



## THE UNITED STATES PONY CLUBS, INC. PRESS RELEASE

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### 2022 USPC Convention Marks Success with Hybrid Event Format

**February 9, 2022 (Lexington, KY)** — The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (USPC) gathered nearly 500 equestrians of all ages for the 2022 USPC Convention, held January 26-30, in a new hybrid format with a blend of in-person, livestream, and on-demand opportunities including more than 60 workshops and seminars plus meetings and awards presentations. As an added benefit, Convention attendees will enjoy extended access to all content on the digital event platform for the next six months.

Pony Club members, leaders and equine enthusiasts met in Norfolk, Virginia, for networking and education with additional attendees logging in online. Representatives from 36 United States Pony Club Regions participated in the event, working to expand Pony Club programming for current and future members. In addition to educational workshops, attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, from shopping the trade fair and viewing research project fair entries to exploring the popular USPC Anatomy Lab presented by Banixx Horse & Pet Care. Pony Club leaders enjoyed a special professional development seminar, and members got advice to prepare for horse management at certifications and rallies. Workshop tracks focused on leadership, instruction, veterinary care, and riding disciplines.

The convention welcomed 19 delegates to the 2022 National Youth Congress as well as honoring the inductees into this year's Academy of Achievement: Sally Ike and Carol Kozlowski.

Many Pony Club awards were announced at the Saturday morning Meeting of the Corporation, sponsored by the University of Louisville College of Business Equine Industry Program. Alley-Cat Pony Club (Western New York Region), Conestoga Pony Club (Delmarva Region), Dune Riders Pony Club (Lake Shore Region), Gambel Oak Pony Club (Intermountain Region), Redwood Hills Pony Club (Middle California Region), and Sawtooth Pony Club (Intermountain Region) were recognized with 25-Year Club Milestone Awards. Connecticut Valley Pony Club (New York/Upper Connecticut Region), Covered Bridge Pony Club (Midsouth Region), Hinkson Valley Pony Club (Midwest Region), River Bend Pony Club (Virginia Region), Tusawilla Pony Club (Sunshine Region) and Woodbrook Hunt Pony Club (Northwest Region) were honored with 50-Year Club Milestone Awards. Upper-level members received special recognition for achieving Pony Club's highest certification, with members Arielle Aharoni (Amwell Valley Hounds Pony Club, New Jersey Region), Alexa Ehlers (National Member), Jessica Fan (Tejas Pony Club, Rio Grande Region) and Catherine Meehan (Blue Ridge Hunt

Pony Club, Virginia Region) earning A certifications. The Brookfield Land Conservation Award was presented to Miami Valley Pony Club and Zoe Hagedorn in the Midsouth Region, while the Flash Teamwork Award went to Deer Creek Pony Club in the Sierra Pacific Region.

At the Saturday night banquet, Pony Club welcomed newly elected USPC President Jennifer Sweet. Winners of the USPC Research Project Fair presented by Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation and supported by Kentucky Equine Research were announced, and attendees celebrated the recipients of the USPC Founders Awards for 2021, recognizing longtime volunteers Darlene Connors and Kim Lowman Vollmer for their dedicated service to Pony Club. Outgoing USPC President Ben Duke presented the inaugural President's Recognition Award to Gegi Winslett in gratitude for her commitment to Pony Club and all the knowledge and wisdom she has contributed to the organization over the years.

The 2022 USPC Convention was possible thanks to the support of our sponsors, including the Arabian Horse Youth Association, Banixx Horse & Pet Care, Ballyhack Farm, Blue Ridge Equine Clinic, Dressage4Kids, Earth-Tek, Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation, HandsOn Gloves, Harmonia, Inc., Harmony Hills Equestrian Center, Kentucky Equine Research, Laura King, Major League Eventing, Old Dominion Equine Associates, Old Dominion Region, Victoria Pickett, ODR Alumna; Kenzie and Cora Raniowski, The Rising Equestrian Pro, St. Andrews University, Specialty Program Insurers, Sweet Briar College, Trafalgar Square Books, University of Louisville College of Business Equine Industry Program, the Virginia Horse Center Foundation, the Virginia Horse Industry Board, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, and Western & English Sales Association, as well as USPC corporate sponsors Kerrits, Shapley's Grooming Products, Triple Crown Nutrition, Wintec, and The Horse.

The 2023 USPC Convention will be held January 18-22, 2023, as Pony Club will explore the "Gateway to the Future" with the Midwest Region at the Marriott St. Louis Grand in St. Louis, Missouri.

**About The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.** — *The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (USPC or Pony Club) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization that builds the foundation of teamwork and sportsmanship through riding, mounted sports, care of horses and ponies, while developing and enhancing leadership, confidence, responsibility, and a sense of community in its youth and adult members. USPC is proud to offer instruction and competitive opportunities in more than 10 different disciplines through hundreds of clubs and centers across the United States. USPC's educational standards continue to be instrumental in curriculum development for schools, universities, equestrian professionals, and organizations across the United States. Many of the nation's top equestrians, including Olympic team members, as well as successful business professionals and leaders in a variety of fields, have roots in Pony Club.*