

"Our individual certified instructors are the life blood of our association. Without you we would not exist. Each year CHA recognizes an outstanding individual that has been nominated by their students to receive recognition for what they do best – teach people to ride! Now I want to read a few of the remarks about our **2019 CHA Instructor of the Year**.

This riding instructor has been called fair, consistent, hard-working, strict, loving, empathetic, honest and kind. She leads by example and it is through her actions that she promotes her riding discipline and her barn's horsemanship and riding brand. What makes her stand out is her amazing ability to adapt to each rider's needs, while processing the gift to read and anticipate each horse's behavior. She can transition easily from teaching an advanced team session to teaching a first time rider. From coaching in the warm up arena at a rated show, working with a veteran, helping a rider who suffers from panic attacks, teaching kids with autism and helping a blind rider navigate some cavalletti work – she can do it all. I truly believe that no one else can be so versatile while remaining humble and highly effective.

She has a devotion to serve others and sets high standards for herself. She is an avid learner and is always attending clinics, seminars, workshops and reading and watching educational materials. I think the key though to her success is her love of teaching and watching her students succeed. She loves the horse first and the sport second. She is a true believer in inclusion and can adapt to what each individual needs. She is a confidence builder in us all.

Another rider says, "I took riding lessons at a therapeutic riding facility and it was really just pony rides. I started taking lessons from this instructor and now I can walk, trot and canter and do work over trot poles. I can't jump due to my physical impairments, but if it wasn't for that, I am sure I would be doing that, too! My instructor is the best."

When I first met my riding instructor, I was an older person getting back into riding after many years. I told her that I wanted to rescue a horse so that I could learn about riding again with my dream project horse. Her answer was short and to the point – "if you want to do that I can't help you. We do work with rescue horses here but at this point in your life

that would be unsafe for you to start with.” So she directed me to an older, very well trained dressage horse and we have worked out perfectly together. My instructor is really strict about learning the basics or in my case relearning everything and she works me through my fear issues.

Last year our barn was hit by Hurricane Irma. She kept the barn running and despite the major stress, not one of us ever saw her give up, get angry or lose patience. She was exhausted but still took the time to care for the horses and clients and when it was time to start over, she somehow managed to give fun, happy lessons to us all. She was able to give us hope, when her world was in shambles. She is tough and caring and I have great admiration for her.

This winner has been a CHA member and certified since 2013 in our Standard English/Western program and with our Instructors of Riders with Disabilities program since 2016.

The CHA 2019 Instructor of the Year is Celia Bunge from the Miami International Riding Club in Miami, Florida!

Thank you!

Christy Landwehr

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