



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Four Arabian Horse Industry Leaders Nominated for the 2016 USEF Equestrian of the Year Award

(22-DEC-16) AURORA, COLO. – Every year the [United States Equestrian Federation](#) (USEF) honors top equestrian leaders on their numerous accomplishments and achievements within the horse industry through various awards. One of the most coveted awards, the [Equestrian of the Year Award](#), is an ultimate goal for many horsemen and women in the industry.

Nine nominees have been selected for the 2016 award. You can vote for your favorite finalist on the [Equestrian of the Year webpage](#) through December. Of the nine finalist, four of the nominees are leaders in the Arabian horse industry. The winner will be announced at the [2017 Pegasus Awards](#). The individuals are:

Vaughan Smith Trophy

Cynthia Burkman

Scottsdale, Ariz.

(Bio from USEF)

For over 25 years, Cynthia Burkman has been one of the top trainers in the Arabian horse world, with numerous National Championships in Western, English, Country, Hunter, Side Saddle, and Show Hack. She has been Arabian Professional & Amateur Horseman's Association (APAHA) Hunter/Show Hack Trainer of the Year twice, as well as APAHA Western Trainer of the Year. Cynthia has also been honored as Arabian Horse Times Reader's Choice Awards Horsewoman of the Year, and bred and raised numerous National Champions. Cynthia and her clients are always formidable contenders at the Regional and National shows.

In 2016, Cynthia competed at the Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show, three Regional shows, and at the U.S. National Arabian & Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show in several disciplines, including Country English Pleasure, English Show Hack, Hunter Pleasure, and Ladies Side Saddle. At Scottsdale, Cynthia earned seven first-place ribbons and three second-place ribbons. She earned 10 Regional Championships, two Reserve National Championships, and three Top Three Awards. At the U.S. Nationals, she garnered one National Championship and four Top Three Awards.

Norman K. Dunn Trophy

Ted Carson

White Oak, N.C.

(Bio from USEF)

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Ted Carson's passion for the Arabian horse and the people involved with them knows no boundaries. This has enabled his Butler Farms Training Center to become the world-class breeding, training, and marketing powerhouse that it is today. On any given day, Ted may be judging or showing horses, assisting his clients in determining and reaching their personal goals with their horses, or seeking out the next bloodline that will complement his and his clients' breeding programs. Ted has presented horses throughout North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Brazil. He has judged numerous shows at the Regional and National level in North America, as well as major shows in other countries such as Australia and Israel. Breeding programs around the world include horses bred or marketed by Ted. With over 30 years of experience with Arabian horses, Ted has not only built a solid reputation as an internationally talented trainer and handler, he is also an internationally respected judge and breeder.

In 2016, Ted competed in several local shows, four Regional shows, and the U.S. National Arabian & Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show. At the Regional level, he earned 13 Championships, one Reserve Championship, three Top Three Awards, and one Top Four Award in Breeding and In-Hand classes. At the U.S. Nationals, he garnered two Champions, one Reserve Championship, and seven Top 10 Awards.

C.J. June Cronan Trophy

Joel Kiesner

Louisville, Tenn.

(Bio from USEF)

Joel Kiesner grew up in the horse business, with both of his parents being professional trainers in Minnesota. He and his wife, Ashton, both train, show, and breed Arabians from their farm in East Tennessee. They have two daughters, Alexis and Ellawynn, who are both national champion saddle seat riders.

The Kiesners found, trained, showed, and promoted the stallion Afires Heir, who is on track to break every record set by an Arabian English stallion, both in and out of the ring. In competition, Joel's record speaks for itself. In the last fourteen years, he has won the coveted Open English Pleasure National Championship eight times.

This year was another banner year for Joel, who was the unanimous Purebred Open English Pleasure National Champion aboard the great mare, Heirs Noble Love, and the unanimous Half-Arabian Open English Pleasure National Champion, riding Emperors Fire. He was also unanimous National Champion in Purebred Open Country English Pleasure, Purebred English Pleasure Junior Horse, and Half-Arabian Country English Pleasure Three-Year-Old Futurity.

Joel has been awarded the Arabian Professional and Amateur Horse Association Saddle Seat Trainer of the Year five times, the APAHA Horseman of the Year twice, and in 2016, was the first ever winner of APAHA's Hall of Fame Trainer of the Year.

Barbara Worth Oakford Trophy

Lou Roper

San Marcos, Calif.

(Bio from USEF)

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Lou Roper began training horses over 40 years ago at his family's facility in Davis, Calif. He has won many U.S. Nationals, Canadian Nationals, and Regional titles in various disciplines, including Trail, Western Pleasure, Hunter Pleasure, and Reining. He has been presented the Horseman of the Year Award from Region 1, and the Working Western Trainer Award from the Arabian Professional & Amateur Horseman's Association.

Lou instructs both youth and amateur riders, many of whom have been successful in the show ring, winning numerous Regional and National titles. He owns and operates The Roper Ranch in Twin Oaks Valley of San Marcos, Calif., where he and his staff give riding instructions. They have 40 to 50 horses of many different breeds trained in a variety of disciplines. He also travels to Europe, Canada, and throughout the U.S. giving clinics and seminars.

Lou had a milestone 2016, achieving 27 National Championships, 22 Reserve National Championships, and over 70 Top-10 finishes in the trail horse division alone.

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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 400 Arabian horse shows and distance rides and provides activities, education, and programs that promote breeding and ownership.

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