

# Queen Sarah Brodnax Williamson

In this special 85th Anniversary year of Carnival, our Queen is Sarah Brodnax Williamson. One could say that Queen Sarah was destined for Carnival Royalty, as her family has a long history in Carnival Memphis. Queen Sarah's Uncle Lewis Williamson served as Carnival President in 1996 and King in 1998. Her cousin Will Yandell held both positions as well, serving as King in 2010 and President in 2014. Sarah's father, Russell Williamson, is a member of the Grand Krewe of Osiris and a former Carnival Escort. Her father and mother, Elizabeth Willbourn Williamson, have been great supporters of Carnival, and they, along with Sarah's sister Caroline and brother Russell, Jr. are looking forward to Carnival Week. The Williamson family has seen first hand the Carnival Children's Charity Initiative's positive impact on the community, with Caroline attending Madonna Learning Center since she was very young. The school has been selected by Carnival multiple times, including last year when their capital campaign helped build a new school. Madonna is also an annual visit for the Carnival Royalty and Boll Weevils, something very important to all involved. In 2015, Queen Sarah participated in the Royal Court as the Queen's Princess to Lockie Dearman. She served as a Carnival Page in 2007 to King Claude Chafin and Queen Maggie Horn.

Queen Sarah is a rising junior at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. She is a Business Administration and Art History Major and is involved in many organizations around campus, including the Real Estate Society and Reformed University Fellowship. A member of Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority, she has been active in her chapter's Literacy is Key initiative. Queen Sarah served as the co-chair of the Mock Convention Corporate Partnerships Team, where she worked to increase support for the convention, by forming partnerships with local and national companies. As the Fancy Dress Committee Auditing co-chair, Sarah oversees the organization of funds allocated for Washington and Lee's annual school-wide ball. With a passion for leadership and volunteering, Sarah spent her time last summer as an assistant at a local non-profit organization, Advance Memphis. She helped the organization plan their annual fundraiser and tutored math to GED students. This year Sarah has enjoyed her time as a Junior Achievement Economics for Success tutor, teaching 7th grade students the basics of money management.

A graduate of the Hutchison School, Queen Sarah was avidly involved in both academics and athletics. She was a member of numerous organizations including the



*The Williamson Family: Caroline, Russell, Sarah, Elizabeth and Russell, Jr.*

Ascensus Society, Wilson Society, and National Honor Society, and served as President of the Peer Council her senior year. While at Hutchison, Sarah established a fitness program for young Memphians with disabilities through the Exceptional Foundation and received a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition commending her service. Sarah was a member of Hutchison's varsity tennis team and was awarded the Varsity Tennis Leadership Award as team captain her junior and senior years. Her senior year, she was chosen by her peers to serve on Hutchison's May Court, one of Hutchison's highest honors.

The Queen said, "Throughout its history, Carnival has proven that its purpose is far greater than the party, and I am so honored to be a part of that as this year's Queen. Carnival has been special to my family and me for many years now, and as a page and princess, I have seen Carnival's deep impact on our community. Not only does Carnival give back to Memphis, but it also celebrates our city's successes and all the good being done. I am so grateful for the opportunity to represent Carnival in its 85th year as King Jay and I continue its legacy of serving Memphis by day and celebrating it by night."