

FOUNDATION FEATURE:

Seeing The Possible

photos by Connie Lechleitner and Courtesy of Utah State University



The NSBA Foundation helps make many things possible for those throughout the horse world from helping trainers in a crisis, to raising awareness of humane treatment of animals, to assisting equestrians with disabilities and veterans. The success of the Foundation depends on members seeing a need and making something happen.

Alexis Taylor Makes EWD Fundraiser Her Focus

When Alexis Taylor was crowned 2018 queen of the Northern Ohio Quarter Horse Association, she had many duties representing the association around the state as well as in the All American Quarter Horse Congress Queen Contest.

In addition to those activities, Alexis had watched the Equestrians With Disabilities classes at the All American Quarter Horse Congress. She was moved to set a goal to raise \$5,000 for the NSBA Foundation for the Equestrians With Disabilities program to support exhibitors attending the All American Quarter Horse Congress. "I chose these particular equestrians because of their simple love of the horse and the sport," Alexis said when announcing her philanthropic cause. "To them it's not about winning or losing, it's about going out and having fun. This is something I believe we all, no matter our age, could learn something from."

Alexis obtained sponsors, held a silent auction at NOQHA's Summer Six Pack AQHA show, and sold raffle tickets for a Harris Leather and Silverworks work saddle. Smashing her goal, Alexis presented a check for \$6,035 to the NSBA Foundation at the EWD exhibitor reception during the 2018 All American Quarter Horse Congress.

"This process has been so life changing and eye opening," she said. "I've met so many wonderful people and heard so many heartwarming stories. I wouldn't change donating to the EWD for anything in the world!"



Alexis Taylor and EWD exhibitors at the Congress

Judy Smith Changes Lives Daily



Judy Smith leads a participant

As assistant professor of equine assisted activities at Utah State University, Judy Smith changes lives in multiple ways every day. She prepares college students to use equine therapy in a variety of careers, and also sees the changes in those who receive therapy through USU's programs at the college and in the community. She attended the 2018 Coaches Summit to learn more about what was possible for her program.

"Equine therapies serve a wide variety of people, and it's not enough to just be a really good horseman," Judy said. "We prepare students to become equine specialists who will work with licensed mental health professionals to address clients' mental and behavioral issues. In the case of hippotherapy, specialists work with a physical therapist or speech therapist to focus on the movement of the horse and the therapeutic results of riding."

USU provides programs that range from the Reading Corral, a literacy program that takes horses into schools and libraries, to Ride-Ability, which brings children to the USU Animal Sciences Farm to complete tasks on horseback to improve motor skills, speech, cognitive skills and more.

"We tell students and riders to focus not on limitations, but rather on what's possible," Judy said. "We encourage our riders to explore what they believe they are capable of and challenge them to go beyond."

These two individuals saw a need and took action. The 2019 Coaches Summit, being held March 25-27, in Westlake, Texas, is one more example of ways to see what is possible in the horse world.

For more information about becoming involved in any of the Foundation's projects, please contact Lynn Campbell at lcampbell@nsba.com. ■