



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Arabian Horse Association Announces the 2018 Youth of the Year Award Winner

Aurora, CO – November 21, 2018 – Arabian Horse Association (AHA) youth members are exceptional! The Youth of the Year Award honors one outstanding youth member who exemplifies character and dedication to excellence in this or her academic and community achievements, as well as contributions to the Arabian horse industry and AHA.



In 2018, one candidate distinguished herself with a passion for the Arabian horse breed in bringing industry individuals together to help others. AHA is proud to announce **Miss Ashley Lounsberry**, from Pawnee, Illinois, as the honored winner of the 2018 Youth of the Year Award. Ashley receives the Youth of the Year perpetual trophy as well as a \$1,000 scholarship from the Arabian Horse Youth Association.

Compassion, humility, and motivation are the foundation of this young woman's approach to life. Through her high school career, she has taken on numerous volunteer and service positions. She has a desire for serving and has been a very active member of her school's key club and National Honors Society. In 2017 she received the Region XI Youth Ambassador Award for her success in the show pen and her time spent doing a community service project with her horse. For the community service project, Ashley visited a local nursing home with her horse and interacted with the residents who enjoyed the visit. It was rewarding for Ashley to see how a simple project with an Arabian horse impacted so many lives in a positive manner.

Ashley is an important part of the Arabian Horse Youth Association. She has served as the Region 11 Youth Vice Director and was elected as the AHYA Secretary in 2018. During these years, she has created new activities and fundraising opportunities. Her efforts within the Arabian horse community have led her to strive to be a positive influence for AHYA and a role model for those who aspire to become further involved in the Arabian horse community. She believes that the Arabian horse youth community can and will grow because youth are the stepping stones to a bright future. Her passion, pursuit of excellence, personality, and support of the Arabian horse are just some of the attributes that make Ashley shine in a talented group of youth at AHA.

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Miss Marianna Graziadio from Region 1 is the first runner-up for Youth of the Year. She receives a \$500 scholarship sponsored by All Things Equine.

Marianna has been a very active and important member in her community. She served as a Ticktocker with the National Charity League. Through this organization Marianna has given numerous volunteer and community service hours that have helped her give back and strengthen her community.

Marianna is an active member of her school's equestrian team and serves as their captain. She advocates the importance of the sport to school representatives to ensure the future of equestrian sports in the district high school.

Miss Sophia Janssen-Madden from Region 5, is the second runner-up. Sophia is involved in equestrian activities and her community. She has competed on her local judging team, was the youth secretary of Region 5 and is a community volunteer.

About the Arabian Horse Association

AHA is a major equine association serving 84,000 Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse owners across North America. AHA registers and maintains a database of more than one million Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horses. AHA produces championship events, recognizes over 392 Arabian horse shows and distance rides and provides activities, education, and programs that promote breeding and ownership.