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## **Aspiring Chemical Engineer Crowned 2016 New Mexico State Fair Queen**

ALBUQUERQUE—September 21, 2015—The newly-crowned New Mexico State Fair Queen for 2016 is a research and development scientist who is actively pursuing her PhD in Chemical Engineering at the University of New Mexico.

Meet Cami Belcher, Miss Bernalillo County, was crowned on Saturday, September 19, during the rodeo in Tingley Coliseum. Cami is the 23-year-old daughter of Curtis and Elizabeth Belcher and calls Stanley, NM, home. Her future goals include working as a professional engineer and furthering her skills as a horsewoman. When she's not in the saddle or working in the lab at Sandia National Labs – where she says she is proud to serve the national security interests of the United States – she can be found enjoying the scenic New Mexico outdoors – running trails, camping and fishing.

Cami says she has “a passion for the Western way of life and all things rodeo.” She enjoys barrel racing and riding the beautiful landscapes of New Mexico with her registered Quarter Horses Whiz and Rogue. She believes that the greatest attributes a queen can possess are grace, class and a warm smile. According to Cami, what she looks forward to the most as the New Mexico State Fair Queen is “the opportunity to give back to the community and way of life that has molded me into the woman I am today. I long to share my passion with younger generations, ensuring the longevity of the Western lifestyle and cowboy dream.”

The rules for the Queen Contest describe the title of New Mexico State Fair Queen as “one of honor and prestige like no other in New Mexico and the experience gained during the queen’s reign will enrich her life in countless ways.” This title represents not only the Western way of life, but also the quality of leadership among young women in New Mexico as the leaders of tomorrow. According to Queens contest guidelines, the objective of the New Mexico State Fair Queen Contest is to determine an official representative of the Fair who will serve as an ambassador to the general public, exhibiting exceptional sportsmanship. She should be able to speak with authority, and with knowledge about the New Mexico State Fair, the State of New Mexico and the sport of Rodeo. She should also be familiar with the state's agriculture industry, its Western heritage, and diverse cultures which is what the New Mexico State Fair is about.

A panel of three judged the New Mexico State Fair Queen Contest – with their scores added together to give one averaged score for each contestant. The contestant with the highest averaged score is selected as the New Mexico State Fair Queen. The contestants were judged on: Horsemanship, Personality and Personal Interviews.

The first runner up is Stephanie Miller from Chaves County and second attendant is Sara Czmyrid of Santa Fe County.