

Meet Miss Indian North Carolina

Contributed by Samantha Brett Locklear and Cher Thomas
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Photo: Courtesy Samanth Brett Locklear

Hello everyone! My name is Samantha Brett Locklear and I am the reigning Miss Indian North Carolina 2006-07, gracefully representing nearly 100,000 Native Americans in the great state of North Carolina! My platform during my reign has been Youth Cultural Awareness and Preservation. I am a PROUD member of the Lumbee Tribe, born and raised in Pembroke, North Carolina.

I am currently attending school at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, where I am a Junior earning my Bachelor's degree in Sociology and hoping to obtain a minor in History. I am a Gates Millennium Scholarship recipient. In addition to holding a tribal royalty title, traveling and performing my duties I am also heavily involved in several student organizations on campus.

I am currently the Co-President and Secretary of my sorority, Sigma Omicron Epsilon Sorority, Inc. (Native American Sorority); the Interim President of our Native American Student Association (NASA); a member of our AISES Chapter; and a Mentor in the Peer Mentor Program thru the Multicultural Student Affairs Office. It is my dream upon graduation to attend graduate school in order to attain my Master's degree in School Counseling and possibly go on to obtain a doctorate degree in counseling as well. I plan on moving back home and bringing this knowledge to the communities and children there. I am also tentatively considering on applying for the Teach for America program.

I have been dancing and singing in Powwows across the state for the last 6 years. I was 14 when I started dancing and I have learned so much from my mentors, but I still have much more to learn! I have had the opportunity to travel across the country to the National UNITY Conference and National AISES Conference via the Indian Education Association program in Pembroke.

My family graciously gave me the chance to travel to the Navajo Nation when I was in high school.

It has been a privilege, honor and joy to serve the Native People of North Carolina thus far and I look forward tot he rest of my reign with exhilaration!Â Â

Interview by Cher ThomasÂ

What inspired you to run for this title?

My mentors have always encouraged me to consider running for this title, but I was really inspired by the need of my people.

Please tell the group about the state you represent!

I represent the eight state recognize tribes and four urban organizations of North Carolina: the Lumbee, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Waccamaw-Siouan, Coharie, Haliwa-Saponi, Meherrin, Sappony and the Occaneechi; the four urban organizations are the Guilford Native American Association, the Mертrolina Indian Association, the Triangle Native American Society and the Cumberland Co. Association of Indian People.

What did you do to prepare for this pageant?

I meditated some before making the decision to fill out my application.

Then, I bought a few new suits and a new formal evening gown. I practiced my traditional talent and explanation of my traditional regalia relentlessly. I also prepared a scrapbook from my travels on the powwow circuit as required in the application. I also smudged the evening/night before the pageant began to cleanse my mind, body and spirit of any negativity!!

What is your favorite memory from the pageant?

My favorite memory from the pageant was waiting for the winner to be announced after a three-day event. I almost passed out standing!

What was your talent for the pageant?

I walked through the steps of making a traditional pine needle basket.

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What trick do you have for getting over nervousness or stage fright?

There is NO trick!! You just have to have confidence in your abilities!

Also, practice makes perfect when you know you have to speak!!

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Who did you thank in your acceptance speech?

EVERYBODY!!

What is your platform for this year?

Youth cultural awareness and preservation

What events are you going to or have attended throughout your reign?

There are too many to tell! I have traveled the state extensively already, making appearances at every tribe's powwow, acting as head female dancer, parades and judging other pageants.

Why do you think pageants are important to Native Americans?

I think pageants are important because it gives our youth the opportunity to be role models and at the same time have role models to look up to!

Which former titleholder inspires you the most?

Both my mentors - Becky G. Leviner, form Miss Lumbee and Sharon Harris, former Miss Haliwa - Saponi and former Miss Indian North Carolina; Miss Erica Dellinger - she was the first lady to have held all four titles of the Lumbee Ambassadors: Little Miss, Junior Miss, Teen Miss and Miss Lumbee!!!

What are you long term goals?

My long-term goals are to finish my education and take it back to my community! I would also like to possibly compete for the Miss Indian Nations title and/or Miss Indian World title!! I do not know for sure yet!Â

What would you like to tell prospective contestants about your experience running?

Be confident but not arrogant about your abilities! Also, listen to your elders only they can give you the best advice in the world! Being modest and humble are some of the best characteristics one can have! Holding a title can definitely be tiresome and the people do get worrisome but the experience is unquestionably worth the headache!!

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Where can prospective contestants get more information on your pageant?

E-mail me at MissIndianNC_06-07@hotmail.com for more information and for pageant applications; be sure to include your mailing address in the body of the e-mail!