



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Arabian Horse Youth Association Announces their 2014-2015 'Youth of the Year' Award Winner

(14-November-14 – AURORA, CO) – Arabian Horse Association (AHA) youth members are anything but average! AHA's 'Youth of the Year' award honors one outstanding youth member annually. Criteria for this prestigious award are based on his or her achievements and contributions to the Arabian horse industry, AHA, and his or her community.

This year, AHA was privileged to review applications from some of the brightest youth members and interview final candidates. Each of the finalists presented their own strengths, passions and insights, but one young lady's accomplishments and drive to see the Arabian breed grow, stood out.

AHA is proud to announce that **Miss Jacklyn Abernathy**, from Franklin, Tennessee, is the honored winner of this year's 'Youth of the Year' award.

Serving as the Region 12 youth director since January 2014, Abernathy almost single-handedly established a solid foundation for communication and fundraising for youth within her AHA region. She founded youth Facebook and Instagram pages and began writing monthly youth updates in their regional newsletter. The culmination of her attempts and efforts to reach more of Region 12's youth resulted in the election of a full executive officer board and nine youth members signing up for a judging team. At the national level, this young lady is the Convention Committee Chair.

Abernathy's efforts within the Arabian horse community have led her to believe that a resurgence of grassroots efforts is needed to reach out to potential youth members. She wants to encourage youth to join judging teams, attend clubs and meetings, and become actively involved in the Arabian horse breed. Abernathy believes that the Arabian youth community can and will grow – that youth are the stepping-stones to the future.

This young woman is not only highly involved in the Arabian breed, but approaches every area of her life with intelligence, motivation and integrity. An honors student, Abernathy is very intelligent, articulating herself well in her classes to peers and teachers. She was recently named a National Merit Semi-Finalist, and is also President of both the National Honor Society and Digamma honor society at Battle Ground Academy.

This enduring young woman spends much of her free time volunteering. Abernathy volunteers with dedication, passion, and leadership within the American Red Cross. She became a Blood Drive Coordinator for Red Cross blood drives, working tirelessly to recruit donors. She also has served as the secretary of Operation Broken Silence, a student advocacy group which seeks to educate others about the atrocities occurring every day in Sudan. Abernathy helps lead fundraisers and coordinate awareness efforts for this outreach group.

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As you can see, Abernathy's credentials, pursuit of excellence, personality, and support for the Arabian horse are just some of the attributes AHA members want to represent them as the 'Youth of the Year.' Abernathy's winning accomplishment of this well-deserved award was announced this past week at AHA's Annual Convention in Denver, Colo. There, she was presented with the 'Youth of the Year' perpetual trophy, as well as a \$1000 scholarship from the Arabian Horse Youth Association (AHYA).

Jacklyn Abernathy is a leader among her peers, serving her breed and others with a selfless attitude and the heart of champion. AHA is proud to call her their 2014 'Youth of the Year.'

AHA would also like to congratulate, Mr. Ryan Melendez from Region 1 as the first runner-up for 'Youth of the Year' and Miss Molly Schwister from Region 10, as the second runner-up. Congrats to all!

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