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### Allie Cooke Crowned Miss Gardner-Webb

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## CAMPUS NEWS

# Allie Cooke Crowned Miss Gardner-Webb

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 12, 2022



▲ Photos by Danielle Billups / GWU Photo Staff

## Bri Bryant is First Runner-up and Miss Congeniality, and Callie Owen won Most Talented and Second Runner-up

*Written by Alexa Key, GWU-Today staff*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Allie Cooke, of Hickory, N.C., was crowned Miss Gardner-Webb at the pageant held on March 27. Cooke, a first-year student, is double majoring in exercise science/biology and youth discipleship. Her platform is to raise awareness of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Cooke was selected from a field of nine contestants. Also competing were Bailey Clayton, Breanna Littlejohn, Madelyn Kampfe, Nikki Swanson, Brianna “Bri” Bryant, Charity Rosenhauer, Callie Owen and Anna Sample. The group prepared for the pageant for nine weeks by practicing the opening number, stage presence and individual talent; choosing their attire for each competition; participating in dress rehearsals and photoshoots; and interviewing with the judges. “All the girls worked very hard on this pageant from learning to dance, to walking in heels,” said Maggie Covey, volunteer for the pageant and GWU Photo Staff member.

The pageant focused on “women empowerment, confidence, grace and sisterhood,” said Jessika Raduly, coordinator of the pageant and associate director of Student Engagement. The pageant allowed each of the nine contestants to showcase their personalities through the different segments, such as business wear, fun fashion, talent presentation, and evening gown.



▲ Bri Bryant

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The judges were GWU staff members, Carrie Baker, Lesley Villarose, Lindsey Blanton, Shea Mattingly and Thea Thompson. Before the competition, the judges interviewed each contestant. Contestants were allowed 15 minutes to answer questions that would determine the winners for the titles of Miss Congeniality, Most Photogenic, Most Talented and Miss Gardner-Webb. In honor of Women's History Month, contestants were also asked to write a tribute speech about a woman who has inspired them most.

The contestants also had their own each individual photoshoot with Covey. These photos were used to determine the Most Photogenic, which was awarded to Cooke.

Miss Congeniality was presented to Bryant, of Dallas, N.C., who exemplified the qualities of congeniality by her friendliness and helping her fellow contestants. A freshman business management major, Bryant was also named First Runner-up. Her platform was STAR (Sexual Trauma Awareness & Response) Organization.

The title of Most Talented was presented to Owen, of Balsam Grove, N.C., who performed a piano piece composed by Bach. A sophomore middle grades mathematics education major, Owen also won Second Runner-up. She chose Operation Christmas Tree as her platform.

After the winners were announced, the contestants shared hugs and gratitude to one another. "I'm overwhelmed with joy, and my heart is so full right now," said Cooke, who also shared a word of advice to future Miss-Gardner Webb contestants. "I would just say really be yourself," she asserted. "God made you, *you*, for a reason, so just be in love with who God made you to be and really just show off your personality."

Take a look at the [Photo Gallery](https://photos.gardner-webb.edu/2022-Photos/March-2022/Miss-GWU-Pageant-/) (https://photos.gardner-webb.edu/2022-Photos/March-2022/Miss-GWU-Pageant-/) by GWU Photo Staff to see some moments from the pageant.



▲ Callie Owen

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