



AHYA Youth of the Year

2018, Ashley Lounsberry of Region 11



At the 2018 Annual AHA Membership Convention in Tulsa, OK it was announced that Pawnee, Illinois youth Ashley Lounsberry is the recipient of the 2018 AHA Youth of the Year award.

Our Youth of the Year has and is an important part of the Arabian Horse Youth Association (AHYA). She served as the Region 11 Youth Vice Director, and was elected as the AHYA Secretary, in 2018-2019. During her years as the Region 5 Youth Director and the AHYA Secretary she has created new activities and fundraising opportunities in her region. She also was awarded 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. The residents and staff enjoyed spending time with the horse, and it was rewarding to see how a simple project with an Arabian horse impacted so many lives in a positive manner.

Her efforts within the Arabian horse community has led her to strive to be a positive influence on AHYA and to be 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 – that 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 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 \$1,000 scholarship from the Arabian Horse Youth Association.

Ashley Lounsberry is a leader among her peers, serving her breed and others with a selfless attitude and the heart of a champion. AHA is proud to call her our 2018 'Youth of the Year'.

AHA would also like to congratulate, Miss Marianna Graziadio from Region 1 as the first runner-up for 'Youth of the Year' and earning a \$500 scholarship sponsored by All Things Equine and Miss Sophia Janssen-Madden from Region 5, as the second runner-up. Congrats to all!

Below is the transcript of the Youth of the Year Award results presentation from the 2018 AHA Annual Membership Convention in Tulsa, OK. The presentation was made by 2018 Youth of the Year Selection Sub-Committee Member, Deborah Johnson of Region 3.

Thank you, it is an honor to serve on the Youth of the Year sub-committee. I'd like to begin by recognizing those who joined me in selecting the 2018 winner:

Debbie Price, Region 1

Cindy Howey, Youth Committee Vice Chair

Hillary Hoffman, Region 10

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 his or her 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, our committee is privileged to review these applications, giving us 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. We continue to be amazed each year with the quality of the youth members that are a part of this organization.



Region 5 has reason to be proud of a particular young lady named Sophia Janssen-Madden. Sophia is extremely involved in her equestrian activities and community. She has competed on her local judging team, was the youth secretary of Region 5, and has volunteered in her community. She is a hard worker, passionate and determined in all that she does. We congratulate Sophia on her many achievements and as the Second Runner-up for Youth of the Year.

Region 1 was also well represented this year by a bright and charismatic young woman by the name of Marianna Graziadio. Marianna has been a very active and important member of 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. Beyond this Marianna has been a very active member of her school Equestrian Team becoming captain and speaking to representatives about ensuring the future of equestrian in the district high school. The first runner up for the Youth of the Year will be awarded a \$500 scholarship sponsored by All Things Equine. Congratulations Marianna for being the 2018 first runner up for the Youth of the Year and being the recipient of the \$500 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, and above all, her global view and passion for helping others. It is now my distinct honor to describe to you an outstanding youth from Region 11.

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 of the home. The residents and staff enjoyed spending time with the horse and it was extremely rewarding to see how a simple project with an Arabian horse impacted so many lives.

Moreover, our Youth of the Year has and is an important part of the Arabian Horse Youth Association. She served as the Region 11 youth vice director, and was elected as the AHYA Secretary in 2018. During her years as the Region 11 Youth Vice Director and the AHYA Secretary she has created new activities and fundraising opportunities in her region.

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Ladies and gentlemen, I am proud to present to you, from Pawnee, Illinois and Region 11, your 2018 Youth of the Year, Miss Ashley Lounsberry.