

MISS ARKANSAS, SAVVY JANINE SHIELDS, CROWNED MISS AMERICA 2017

*The "2017 Miss America Competition" Aired Live
on Sunday, September 11th from Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall
on the ABC Television Network for its 96th Anniversary*

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Red Carpet - <http://bit.ly/2cC7Yfl>

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ATLANTIC CITY, NJ (September 12, 2016) - Miss Arkansas, Savvy Janine Shields, was crowned Miss America 2017 tonight at the birthplace of the legendary competition in Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall for its 96th Anniversary broadcast on the ABC Television Network. Returning for his 8th time as host, Chris Harrison was joined by co-host Sage Steele and celebrity judges Ciara, Mark Cuban, Gabby Douglas, Sara Foster, Laura Marano, Cole Swindell and Miss America 1985 Sharlene Wells Hawkes. The evening included a 9/11 tribute in honor of the 15th anniversary.

Shields' acceptance of the highly-coveted crown is just the beginning of a journey that will take her to every corner of the nation and around the world during her year of service as Miss America 2017. She will embark on her national speaking tour about her platform, Eat Better, Live Better and act as the official National Goodwill Ambassador for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, a non-profit organization dedicated to saving and improving the lives of children by raising funds for its 170 member hospitals, is the national platform partner of the Miss America Organization.

Shields is a student at the University of Arkansas. During her year as Miss America she will serve as a spokesperson for Eat Better, Live Better. Along with the coveted title of Miss America 2017, Shields won a \$50,000 scholarship provided in part by Joseph Ribkoff Inc. and the Miss America Organization to continue her education. For the talent portion of the competition, Shields performed a jazz dance to "They Just Keep Moving The Line" from the American drama series *Smash*.

The first runner-up in the competition was Miss South Carolina Rachel Wyatt who earned a \$25,000 scholarship. Her talent was dance and her personal platform is Autism Speaks. The second runner-up is Miss New York Camille Sims and received a \$20,000 scholarship. Her talent was jazz vocal, and her personal platform is Encouraging Wellness and Fostering Food Justice. Third runner-up Miss Washington Alicia Nicole Cooper received a \$15,000 scholarship. Her talent was tap dance and her platform is Live on Purpose: Defining Your Legacy. Fourth runner up Miss Mississippi Laura Lee Lewis was awarded a \$10,000. Her talent was vocal and her platform is Mentoring Matters.

The 52 contestants, who represented all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, participated in preliminary competitions earlier in the week. Miss Kentucky Laura Katherine Jones was the winner of “America's Choice,” an online competition where viewers were given the opportunity to vote for their favorite Miss America contestant entirely on social media. The winner of “America’s Choice” advanced to the Top 15 in the competition.

Founded in 1921, the Miss America Organization is one of the nation's leading advocates for women's education and the largest provider of scholarship assistance to young women. The Miss America Organization and its 52 state organizations award millions in cash and in-kind scholarships annually. The Miss America Organization also provides young women with a vehicle to further their personal and professional goals and instills within them a spirit of community service through a variety of nationwide community-based programs.

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dick clark productions and the Miss America Organization collaborated on all creative, marketing, sponsorship, licensing, ticketing and distribution elements of this year’s show. Tony Eaton and Tall Pony Productions produced the “2017 Miss America Competition.”

About The Miss America Organization

The Miss America Organization, a 501(c) 4 non-profit corporation, awards millions of dollars in annual college scholarship assistance making it the largest scholarship program for women in the United States. MAO is comprised of 52 licensed organizations which includes all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico. MAO contestants contribute over 500,000 hours of community service annually and have raised over \$14 million for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and Miss America scholarships since 2007.

About dick clark productions

dick clark productions (dcp) is the world’s largest producer and proprietor of televised live event entertainment programming, with the “Academy of Country Music Awards,” “American Country Countdown Awards,” “American Music Awards,” “Billboard Music Awards,” “Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve with Ryan Seacrest,” “Golden Globe Awards,” “Hollywood Film Awards” and the “Streamy Awards.” Weekly television programming includes “So You Think You Can Dance,” from 19 Entertainment, a division of CORE Media Group and dcp. dcp also owns one of the world’s most unique and extensive entertainment archive libraries, with more than 55 years of award-winning shows, historic programs, specials, performances and legendary programming. For additional information, visit www.dickclark.com.

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