

# The Crown Chronicle

## Miss Kentucky Pageant

### A Note From The Executive Director

Happy Wednesday everyone!

I hope this issue finds you well. The past couple of weeks have been insanely busy but exciting all at the same time.

This Derby week was the launch of our new partnership with Churchill Downs and I couldn't be more excited! Our Miss contestants volunteered at Churchill Downs for Thurby, Oaks and Derby to sell 50/50 raffle tickets for the Churchill

Downs Foundation. Our contestants out-raised the last two year combined! They raised over \$130,000! Our Miss Richmond, Morgan Moses won the Thurby and Oaks day challenge and got to walk the red carpet on Derby day! Miss Mammoth Cave Area, Hannah Robb won the Derby day challenge and won a \$5,000

Scholarship from Churchill Downs! I'm so proud of our contestants. These ladies are seriously a force to be reckoned with! The CEO of Churchill Downs was so impressed with our young ladies and has agreed to extend this partnership! I can't wait to reveal more! I again want to thank Tonya Abeln for bringing this opportunity our way. You truly are amazing and we're so appreciative of all you do for our program.



**MKYOT**

May 25-27th, 2018



**Miss Kentucky**

June 28th - 30th,  
2018

Also in this issue, we get to catch up with Miss Kentucky 2011, Ann Blair Thornton. Ann Blair is one amazing woman and has much to share about her year of service as well as what she's been up to in the last few years! Make sure you read her segment!

We also get to hear from Molly and Abby about their last couple of weeks. As usual, they've been very busy! I'm sad typing this, but this is Abby's last newsletter as the reigning Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen. I have no idea where the time went, but what I do know is that Abby is one special young woman. Her intellect is far beyond her years, her talent is phenomenal, and her passion for service is unmatched amongst her peers. Her goal for this year was to further her platform and to increase the reach of this program. I would say she's been greatly successful. I'm thankful for the opportunity to be in your life Abby, there's not another like you! Wishing you the best as you open the next chapter of your life...at the University of Alabama...on a FULL scholarship! Make sure you vote for your favorite Outstanding Teen contestant to be named Kentucky's Choice! And don't forget to submit yourself or someone else for the MKO Top 40 under 40! The list is growing and I'm so excited to hear from more of our pageant family!

See you soon!

Yours in Service,

Ashley Anderson

# Miss Kentucky Org. Top 40 Under 40!

Every former competitor has a story to tell. Our organization is all about positioning young women to be successful long after their last curtain call, but rarely do we get to follow up with them down the line.

We know there are countless members of the Miss Kentucky and Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen family out there doing incredible work, and we want to hear your stories! Perhaps it's your career, or it may be philanthropy or art where you have found purpose.

Whatever it is, step back in the spotlight for a paragraph or two and tell us all about it!

Nominate yourself or someone else! Email your nomination to: [kjordanphillips@gmail.com](mailto:kjordanphillips@gmail.com)

Former Outstanding Teen and Miss contestants are welcome to submit!

Deadline to enter: May 31, 2018

Submissions should include:

- A recent picture
- A "mini memoir" in 250 words or less
- Answers to the following questions:
  - When did you compete
  - What is the best lesson that you learned from Miss Kentucky? How do you still use it today?
  - When you were young, you probably had a vision of where you thought you would be at your current age. Looking back, do you think your younger self would be surprised with where you are now?
  - What is your all time favorite memory from Miss Kentucky? Make it a good one!



## ANECDOTE FROM MISS KENTUCKY'S OUTSTANDING TEEN ABBY QUAMMEN

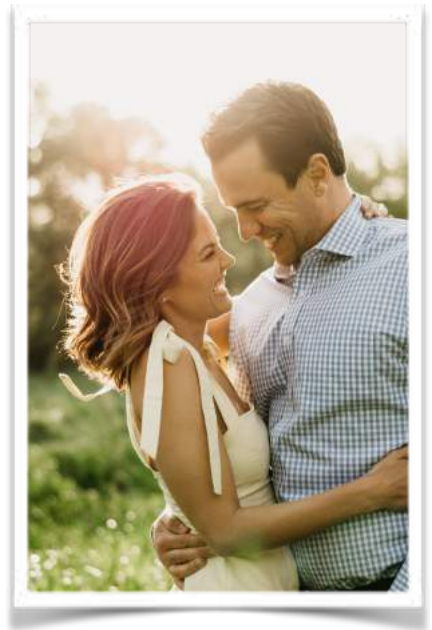
"The past couple of weeks have been FULL of prep for MKYOT weekend, the BEST Kentucky Derby weekend, and end of the year senior festivities! AP testing, college t-shirt day, and my very last day of high school filled last week, and on Saturday I attended my senior prom! The perfect end to a crazy year. This Sunday, I will be graduating from Lexington Catholic High School with honors, and I couldn't be more proud! I can't believe a new Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen will be crowned in less than two weeks. It's so bittersweet. I will miss being MKYOT, but it's time for a new chapter of my life and for another girl to get her moment in the spotlight! I can't wait to see who it is and all that they do with this incredible opportunity. To the MKYOT Class of 2018, I'm so proud of the incredible, smart, beautiful ladies that you are! Each and every one of you are going to shine so bright on stage, and I'm anxious to see which one of you is Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen 2018! Good luck!"



# Forever Miss Kentucky

Ann-Blair Thornton, Miss Kentucky 2011

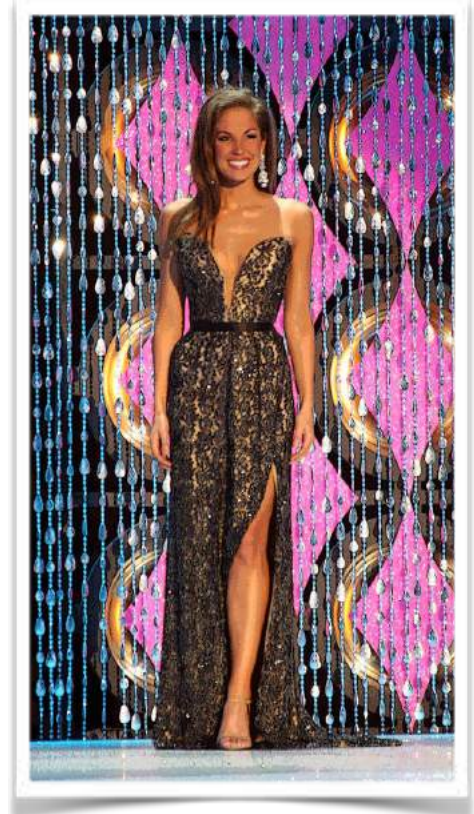
- **What have you been up to since you've given up the Miss Kentucky title?** After graduating from WKU, I moved to Dallas, TX to work as a Diabetes Care Associate for AstraZeneca. It's such a fun, fulfilling job and I just feel so lucky to have found it! As a fun little side job, I also began teaching Pure Barre--an exercise class that is kind of a mix of pilates and yoga. And most exciting: a few months after moving here in 2014, I met my now fiancée, Ryan Housefield. We are getting married November 3 of this year. So between my career, my hobby job, and planning a wedding, 2018 has been a very busy (but FUN) year!
- **What was the first thing you did after pageant weekend ended?** Honestly, I can't even remember. That entire week was such a whirlwind... I remember going back to my college house for one night to pack up my stuff to spend that first week in Lexington, but I don't really remember the specifics. I'm sure a lot of food was involved and my friends and family were just so wonderful during that time, so I'm certain some type of celebration happened! The Monday after the crowning is when all the Miss America prep starts, so there's not a whole lot of time to rest on your laurels. But man oh man, what a joyful time that is! I do very vividly remember taking my Miss America headshots a few days later and Phillips Mitchell and I looking at each other with tears in our eyes because I was just so overwhelmed by it all. I had worked with him since I was 15, so shooting my Miss A headshots all those years later was pretty dang emotional... in the best way.
- **Looking back on your year of service, what was your most memorable moment?** Oh gosh, there are so many I don't even know where to start. I hate to choose a moment from the night I was crowned because the year is so much more than that one night, but I gotta say, the night I won was pretty spectacular. I had SO many friends and family there, which was just so invigorating, nerve-racking, and humbling all at the same time. I'll never forget being at the Crown and Roses ball after the pageant and watching as one by one, dozens and dozens of my friends and family came barreling in to celebrate with me. I think some of them even blew straight pass the sign in table without presenting or buying a ticket... we probably still owe money for that (does an IOU cover us here?!). At one point the DJ played the song "We Are Family" and my entire family (50 plus people) raced to the dance floor singing at the top of their lungs. It was just such a great moment because it's a reminder of the fact that it truly takes a village. Of course I had so many memorable moments on my school tour, at Miss America, etc., but if I could choose one moment to relive over and over again, it would have to be seeing all the love in one room celebrating one of the coolest moments I will ever have.



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- **Funniest moment?** Oh shoot! This is an even tougher one! As stressful and tiresome as that year can be, it is also so filled with laughter. I think one of the funniest events I had was a charity event called "Bourbon and Cigars". I forgot what charity it was or who hosted the event but I will never forget sitting next to John

Calipari and having absolutely no idea who he was (I know I know... what a terrible Miss Kentucky. But, in my defense it was within the first couple of weeks of my reign and I'm a Hilltopper through and through). He had a bunch of friends in town for the event who were staying at a hotel in downtown Lexington. My car was parked behind the bus that was supposed to take all of them back for the night, but all 8 of them decided that, as the ambassador for the state, Miss Kentucky needed to drive them home. I obliged, because who says no to Coach Cal, and needless to say, it was an entertaining trip. Although it was only about a mile from the event space, it turned out to be the funniest mile driven throughout my year (and I drove many a mile that year). There was also that time I stayed in a haunted house in far Western Kentucky for a night.... I called Kim Canter crying in the middle of the night but I guess that story is only funny in retrospect?



- **What is something you miss?** The Fame! Kidding kidding... I really miss the tangible feeling of making a difference every single day. I know we can do that in our real lives, and I certainly strive to do so, but there really is something magical about that crown and how it can inspire others around you to do better. I miss the adventure of the job, and I miss the family that I created with the Miss Kentucky Board during the course of that year. It is just so special and really inexplicable.
- **What was the most difficult thing about being Miss Kentucky?** I'm sure you've heard this one before, but it can be very lonesome. I'm definitely a social person in general and like to be surrounded by people, but I learned that most people you interact with during that year don't actually want to know YOU, they want to know the crown. That sounds a little more cynical than I mean for it to, but it's the only way to describe it. In turn, you feel like you spend all this time surrounded by complete strangers (which you do), and while it's fulfilling and lovely and so magical, it can also be lonesome. (To clarify, I'm talking about the people you interact with when you are on the road, not the people who are helping you throughout the year like the board... they are AMAZING and care so much about every young woman involved in the program.)
- **After doing the job for a year, what advice do you have for girls interested in becoming Miss Kentucky?** Prepare yourself to have the most exhilarating yet exhausting; fun yet laborious; glamorous yet down home; wonderful yet stressful kind of a year. It really can feel like one big, magical contradiction. It's unlike anything else, really. That makes it a little difficult to navigate sometimes, because so few people really understand the highs and lows that come with it... so give me a call sista... I'd be happy to celebrate every high and low with empathy and excitement! I'd also encourage the winners to try to look at this year through a constant "Big Picture" lens. It is SO easy to get wrapped up in the details, but remind yourself to take a step back and enjoy the show... it's one of the best you'll ever see.
- **What did you learn doing the job that you wish you knew before competing?** I think I had a pretty good handle on the job before winning the title because I had such excellent mentors throughout the whole process. Heather French Henry, Mackenzie Walter, Maria Smith, Kerri Mitchell, Rachelle Phillips, Kaitlynne Postel, Mallory, Djuan etc etc etc... I was so lucky to have amazing women that I trusted (and still do!) with my whole heart to lead me through the process from beginning to end.

- **What life lessons have you taken from your year of service?** One of my biggest take aways from that year is that inclusivity matters. I mean, think about the diversity that we see within the pageant community. Isn't it so cool? Contrary to the popular narrative propagated by outsiders (world peace, "cookie cutter", fake..etc.), we celebrate our differences and what makes us unique, and all of us become better for it. And I'm not just talking about the young women who compete, I'm talking about the pageant community as a whole. It's a colorful community bursting with talent and love... whats better than that?
- **How has your participation in this program impacted your life?** This is SUCH a cliché answer, but I'm gonna go with it because it's true. Some of my truest friendships have stemmed from this program, and that's something I've only realized as time has passed. The women with whom you compete have a really cool understanding of one another, and that creates a bond that's hard to break. Mackenzie Walter is one of my dearest friends and I would not have her in my life had it not been for this program. That alone is something to be thankful for. Not to mention the love between a director and their titleholder. Joey Neal, George Reed, Jamie Breeding, Jim Morton, Jimmy Mawyer, Kim Canter, Joetta Gaunt... how does one even begin to thank them for their sacrifice and commitment to every girl that steps on that stage? I know I can't... but I'll certainly try by thanking them here: YOU CHANGED MY LIFE AND I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU FOR IT! Of course they changed my life by helping me achieve my dream of becoming Miss Kentucky, but even more so they changed my life by SHOWING me how to be selfless. Truer friends I've never known... and that's pretty dang special.



## MESSAGE FROM MISS KENTUCKY 2017 MOLLY MATNEY

"In this edition of the Crown Chronicle, I'm looking forward to the Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen pageant next week and looking back on my experience at the Kentucky Derby! Derby was amazing! It was so special to look out into the crowd and see the crowns of our contestants who were working so hard to raise money for the Churchill Downs foundation. Thank you Tonya Abeln for this opportunity. These next few weeks are so bittersweet because even though I'll be gaining another teen sister, Abby will be moving on to the next chapter in her life in Alabama. I'll miss her so much! We have grown so close this year and have been able to lean on each other for support many times. I'm so proud of her and the job she has done! Some of my favorite events with Abby have been emceeing the sweeps pageant, watching her compete at MAOT, and our holiday photoshoot with Ryan Kendall! Good luck to all the ladies competing in MKYOT! I'll be there rooting you on as the emcee!"





## MKYOT People's Choice!

You can now log on to vote for your favorite MKYOT contestant to become Kentucky's choice! Head to [www.misskentucky.org/teenpeopleschoice/](http://www.misskentucky.org/teenpeopleschoice/) to vote for your favorite contestant! Each vote is \$1 and all proceeds go to the Miss Kentucky Scholarship Foundation! Vote early & vote often!



## Upcoming Events:



## Want to book Miss Kentucky or Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen?



For Miss Kentucky, email: [bookmissky@gmail.com](mailto:bookmissky@gmail.com)



For Miss Kentucky's Outstanding Teen, email: [misskyoteen@gmail.com](mailto:misskyoteen@gmail.com)

Have something you would like to see  
in the Crown Chronicle?

**Contact us!**

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