

Madelyn is the daughter of John and Bonny Karstedt of La Grange, TX. Her family has lived in Fayette County, TX since her first Czech ancestors arrived in 1855, making her 7th generation Fayette County. Her family still lives on the land owned by her great-great-great grandfather, Vinc Zapalač. Her Bohemian and Moravian ancestry comes from Horní Heřmanice, Nový Hrozenkov, Bordovice, Rokytnice, and Ostrava. Madelyn graduated Suma Cum Laude in 2025 with a Bachelor's in Health from Texas A&M University.

Growing up in “The Cradle of Czech Immigration in Texas”, Madelyn has grown up around Czech culture her entire life. From the famous Czech and German painter churches in Fayette County, to popular kolache bakeries and polka masses, Madelyn has always been rooted in our beautiful culture. After moving away for college, Madelyn realized how special the culture she grew up in was. This inspired her to learn more about her heritage. She began cooking and baking more Czech recipes and studying Czech and Slovak history and language. She also began creating social media content to share what she learned with other young people. She became more deeply involved with the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center in her hometown of La Grange, where she even served as demonstration chairman for their annual Czech Heritage Festival. Madelyn also had the amazing opportunity to travel to Czechia with her university on a study abroad trip. They partnered with The Film Academy of Miroslav Ondříček in Písek to create short films about UN Sustainability Goals. Madelyn's group created a short film about preserving cultural and heritage sites.

During the Miss Czech Slovak US Pageant, Madelyn performed “Home is the Heart of Life”, a song from a local Fayette County musical she was in as a child. The musical, “Heart of the Tin Trunk”, was about Czech immigrants who came to La Grange in the mid 19th century. Writer and producer Virginia Leech based the production on her ancestor's diary, found in an old tin trunk. Madelyn modeled a replica of a Polabi kroj, her Kulhanek ancestors came from Horni Hermanice in this region. Her kroj was lovingly made by her mother and grandmother. Madelyn's favorite part of her kroj is the handkerchief that she hand embroidered with the Kulhanek family crest, which she found during her genealogy research. On top of winning the honor of the national title, Madelyn also won Sokol Talent Runner-Up and the Kroj Merit Award.

Madelyn is beyond honored to have been entrusted with this prestigious title. She looks forward to spending time in Czech and Slovak communities across the United States and meeting people of Czech and Slovak heritage from all over. She also looks forward to creating social media content for the Miss Czech Slovak US Pageant social media pages.