

Four New Bedford area titleholders to compete for title of Miss Massachusetts 2022

Four area women Among 20 Candidates Competing for over \$30,000 in Scholarships.

The 2022 Miss Massachusetts Scholarship Competition will be held at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester on Friday, July 1 with finals on Saturday, July 2 at 7pm each night. Among the 20 contestants vying to be the 82nd Miss Massachusetts are:

- Miss New Bedford Megan Sylvia who graduated in 2021 from Bridgewater State University with a degree in Criminal Justice.
- Miss Freetown Tori Kalisz who is a native of Acushnet and is a 2020 graduate of Fairhaven High School and a member of the Class of 2024 at Bridgewater State University majoring in Health Sciences with a pre-physical therapy concentration.
- Miss Norfolk County Mya Leonardo, a 2021 graduate of Dartmouth High School who just completed her first year of studies at Northeastern University where she is majoring in Biology.
- Miss Collegiate Area Olivia Marques who is a 2016 graduate of New Bedford High School and a 2020 graduate of Bridgewater State University with a degree in Theatre Education/Secondary Education and a minor in Musical Theater.

Sylvia is the daughter of Karen Treadup of New Bedford. Her Social Impact Initiative is "Learning Begins with Literacy". Sylvia will be singing the song "Hurt" by Christina Aguilera

for the talent portion of competition and has previously competed for the title of Miss Massachusetts.

Kalish is the daughter of Marlene and Michael Kalish of Acushnet and will be singing "Mama Knows Best" for her talent selection. Kalish's Social Impact Initiative is "Rise Up: You are Stronger Than You Think". This year marks the first time she is competing in the state competition.

Leonardo is also competing at the state competition for the first time and is the daughter of Dana and Angie Leonardo of Dartmouth. She will perform a lyrical dance to "A Moment Like This" and her Social Impact Initiative is "Empower: Spreading Inclusion and a Positive Mindset One Story at a Time."

Olivia Marques is no stranger to the Miss Massachusetts stage, having placed in the Top 10 last year. Her parents are John and Joanne Marques of New Bedford. Marques will perform "Think of Me" from the Broadway musical "Phantom of the Opera". Her Social Impact Initiative is "The World Needs What You've Got – Teachers Teaching Volunteers."

Miss Massachusetts 2021 Elizabeth Pierre had an incredibly successful year, placing 2nd Runner Up at the 100th Anniversary Miss America competition last December and making appearances across the state while working towards a master's degree in Social Work at Boston College. Elizabeth held the title of Miss Cambridge before winning the state title and is the state's first Haitian Miss Massachusetts. She has earned \$38,000 in scholarships during her time competing in the Miss America Organization.

The field of 20 candidates will be narrowed to a Top 10 plus the People's Choice candidate. Supporters help select the People's Choice position by voting online. Each vote is \$1.00 and counts as one vote. Online voting is live now and will end at 10:00 PM on Friday, July 1. For more details visit www.missmass.org and click on the online voting link.

“Our 2022 Miss Massachusetts class is made up of some of the best and brightest young women from across the Bay State,” said Executive Director Dolores “Buffy” Rabuffo. “With the rising costs of a college education, The Miss Massachusetts Scholarship Foundation is proud to be able to assist our candidates with scholarships which help ease the financial burden they face after graduation.”

The next Miss Massachusetts will earn a \$14,000 scholarship and will compete at the 101st Anniversary Miss America competition at Mohegan Sun Casino in Uncasville, CT.