

## LONG ISLAND / TOWNS

# Rain doesn't stop Kayla Knight from being crowned Miss Wantagh



Kayla Knight, 16, is all smiles after being crowned Miss Wantagh on Friday, July 4, 2014.  
Photo Credit: Marlo Jappen

**By Marlo Jappen**

*Updated July 5, 2014 8:33 AM*

Rain following the Wantagh Fourth of July parade did not dampen the spirits of the eight teens in gowns and sashes waiting to hear who would be crowned Miss Wantagh.

The ceremony was held in the auditorium of Wantagh Elementary School Friday. The pageant winner is usually crowned outside the school, but due to the weather forecast it was held indoors for only the second time in the pageant's 58-year history, said pageant coordinator Ella Stevens.

The Miss Wantagh Pageant took place on Wednesday, but it's tradition to reveal the winner on the Fourth of July.

— The audience waited in suspense as Town of Hempstead Supervisor Kate Murray announced Wantagh High School student Kayla Knight, 16, as the winner..

"I'm completely blown away," Knight said. "I'm ecstatic and honored to be crowned Miss Wantagh."

The crowd in the auditorium included past winners and runners-up. Last year's winner, Angelica Balitosos, said she has since pursued her pageant community project of helping the homeless by making sandwiches for them at the Long Beach Fire Department.

"This is not a beauty competition whatsoever," said Stevens, who added that the winner is chosen based on her academic excellence, involvement and desire to help the community. Knight's service project involves helping the elderly by visiting local nursing homes.

---

## Get the Breaking News newsletter!

Get the latest breaking news as it happens.

Sign up

By clicking Sign up, you agree to our [privacy policy](#).

---

"I have no girls, so they become my daughters," Stevens said. "They all deserve the title."

Before Knight was crowned, 3-year-old Adrianna Nordquist walked on stage in a sparkly pink dress and was awarded a tiara and a bouquet of roses. She was asked to join the ceremony after she was spotted sporting a "Future Miss Wantagh" T-shirt at the Wantagh Memorial Day parade.

**By Marlo Jappen**