



For Immediate Release



Selima Maria Ortiz Crowned International Junior Miss Pre-Teen 2025-2026

Selima Maria Ortiz, representing Montenegro, has been crowned the International Junior Miss (IJM) Pre-Teen International Queen, earning one of the most prestigious titles within the global IJM organization. As a first-generation Montenegrin, with a mother born and raised in Montenegro, Selima proudly carries her heritage into her new role, making this title especially meaningful for her and her family.

Selima is an eighth-grade student at Rippowam Cisqua School in Bedford, New York, where she is known for her academic excellence, leadership, and positive energy. Beyond school, she is the founder of Smile With Selima, a global positivity initiative launched in 2021 to teach young people around the world how to love themselves and embrace authenticity. Through this mission, Selima has written one published book (with a second on the way), hosted Instagram Live discussions, spoken in elementary schools, and organized three international book drives promoting confidence and kindness.

As an international titleholder, Selima has bold and exciting goals for the year ahead. She hopes to appear on Good Morning America again, publish her second guidebook, expand her book drive into several new countries, and travel to at least three countries during her reign. Her advocacy for self-love and cultural pride continues to inspire young girls worldwide.

Selima chose International Junior Miss because the system truly values diversity and encourages girls to embrace who they are. As a mixed-heritage young woman and a first-generation Montenegrin American, she appreciates that IJM celebrates different backgrounds and creates a global sisterhood where every girl feels seen and supported. Through IJM, she has learned to be confident, proud of her culture, and empowered to share her story.

Her advice to future contestants: Preparation builds confidence. Practice your walk, communication skills, and presentation, but always stay true to yourself. Pageants aren't just about appearance; they're about character, dedication, and the way you treat others. She encourages girls to embrace feedback, remain open to growth, and enjoy the experience because the personal development gained through IJM is just as valuable as the crown.

About International Junior Miss (IJM)

International Junior Miss is a premier global pageant organization proudly celebrating 18 years of empowering young women worldwide. IJM is known for its fashion-forward approach, emphasis on leadership, and a truly international sisterhood that spans countries, cultures, and continents. Each division winner receives up to \$10,000 in cash scholarships, and every international titleholder earns an expense-paid international trip, making IJM one of the most rewarding programs in pageantry. Now accepting at-large contestants representing their state, country, or heritage, IJM continues to expand its global footprint while welcoming diverse voices from across the world.

Additional photos and headshots available upon request.

Image above courtesy of Urban Hill Photography for International Junior Miss.

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