kristof – Kande and Amy are most grateful!!



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