



AHYA Youth of the Year

2023 AHA Youth of the Year: Marin McKee, Region 5

2023 Convention

Youth of the Year Presentation to General Assembly

Delivered November 17, 2023

Presentation by Deborah Johnson

Now it is time for our Youth of the Year presentation. I would first like to begin by thanking the Arabian Horse Foundation for generously sponsoring a \$5,000 Scholarship for our 2023 Youth of the Year. I would also like to recognize those who served in selecting the 2023 winners:

Cindy Howey, Youth Committee Vice Chair

Annaliese Himmel, Region 9

Stacey Dunn, Region 10

Shannon Bedell, Region 5

AHA youth members are anything but average! The Youth of the Year award honors annually one outstanding youth member. Criteria for this prestigious award is based on his or her achievements and contributions to the Arabian horse industry, to AHA and lastly to their community. Our past winners have been outstanding ambassadors for the breed and have gone on to represent us exceptionally well – not just in the Arabian horse industry but in the equine industry as a whole.

Each year, the committee is privileged to review these applications, giving them a chance to learn about some of our brightest youth members and then personally interview the final candidates. Each of the finalists presented their own strengths, passions and insights in various areas. They continue to be amazed each year with the quality of the youth members that are a part of this organization.



Region 12 has reason to be proud of a particular young lady named Mikayla Clement. Mikayla is extremely involved in AHYA, serving as the Region 12 Youth Director. She has competed at multiple levels with multiple horses in the show ring, but finds joy in sharing her horses with youth to expose them to the breed and experience the show ring. She is a hard worker, passionate and determined in all that she does. We congratulate Mikayla on her many achievements and as the Second Runner-up for Youth of the Year.

Region 5 was also well represented this year by a bright and charismatic young woman by the name of Hannah Hiiva. Hannah has been a big part of AHYA in and out of the show ring. She has served as the Region 5 Secretary, Vice Director and now Director, focusing a lot on the regional youth social media presence as well as ways to increase youth involvement. She has been a champion of the Region 5

youth grant program and watched with joy as one of the grant winners this year won a national championship. Beyond this Hannah is very active in her school clubs, being the Editor in Chief for her school yearbook. She has helped serve in many other club activities and continues to help each of those clubs especially through her social media skills. The first runner up for the Youth of the Year will be awarded a \$1000 scholarship sponsored by the Arabian Horse Association. Congratulations Hannah for being the 2023 first runner up for the Youth of the Year and being the recipient of the \$1000 scholarship.



With so many bright futures placed before us, it was certainly difficult to choose a single winner. This year, one candidate distinguished herself, with her passion for the Arabian horse breed; with her desire to help others, and to bring people in the industry together. It is now my distinct honor to describe to you an outstanding youth from Region 5.

Compassion, humility, and motivation are the foundation of this young woman's approach to life. She is currently enrolled at Rocky Mountain College in Billings Montana, studying within the Equine Program and competing on the Intercollegiate Equestrian Team. She has been active in her high school volleyball team and gives back by helping out the middle school team during their season. She is involved in numerous community service projects and involved in tutoring at her high school.



Moreover, our Youth of the Year has and is an important part of the Arabian Horse Youth Association. She not only served two years as the AHYA Vice President, but in her own region she shared the Are U Okay? Program by posting up kindness boards at the shows. Beyond this she was involved in running all youth activities at shows as well as this last year working with their new Director to help make a smooth transition as she moved onto college.

Her passion, pursuit of excellence, personality, and support of the Arabian horse are just some of the attributes that we, as Arabian Horse Association members want to represent us as our Youth of the Year. We would like to present her with the Youth of the Year perpetual trophy as well as a \$5000 scholarship sponsored by the Arabian Horse Foundation.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am proud to present to you, from Medical Lake, Washington and Region 5, your 2023 Youth of the Year, Miss Marin McKee.