

# Miss Greater Jonesboro Returns Home

BY AUDREY HANES  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM VICKREY-JONES

After a brief change in locale, Miss Greater Jonesboro is returning to its rightful home in the City of Jonesboro for 2025. The franchise's new co-executive directors, Tara Stallings and Lisa Davis, along with their daughters, promise to honor the pageant's long history while growing the scholarship competition back in its hometown.

Miss Greater Jonesboro began in 1937 when Miss Jonesboro, Mary Hinkle Pulliam, was selected as a participant in a bathing beauty review as a part of the annual peach festival held in Forrest City and sponsored by the East Arkansas Young Men's Club. The Jonesboro Jaycees took over sponsorship in 1952; Cynthia Kenward Melnich was selected as the winner and was also first runner up in the 1952 Miss Arkansas pageant. After a variety of other owners and sponsors, the Miss Jonesboro Scholarship Pageant Association Inc. was formed in 1995 as a nonprofit to produce the Miss Jonesboro Pageant.

For the past several years, The Miss Greater Jonesboro franchise has been under the ownership of Denise Holdaway and was held in Blytheville through the NEA Scholarship Organization. Just in time for 2025, Tara and her daughter, Piper, along with Lisa and her daughter, Erin, are bringing Miss Greater Jonesboro back home to Jonesboro.

After watching their daughters compete within the Miss Arkansas Organization in recent years, Tara and Lisa knew they wanted to help the pageant survive and thrive.

"Our daughters, Erin Davis and Piper Stallings, were crowned on the same night as the 2023 Miss Greater Jonesboro and Miss Northeast Arkansas," said Tara. "Throughout their year of service, they grew a close friendship. This allowed Lisa and me to become friends. Once the girls were finished competing, we knew our time in the organization was far from over. In September of 2024, we were granted approval as the new Miss Greater Jonesboro executive directors."

Knowing what kind of an impact Miss Arkansas had on their daughters, the co-directors were eager to support the local pageant within the organization.

"While our daughters competed, we saw firsthand the impact it made in their lives," said Tara. "Confidence, elevated interview and speaking skills, scholarship dollars and friendships that will last a lifetime. More than anything, we simply wanted to bring that to the Jonesboro community and pour into young women the same way our daughters were poured into."

"The first thing we had to do was write a proposal to the Miss Arkansas Board and explain why we thought having the Miss Greater Jonesboro Pageant back in Jonesboro was important. Upon



Erin and Lisa Davis, Tara and Piper Stallings

approval, we immediately started reaching out to local businesses hopeful of their support. We've worked tirelessly to ensure our contestants and titleholders ultimately have the best experience competing with us."

Tara has always been involved in pageants and has lived in Jonesboro since 1992. After graduating high school, Tara attended Hair Tech Beauty College and got her cosmetology license. She married her husband, Paul, and together they opened a hair salon, Tara's Design Team, which has been in business for 21 years. Tara has been involved in pageantry her whole life, from competing locally while growing up to doing pageant hair and makeup and judging.

Her Co-Executive Director, Lisa, is a Bono native. She graduated from Westside High School then went on to graduate from Arkansas State University with a bachelor's degree in plant science. In 1980, Lisa's mother founded and opened Enhancements Boutique, a clothing store with a goal of providing fashion and friendship for women of all ages. For the past 18 years, Lisa and her mother have supported the NEA Breast Cancer Support Group by serving as the main sponsors for the NEA Breast Cancer Awareness fundraising fashion show and silent auction.

"There is so much to love about the Miss Arkansas Organization," said Lisa. "From watching our daughters blossom into young leaders, to the promotion of community involvement, to showing the importance of volunteering, to sharing their passions and urgencies of their Community Service Initiatives and the scholarship dollars gained along the way, this organization ultimately allowed our daughters to go through college debt free.

That is why this opportunity is so important."

Lisa's daughter, Erin, said the lifelong effect the Miss Arkansas Organization had on her life is one reason she wanted to be involved in bringing Miss Greater Jonesboro back to Jonesboro; she began competing for the Miss Arkansas organization in 2021 and previously held the titles of Miss Southeast, Miss Greater Jonesboro and Miss Historic Batesville. Currently a senior at Arkansas State University, Erin is serving as one of the Jonesboro pageant's sponsorship and recruitment coordinators.

"When my name was called as the winner of Miss Greater Jonesboro, I was completely shocked but overcome with excitement," said Erin. "Representing the city that has done so much for my family was incredible. My grandma and mom have been local business owners since 1980, and I have watched the City of Jonesboro come together to support them. During my reign, I was able to educate the community on how therapy animals can be used in the NEA school districts, attend many Jonesboro events like the Elvis festival and support many local businesses.

"This title is very near and dear to my heart, and I'm so excited to see it back home in Jonesboro, Arkansas. To the next Miss Greater Jonesboro, you are about to have an incredible year and a huge community backing you up."

Tara's daughter, Piper, who is also serving as a sponsorship and recruitment coordinator, is a Jonesboro native and A-State graduate with years of pageant experience, as well. Within the Miss Arkansas organization, she has held two titles: Miss Steel Capital 2022 and Miss Northeast Arkansas 2023.

**COVER FEATURE**

“Bringing Miss Greater Jonesboro home truly feels like a dream come true,” said Piper, who now works for Tara’s Design Team. “From the second I won Miss Steel Capital in 2022, I immediately said I’d never fully leave the Miss Arkansas Organization. Working alongside my mom, Erin and Lisa feels like the biggest blessing.”

“Northeast Arkansas has some incredibly talented young women. Their talents and community service initiatives deserve to be highlighted at Miss Arkansas. They are deserving of community support, scholarship dollars and people who pour into them to give them the best opportunity of success. I am elated to see our community come together to support Miss Greater Jonesboro and Miss Greater Jonesboro’s Teen. Thank you, Jonesboro, for your unwavering support.”

For those wishing to follow in their footsteps, there will be an informational meeting on Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at Enhancements Boutique. The pageant itself will be held on Jan. 11, 2025, at Westside Fine Arts Center. Miss and Teen contestants will compete in private interview, onstage question, fitness, talent and evening gown. Those eligible to hold the title of Miss Greater Jonesboro will be women ages 18-28 who reside in Craighead, Lawrence, Greene, Mississippi, Poinsett, Jackson, Randolph and Clay Counties. Miss Greater Jonesboro’s Teen will be open to all young women ages 14-18 who live in Arkansas.

“Attendees can expect to see our contestants show off their incredible talents, speaking skills and grace in their evening gowns,” said Lisa. “They can also expect guest entertainment from the Christie McNeill’s Dance Studio Collective Dancers, special guest performances, past Miss Jonesboro titleholders and the crowning of our new Miss Greater Jonesboro and Miss Greater

Jonesboro’s Teen 2025.

“The Miss Arkansas Organization is special, prestigious and, we believe, needed in our community. The skills these young women are walking away with are life changing. The women who compete in this organization go on to become healthcare professionals, lawyers, educators, entrepreneurs, nonprofit owners and are women who are simply just involved in their communities. While holding a title, these women are visiting local businesses, volunteering, showing up at local events and representing their communities in a wonderful way. When their time in the organization is over and the crown comes off for the last time, they truly are leaving better equipped for life than they came in. We believe this to be the magic of this organization, and Jonesboro women deserve this opportunity. We hope our titleholders and contestants walk away with life skills, scholarship dollars and memories they’ll hold near for life.”

All four women hope the community steps up to support Miss Greater Jonesboro and its return, giving more local women the chance to compete and help fund their education.

“The women of Northeast Arkansas are deserving of this opportunity to showcase their talents, to grow their skills and win scholarship money,” said Tara, who notes that she has seen women graduate from college debt free thanks to pageant scholarships. “We knew the Jonesboro community would ultimately show up, and they absolutely have. I’m proud of the way Jonesboro has rallied behind this pageant, and I can’t wait to see our titleholders representing the 870.”

For more information about Miss Greater Jonesboro, which will take place on Jan. 11, 2025, at the Westside Fine Arts Center, find the pageant on Facebook or Instagram or email [missgreaterjonesboroorg.com](mailto:missgreaterjonesboroorg.com).



**ADVANCING URGENT CARE THAT REALLY CARES.**

All 5 of our St. Bernards Urgent Care locations post real-time wait times to make your visit as convenient as possible. Next time you have an urgent health need but don't need to go to the emergency department, look to us for a faster, more affordable alternative. Our Urgent Care clinics offer extended hours at all locations and on-site services:

-  Lab Work
-  EKG + Imaging
-  IV Fluid Care
-  Extended Hours



To learn more visit [urgentcare.stbernards.info](https://urgentcare.stbernards.info)

**Scan for Locations,  
Wait Times & Extended Hours**

