Conference Info

CONFERENCE COMFORT

The session room temperature is set at a level generally comfortable to groups. If you tend to be cold, please consider bringing a light jacket.

DONATE TO THE STUDENT FUND ONLINE

Help us be a part of the goal to raise $5,000 for the Student Fund! Thanks to USHJA's leadership with a matching gift of $2,500 we are halfway there, but we need members to help get us over the finish line! Funds raised through the Student Auction will get us there, but you can also donate to the fund directly by scanning the QR code.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Registrants will receive a program evaluation by email. Please provide feedback to improve future conferences. Registrants can also scan the QR code to access the evaluation.

JOIN A COMMITTEE!

Click the QR code or visit the registration desk to grab a Committee Application form and be part of the leadership herd! Completed forms can be returned to the registration desk or sent to Amy Sales at **amy.sales@easterassociates.com**.

2025-2026 AHP Board of Directors

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Going the Distance
GOING TOGETHER
LEXINGTON 2026

AHP EQUINE MEDIA CONFERENCE

Schedule of Events

Thursday, May 14

7:45 AM - 4:15 PM	PRE-CONFERENCE TOUR ***Equine Arts Tour***	**MEET IN HOTEL LOBBY**
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	STUDENT AWARD FINALIST INTERVIEWS	**BARREL ROOM**
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	REGISTRATION DESK OPEN	**PRE-FUNCTION PADDOCK**
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM	WELCOME RECEPTION **Drink Tickets Sponsored by USHJA**	**THE BARN**
6:30 PM	WELCOME KEYNOTE ***Beyond the Finish Line: Character, Courage, and Comebacks*** RAMÓN A. DOMINGUEZ, U.S. Racing Hall of Fame Jockey and Multiple Eclipse Award Recipient **Speaker sponsored by BrookeUSA**	**THE BARN**

Friday, May 15

7:30 AM - 5:00 PM — REGISTRATION DESK OPEN — **PRE-FUNCTION PADDOCK**

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM — AHP EQUINE MEDIA CENTER OPEN — **ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE**

AHP Equine Media Center is a media resource for attendees where members distribute material about their business and sample publications.

Sponsored by MARS Equestrian, Buckeye Nutrition, and Antech

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM — BREAKFAST — **THE BARN**

Equine Industry Vision Award Breakfast

Announcement of 2026 Equine Industry Vision Award Winner

Sponsored by Zoetis

9:15 AM - 10:30 AM — GENERAL SESSION — **THE BARN**

Reinventing & Relevance: Career Journeys and What We Can Learn from Them

Join a panel of equine media experts as they open our conference with a discussion on the evolving arena of content creation, strategic collaborations, and industry connections. This session will explore what's gaining momentum, what's fading out, and how equine media professionals can leverage new opportunities for storytelling and partnerships. Whether you're a journalist, freelancer, business owner, or part of an equine organization, you'll gain actionable insights on how to repurpose content, spark fresh ideas, and stay ahead in an ever-changing media landscape.

JEREMY MCGOVERN, Public Information Officer, City of Milwaukee (Moderator)
MARTHA COOK, Co-founder and Partner, Dirt Roads LLC
SANDY OLIYNYK, Marketing Manger, Kentucky Performance Products, LLC
ANNA SOCHOCKY, Chief Executive Officer, Equi-Libris, LLC

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM — MORNING COFFEE BREAK — **ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE**

Sponsored by Humane World for Animals

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM — ROUNDTABLE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Who We Are, Where We Are, What's Our Future

This facilitated roundtable session brings together attendees at similar career stages for small-group conversations about the realities of building a meaningful, sustainable career in equine media and association work. Participants will rotate through discussions led by the same three sets of facilitators, who will share brief personal reflections before guiding conversation around issues of career growth.

Each room is designed to create a comfortable, peer-level environment that encourages candid discussion, shared experiences, and practical insight. While the core questions remain the same, the conversations will naturally reflect the unique challenges, opportunities, and perspectives of each career stage.

SARAH WELK BAYNUM, Author and Freelance Writer
JENNIFER O. BRYANT, Editor, United States Dressage Federation
STEPHANIE CHURCH, Editorial Director, *The Horse* and *Stable Management*
ASHYN FLANAGAN, Vice President of Communications, Straight Arrow Products, Inc.
JESSICA HEIN, Senior Director of Communications and Editor, *Paint Horse Journal* and *Chrome*
RUBY TEVIS, Director of Marketing & Communications, TerraNova Equestrian Center

Early Career — **CARRIAGE ROOM**

For attendees who are early in their career, in their first job(s), or are students

Growth & Mid-Career — **BLUEGRASS A**

For attendees who have a few years under their belt and are looking to grow to the next level in their equine media or association career

Leadership, Reinvention, & Mentoring — **BLUEGRASS B**

For attendees who are seasoned veterans in their equine media or association career, have experienced career changes, and/or are in positions of leadership and mentoring the next generation

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM — NETWORKING LUNCH — **THE BARN**

Sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM — BREAKOUT SESSIONS

From Stable to Startup: Canter into Commerce — **BLUEGRASS A**

Transform your creative passion into a profitable equine-focused business with this practical, energizing workshop designed specifically for writers, photographers, designers, marketers, and media professionals in the horse industry. We'll walk through the essential groundwork: choosing the right business structure, separating personal and business finances, and understanding the tax and deduction basics every freelancer or growing LLC should know. Then we'll move into the money side of creativity: how to confidently price your services, select the right billing model, and use contracts to protect your time, scope of work, and earnings. We'll share real-world, actionable tips tailored to the equine world, plus proven ways to build your client base in a niche industry. Whether you're formalizing a side gig or ready to canter into

full-time entrepreneurship, you'll leave with clear, actionable tools to build a stable, sustainable, and thriving equine media business.

JACOB SIZEMORE, Managing Partner/Tax Partner, SLT CPAs and Advisors
FAUSTO SARMIENTO, Center Director, Kentucky SBDC in Lexington

Strategic Press Releases for Opportunity and Crisis — BLUEGRASS B

Press releases are often treated as a mechanical task, when in reality they are a strategic communication tool, particularly when timing is tight or when an organization is navigating heightened scrutiny or negative attention. In this practical session, Pebbles Turbeville of Horses and Humans Research Foundation, and Randi Thompson of Equine Safety and Success Network will discuss how to approach press releases across a range of real world scenarios. Topics will include planning announcements with long lead times, writing effectively under short deadlines, and communicating proactively during crises or periods of negative publicity. Attendees will gain practical insights into using press releases to protect credibility, support social license, and ensure messages reach the right audience at the right time.

PEBBLES TURBEVILLE, CEO, Horses and Humans Research Foundation
RANDI THOMPSON, Equine Safety and Success Network

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM AFTERNOON COFFEE BREAK — ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE

Sponsored by Humane World for Animals

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

45 Ideas in 45 Minutes: How to Find Leads and Get Their Attention — BLUEGRASS A

Regardless of what you sell, finding new clients or customers is critical for the financial success of any business, However, identifying those prospects is only part of it -- how will you stand apart from your competition? In the session, five experts will share their advice for locating and evaluating prospects, and the tactics they use to convert leads into clients or customers.

PAT TROWBRIDGE, Moderator
EMILY ALBERTI, Director of Advertising, Paulick Report
MEREDITH EKSTEDT, Director of Brand Marketing & Strategic Partnerships, United States Hunter Jumper Association
LIZ MOYER, Fundraising & Marketing Coordinator, United States Pony Clubs
RUBY TEVIS, Director of Marketing & Communications, TerraNova Equestrian Center
SARAH WELK BAYNUM, Author and Freelance Writer

Going the Distance from Book to Movie — BLUEGRASS B

Have you ever wondered about how books get made into television and film? Join Moderator and Co-Host of Horses in the Morning, Glenn Hebert, as he sits with award-winning equine authors Lisa Wysocky and Natalie Keller Reinert as they discuss their journey from writing books, to the big screen and answer questions about it all!

GLENN HEBERT, Director of Podcasting, Horse Radio Network
NATALIE KELLER REINERT, Author and Podcast Host
LISA WYSOCKY, Author and Podcaster

Communicating with Confidence: Under the Spotlight — CARRIAGE ROOM

This is a hands-on media training designed to help communications leaders and spokespeople deliver clear, credible, and compelling messages in any setting. Led by RunSwitch PR's Courtney Norris, Senior Vice President, and Katie Bartholomai, Director of Public Relations, this session provides practical tools to navigate interviews, handle tough questions, and stay on message under pressure. Through interactive exercises and real-world scenarios, attendees will leave prepared to communicate with more clarity, confidence, and control.

KATIE BARTHOLOMAI, Director of Public Relations, RunSwitch
COURTNEY NORRIS, Vice President, RunSwitch

Session sponsored by RunSwitch

4:00 PM - 5:15 PM AFTERNOON EXTRAS

Communicating with Confidence: Looking Your Best — CARRIAGE ROOM

Join Leslie Munsell, founder of Beauty For Real, a cruelty- and Paraben-free makeup line and world-renowned editorial makeup artist with 30 years' experience working with the biggest names in the ad and fashion industry for a small-group demo and product and application recommendations for media appearances so you can look your best under the spotlight. Follow your session with Leslie with a mock interview on camera with John Barlett of EQUUS Television. Preference is given in this session to those who attend the media-training session with RunSwitch earlier in the afternoon. (Note: Leslie will also be available throughout the conference for one-on-one consults for makeup application in front of the camera or in riding and performance environments.)

LESLIE MUNSELL, Founder, Beauty For Real

Camera Shy No More: Mock Interviews — BLUEGRASS B

Practice the skills you learned earlier in the day with practice interviews in front of the camera.

JOHN BARLETT, EQUUS Television Network and EQUUS Radio Network

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM SPECIAL AWARDS RECEPTION — PRE-FUNCTION PADDOCK

Honoring the 2026 AHP Student Award Finalists and the winner of the 2026 AHP NextGen Award.

Student Travel Awards presented by AHP Student Fund
Cash awards presented by Equine Network LLC

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM DINNER BUFFET & PARTY — THE BARN

The Winner's Circle Dinner

Join us for the Winner's Circle Dinner, presented by Farnam, celebrating 80 years of Everything for the Ride! Attendees are invited to fuel up at the buffet table, enjoy a cocktail at the bar, and enter a horse in the 80th running of the "Farnam Anniversary Stakes Race" raffle! For 80 years, Farnam has been dedicated to delivering everything for the ride, supporting horse owners, riders, and professionals every step of the way. We can't wait to see what they have in store for us as we ride into the future!

Sponsored by Farnam

Saturday, May 16

7:30 AM - 5:00 PM — REGISTRATION DESK OPEN — **PRE-FUNCTION PADDOCK**

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM — AHP EQUINE MEDIA CENTER OPEN — **ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE**

AHP Equine Media Center is a media resource for attendees where members distribute material about their business and sample publications.
Sponsored by MARS Equestrian, Buckeye Nutrition, and Antech

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM — BREAKFAST BUFFET — **THE BARN**

Co-sponsored by Brooke USA Foundation and SmartPak Equine

9:15 AM - 10:30 AM — TOWN HALL — **THE BARN**

The Future of (Not Just) Equine Media

The media landscape is changing rapidly, bringing both new opportunities and real challenges for journalists, designers, and freelancers. In this interactive town hall, we'll explore how emerging technologies, shifting audience expectations, and evolving business models are reshaping the future of equine media, and media more broadly. Topics will include the role of AI as a creative and research partner, the growing importance of niche expertise and trusted storytelling, and how new formats such as multimedia, interactive, and audience-driven content are expanding the ways stories are told.

Panelists will also discuss the risks facing today's creators, including automation of routine work, downward pressure on rates, platform dependency, and ethical concerns around AI and intellectual property. Together we'll consider practical strategies for staying competitive: building direct audience relationships, developing specialized skills, collaborating across disciplines, and creating sustainable revenue models. This session invites open discussion about how media professionals can adapt, innovate, and thrive in the years ahead.

GLENN HEBERT, Founder, Horse Radio Network (Moderator)
JOHN BARLETT, EQUUS Television Network and EQUUS Radio Network
BETH RASIN, Senior Director of Communications & Global Programs, JustWorld International
C. JILL STOWE, PHD, Professor, Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky
CARRIE WIRTH, President, EQ Media

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM — MORNING COFFEE BREAK — **ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE**

Sponsored by Platinum Performance

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM — BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Layman's Terms: Explaining Complex and Technical Topics to General Audiences — **BLUEGRASS A**

In this session, Josie Mac Holland will provide a breakdown of communication principles in an equine and agricultural context. Dr. Jyme Nichols, Head of Nutrition at Bluebonnet Feeds and host of the Feed Room Chemist Podcast, will provide real-life examples of breaking down scientific topics so that anyone can understand them from her work with clients. This session aims to be a combination of information and practical application takeaways.

JOSIE MAC HOLLAND, Secretary, CK Productions
JYME NICHOLS, Equine Nutritionist, Author, Podcaster

Shooting Video on Your Smartphone: Improve the Professionalism of Your End Product — **CARRIAGE ROOM**

Content generators are often one-person bands in the field, having to collect information for articles, web features and video while in the video. While using high end equipment with multiple staff members is ideal, it isn't reality for many equine media professionals. In this session, You can visit three stations to see what three content creators use when having to shoot video on their smartphones. You'll get practical advice in three areas of video quality, improved audio and how to improve efficiency and organization. This is a sharing ideas session, so you are encouraged to being any equipment you use with your smartphone videography.

JEREMY MCGOVERN, Public Information Officer, City of Milwaukee
JOHN BARLETT, EQUUS Television Network and EQUUS Radio Network
DIANA DEROSA, EQUUS Television Network

12:30 PM - 1:15 PM — LUNCHEON — **THE BARN**

Sponsored by Straight Arrow Products (Mane 'n Tail, Cowboy Magic, Exhibitor's)

1:15 PM - 1:45 PM — GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING — **THE BARN**

1:45 PM - 2:00 PM — BOARD MEETING — **BARREL ROOM**

1:45 PM - 2:00 PM — BREAK

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM — BREAKOUT SESSIONS

How to Write Horse Health Articles Without Landing Yourself (or the company you work for) in Regulatory Jail — **BLUEGRASS A**

Writing about equine health, supplements, and nutrition comes with unique legal and regulatory challenges. Drawing on her years of experience as Staff Veterinarian and Medical Director for SmartPak, Dr. Lydia Gray will try to demystify the complex rules governing feeds, supplements, and related products in this breakout session. By sharing examples and situations, participants will gain insight on how to craft educational, engaging content that stays compliant while still serving marketing and communication goals. The session will allow for discussion on what kinds of "soft" claims are acceptable, how product language is regulated across labels, websites, videos, and testimonials, and how seemingly small wording choices can carry major consequences. It will also clarify the distinct roles of the FDA, FTC, AAFCO, FCC, and NASC, and how company risk tolerance shapes what writers are allowed to say. Ideal for freelancers, editors, marketers, and equine businesses, this breakout session will attempt to bridge the critical gap between credible science and regulatory-safe messaging.

LYDIA GRAY, Editor and Publisher, *Driving Digest*

Man vs Machine: UGC vs AI Creative — BLUEGRASS B

Every industry has a need to direct its marketing toward the most engaged audience possible. A constant struggle is finding and developing that audience. One way Equine Network reached an engaged audience was the use of user generated content. The presentation will cover that case study. The ideas and use case to be examined are: the use of UGC vs AI creative and why it performs so well, how Equine Network deliberately sourced a variety of UGC content to test, and how paid media was used to curate the audience. Specific results of the case study will be given in percentages. Additionally, a broader examination of AI creative vs UGC will be presented. Trends in both as well as a comparison of performance. Cost between each type of creative will also be examined. In the end, attendees will have a better understanding of which type of creative is best for their current situation.

ETHAN STEPHENS, Corporate Marketing Manager, Equine Network, LLC

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM — AFTERNOON COFFEE BREAK — ROCKBRIDGE RESERVE

Sponsored by Platinum Performance

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM — BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Trends Affecting the Nonprofit Sector: What They Mean as We Navigate Uncertain Terrain — BLUEGRASS A

In a time marked by rapid social, political, and economic shifts, nonprofits are navigating an increasingly complex environment. From evolving donor expectations and heightened public scrutiny to changing policies and community needs, organizations are being called upon to adapt while staying true to their missions. This session will explore how the broader socio-political climate is influencing the nonprofit sector today – shaping funding, partnerships, advocacy, and public trust. Together, participants will reflect on the challenges and opportunities facing nonprofits, especially those in the equine sector, and discuss how these organizations can remain resilient, responsive, and impactful during uncertain times.

WESLEY SCOTT, Senior Director, Major Gifts, Cross Catholic Outreach
KATIE VOGEL, System Coordinator, Advancement, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Trad vs. Indie: Book Publishing in 2026 and Beyond
BLUEGRASS B

Are books still relevant? Are traditional publishers? Are trade distributors? Are agents and publicists? The book publishing world has always been difficult to navigate, and its ever-evolving landscape and changing rules can feel more overwhelming now than ever. Join two book industry veterans with combined experience that spans all aspects of traditional and independent publishing to learn the ins-and-outs and pros-and-cons of today's book publishing options. This session makes special accommodation for audience input with a unique question-and-answer format to ensure every attendee walks away with the information they need to bring their book dreams to life. Books rock.

REBECCA DIDIER, Co-Founder, Dirt Roads LLC
HEATHER WALLACE, Author and Podcaster

4:30 PM -5:30 PM — AFTERNOON EXTRAS

Speed-Networking — CARRIAGE ROOM

Back by popular demand! Content buyers and content providers connect in a fast-paced format on Saturday afternoon. Sign up at the registration desk.

HOLLY CACCAMISE, Editor in Chief, Horse Illustrated, Young Rider & Western Life Today
TAMMY GANTT, The Florida Horse/FTBOA
LYDIA GRAY, Editor and Publisher, *Driving Digest*
JESSICA HEIN, Senior Director of Communications and Editor, *Paint Horse Journal* and *Chrome*

Awards Banquet Makeup Stylings By Appointment — BARREL ROOM

Stun the crowd on Saturday night with a pre-Awards Banquet professional makeup styling by Leslie Munsell, founder of Beauty For Real, and using her cruelty- and Paraben-free product line. Limited sign-ups will be available at the Registration Table onsite during the conference – first come, first serve. Professional makeup stylings are reserved for an additional fee.

LESLIE MUNSELL, Founder, Beauty For Real

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM — EQUINE MEDIA AWARDS RECEPTION & PREAKNESS WATCH PARTY LIVE — PRE-FUNCTION PADDOCK

Preakness glasses compliments of *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred*

7:00 PM -9:30 PM — EQUINE MEDIA AWARDS CELEBRATION DINNER & PRESENTATIONS — THE BARN

Announcement of the Equine Media Award Winners
Sponsored by Purina Animal Nutrition
Centerpieces provided by Breyer® Horses

Notes & Networking: