

For Immediate Release: March 3, 2025

For more information contact:

Leslie Baker, ORPC Media Volunteer

(405) 250-3852

Significant Changes Announced for Miss Rodeo Oklahoma Pageant

Woodward, Okla.—Excitement is mounting as the Miss Rodeo Oklahoma (MRO) Pageant announces a series of significant changes for the 2026 competition. Applications for the upcoming pageant will be available soon, promising enhanced opportunities for all contestants. The sweeping upgrades were provided by Reba Lasater, president of the Oklahoma Rodeo Pageants Council (ORPC), the nonprofit organization that conducts the annual pageant for young women in four age divisions, from 4 to 25.

Enhanced Prize Packages

An addition sure to elevate the experience is that every contestant will receive a larger prize package including official pageant photos and videos provided by Sherry Smith Photography. Each package is valued at more than \$600 and will capture the week-long pageant in ways that can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

Sherry Smith Photography has photographed the pageant since 2012 and now is the official photographer and videographer. She also is the official photographer of the Miss Rodeo America Pageant. Smith was inducted into the MRO Hall of Fame in 2023.

Increased Scholarship Awards

The 2026 pageant will see a noteworthy increase in scholarship awards, bringing the scholarship totals to the largest in its history!

- **Miss Division Winner:** The top prize in the Miss division is rising from \$2,500 to \$3,000. In addition, the winner will receive the Dale Shumway Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 upon the completion of her reign as Miss Rodeo Oklahoma.
- **Miss Division First Runner-Up:** The first runner-up in the Miss division will see that scholarship increase from \$1,000 to \$1,500.
- **Miss Division attendants:** Every attendant in the Miss division will be awarded a \$500 scholarship, meaning every participant will go home with an award upon completing the state pageant.
- **Miss Rodeo Oklahoma Teen:** The Teen division winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship—an increase from the previous \$500, and a new \$500 scholarship will go to the first runner-up.

Additional Scholarship Opportunities

Outstanding contestants also benefit from these additional scholarships:

- **Joyce Crouch Memorial Scholarship:** The Miss Appearance winner will receive the newly established Joyce Crouch Memorial Scholarship. Crouch was a respected rodeo queen designer and a long-standing supporter of the MRO program, being inducted into the MRO Hall of Fame in 2023.
- The MRO program will provide \$1,000 in funds toward the personal chaps for Miss Rodeo Oklahoma and \$500 each toward the personal chaps of the Teen and Princess titleholders.

- The new awards are in addition to other category awards and scholarships, including the Annie Oakley Scholarship sponsored by Melissa and Lauren Heaton and the Miss division Horsemanship Jack J. Wells scholarship.
- The comprehensive awards add to the MRO pageant's recognition as one of the most progressive and highly regarded state pageants in the Miss Rodeo America Scholarship program.

Pageant Details

The next Miss Rodeo Oklahoma Scholarship Pageant is scheduled to take place from June 10 to June 14 in Woodward, Oklahoma, the home of the Woodward Elks Rodeo. The Woodward Elks Rodeo, the Woodward Conference Center, and the Woodward Convention & Visitors Bureau are proud platinum sponsors, ensuring robust support for the event. The new headquarters hotel in Woodward will be Candlewood Suites, also an MRO platinum sponsor.

“The MRO Pageant has been conducted for six decades through the efforts of countless volunteers and supporters who believe that the state pageant program provides positive experiences to Oklahoma’s young women,” said Lasater. “To be able to provide such dramatic increases in scholarships and awards is something that our dedicated membership has dreamed of and worked toward. We invite and encourage more contestants to take part.”

Entering the Pageant

The pageant held in June 2025 will select the 2026 titleholders, giving the winners several months to prepare for their reign. The entry information and online applications are available now at missrodeooklahoma.com. Applications are due April 7.

-30-

About the Oklahoma Rodeo Pageants Council: The organization is committed to its mission of providing diverse opportunities for the development of the young women of Oklahoma to maximize their educational potential while promoting the sport of rodeo, the State of Oklahoma, its legacy, and the western way of life. The ORPC conducts the annual Miss Rodeo Oklahoma Scholarship Pageant, which provides opportunities for Oklahoma's young women in four age categories. The pageant selects Oklahoma’s representative to the Miss Rodeo America Pageant held each year in Las Vegas prior to the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.