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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MISS TEEN OF TEXAS, SERENA ZAMARRIPA, WAS CROWNED MISS TEEN OF AMERICA 2017 IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(Minneapolis, Minnesota) – November 22, 2016 – 18 year old Serena Zamarripa of Palacios, Texas was crowned Miss Teen of America 2017 this past Sunday in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Serena is a recent graduate of Palacios High School, where she was ranked first in her class. She was the recipient of the TENARIS Student of the Year Award and \$60,000 Scholarship. Serena also served as the Junior Class President and Senior Class President and was a two-year intern at the Chau Law Firm. Her future ambitions include becoming a corporate attorney. Serena will receive a prize package valued at over \$20,000 and will also serve as an inclusion ambassador for Special Olympics, which is the Miss Teen of America Organization's charitable alliance.

Throughout the pageant the candidates competed in six distinct categories of judging: Scholastic Achievement, Service to School and Community, Personal Development, Personality Poise and Projection in evening wear, a General Awareness Test and Interview. President, Sunny Hill, stated: "This pageant is not a typical beauty pageant, with sixty percent of our judging completed prior to the judges even seeing the young ladies. The Miss Teen of America Organization highlights achievement and promotes confidence in the leaders of tomorrow." The outgoing Miss Teen of America (Iowa), Cornelia Hayes, crowned her successor at the conclusion of the event.

Other highlights of the weekend include: Special Olympics Minnesota Bowling Event at Sky Deck in Mall of America, Forever 21 Exclusive Shopping Event at Mall of America, Autograph Stations at Macy's Mall of America and time at Nickelodeon Universe. Steven Roddy, Founder of The Pageant Planet, co-emceed the Pageant Finals with MTOA Executive Director Becky Thoreson, and provided hosting of the live event on his social media networks. The Mall of America was deservingly named 2016 Sponsor of the Year, and participants greatly

enjoyed time at both the Mall of America and Radisson Blu, which was the Miss Teen of America host hotel.

The Pageant Weekend would not have been possible without the dedication and support of National Event Staff and Volunteers. Appreciation to the following: Mall of America, Radisson Blu, SkyDeck, Special Olympics Minnesota, Macy's, The Tuxedo Shop at Macy's, Forever 21, Nickelodeon Universe, and Caribou Coffee as well as MTOA Leadership Team Kim Tuttle, Paige Jensen, Korie Wilson and Brandon Seagraves.

Final Results:

Miss Teen of America 2017: Miss Teen of Texas, Serena Zamarripa

1st Runner-Up: Miss Teen of New York, Leah Xiao

2nd Runner Up: Miss Teen of Virginia, Kaitlyn Hyun

3rd Runner Up: Miss Teen of North Dakota, Lauren Hinckley

4th Runner-Up: Miss Teen of Utah, Megan Okumura

Spirit Award: Miss Teen of California, Kara Eggink

Sponsor of the Year: Mall of America

About the Miss Teen of America Organization:

The Miss Teen of America Pageant was founded in 1983 by Mr. Warren Alexander, a former educator and pageant director, and designed to help young women reach their full potential. The scholastically based pageant recognizes young women ages 13-18 for their outstanding personal achievements, leadership abilities, and artistic, creative or athletic talents. For more information, please visit www.missteeeofamerica.com.

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