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### **2005 National Youth Horse Leaders Symposium to be hosted by Pennsylvania State University**

Penn State University College of Agricultural Sciences (PSU) is hosting the 28<sup>th</sup> annual National Youth Horse Leaders Symposium! The Symposium is a production of the American Youth Horse Council (AYHC), the umbrella organization for the youth horse industry. The 2005 event is titled Leaders Building Leader: Teaching Tools for the Youth Horse Industry, and boasts more than two-dozen internationally and nationally respected teachers assembled to share their keys to successful youth horse programming. The 28<sup>th</sup> annual National Youth Horse Leader's Symposium Feb. 18-20, 2005 offers take-home tools to teach youth about safe and effective horsemanship. From classroom to the tack-room, attendees will find resources, referrals, and networking to improve their ability to help kids connect through horses.

AYHC and PSU hosts expect a capacity crowd for the event. Symposium Committee Chair Pat Comerford explains, "We are excited to be able to host the Symposium here. I believe the national-level speakers and exchange of ideas from the diverse group of horse-oriented youth leaders attending the conference will be a real asset to PA youth horse programs and an excellent training opportunity for all participants." The symposium routinely draws a broad representation of youth horse leaders from breed associations, equine sport organizations, Cooperative Extension, universities, and the crucially important hands-on youth leaders from such groups as 4-H, U.S. Pony Club, National High School Rodeo, Future Farmers of America, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and more. Three tracks have been built to meet the needs of the audience including an adult volunteer leader track, industry professional track, and the teen (peer) leader track. The Penn State campus in State College offers this year's Symposium participants fabulous facilities to learn in multiple styles with live horse demonstrations, interactive workshops, classroom talks and roundtables.

Selected topic areas include:

- Coaching Kids for Team and Individual Competition – from the competitor's view to the judge's perspective.
- Equine Care and Management –applying new research to time-tested techniques
- Horsemanship Safety – from helmets to horse farms
- Impact of Equine Activities on Youth Development\* National Study Results
- Innovative Teaching Tools – more than a half-dozen sessions will show case new programs
- Teaching Life Skills – engaging horsepower to motivate youth.

The program makes good use of PSU's exceptional access to demonstration facilities by offering a pre-symposium riding clinic in addition to the live horse presentations. The pre-conference clinic with Julie Goodnight: *The Teacher's Tool Kit; Balance, Rhythm, and Communication with the Horse* is sponsored by Certified Horsemanship Association. Julie Goodnight is an international clinician, she headlines at Horse Expos and Fairs throughout the world and serves as Program Director for the Certified Horsemanship Association. This clinic is custom-made to help the individual

with responsibility for teaching riders and groups of riders. This six-hour clinic includes lunch and a learning experience that you can take home and plug in to your youth horseback riding program. Participants will sharpen their eye for identifying equitation problems, find practical solutions for maintaining proper position, and learn take-home exercises and drill games that develop group control.

Another exciting and featured presentation is the Eastern debut of the new Junior Master Horseman curriculum. This curriculum for youth is based on a science core from the respected Horse Industry Handbook, and was developed through a project of the American Quarter Horse Foundation. The Junior Master Horseman curricula leads the child through experiential learning exercises to foster their interest in the horse and feed their desire for contact with horses through practical and safety conscious information that will translate from the book to the barn. The program is appropriate for the "horse-less" as well as horse-owning child, and usable in the urban, suburban, and rural environment.

Sponsors for the 2005 National Youth Horse Leader's Symposium include: American Paint Horse Association, American Quarter Horse Association, Blaze Magazine, Certified Horsemanship Association, HorseCity.com, Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program, Pennsylvania Equine Council, Pfizer Animal Health, PRIMEDIA Equine Network, Stone Model Horses - The Peter Stone Company, Story Publishing, Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders and Exhibitors Association, University of Louisville - Equine Industry Program.

Several industry groups will recognize participation in this conference for continuing education credit. Visit the website for details; [www.ayhc.com](http://www.ayhc.com) See you there!