Kristen Hamilton was crowned Miss UL 2017 last week after she competed with 12 other women for the crown.

Thirteen female University of Louisiana at Lafayette students, who pledged their love for the university and how they wanted to bring about change in the world as a whole, mesmerized the audience with their charm and humor Thursday night, Feb. 9.

Winning the competition includes "the opportunity for Hamilton to participate in the Miss Louisiana USA pageant. The pageant was held in Angelle Hall and hosted friends, family and well-wishers cheering for their favorite contestant. The contestants were judged in three rounds: interview, bathing suit and evening gown.

The event was hosted by Miss Louisiana USA, Bethany Trahan, and Andrew Albritton. Miss UL 2016, Kristal Breaux, also sashayed through her final walk and gave her successor a message, signed with "Ragin' Cajun Pride and Love."

The first runner-up was Josie Stephens, a chemical engineering major from St. Martinville. Stephens also won the Most Photogenic award for the evening. Catherine Miller, the second runner-up, tied with Hamilton for the Ms. Congeniality award. Kelly Briggs and Aaliyah Moffet bagged the third runner-up and fourth runner-up places respectively.

Hamilton, 19, is a nursing major from Breaux Bridge. She is a member of the Kappa Delta sorority and Ragin’ Cajun Catholics. She has volunteers at St. Joseph’s Diner and the Desormeaux Foundation.

She said her life passion is to work with children and help them have a happy and healthy life. She discovered her passion, she added, after a mission trip in Puerto Rico, where she interacted with young boys living in an orphanage. Her career goal is to become a neonatal nurse practitioner.