

## ***From the desk of the President***

For those of you who I haven't had the privilege to get to know yet, I am looking forward to meeting you. I am honored to serve the Illinois Quarter Horse Association as President. When not at my day job...you can usually find me in the horse barn getting roped by my 10 year old twin boys or in the cattle barn working on the show calves who have nicer, thicker hair than I. I have been showing quarter horses since I was a youth and now my boys have been showing with me for the past few years. Growing up, horses were always my out and breathe of fresh air from the cattle barn since my dad and brother didn't have a clue about them. With hard work and determination, cattle and horses have plowed the path to who and where I am today and am eternally grateful.

There's no question 2020 was a year full of challenges for all of us and for our organization. The equine industry is resilient, and it is this vibrant desire for success that gives me much confidence in what we can accomplish together in 2021 and beyond. Today I want to take a look forward and spend a little time sharing my vision for what I hope we can accomplish together in the years ahead.

There are three main areas that I want to focus on today:

Membership growth  
Financial Stability  
Opportunities for Youth

### **Membership growth**

Instead of trying to figure out what is holding us back from attracting new members and hosting more shows throughout the state, I believe it's important to focus on what makes belonging to the ILQHA so great. We need to focus on our strengths, not our deficits, in order to unleash new ideas and ways to attract members.

Membership in ILQHA has become a place to share my love for horses with my family and friends. It is a place where people come together with the same values we strive to maintain every day. It is a place where some of the best horseman and horsewoman in the country reside and am able to look up to and obtain their guidance.

### **Financial stability**

A challenge with the economy over the past several years has been hard on managing shows and budgets. When we become financially stable, we can make our shows bigger, more fun for everyone who attends, and we will be able to give back in a greater way! It will be important to grow our shows in the coming years in order for our association to be more profitable and gain more new members. My challenge to you as a board is to host a major event here in Illinois in the next 2-3 years. We have the membership, the horses, the trainers and I believe the people in this room have the desire.

### **Build new opportunities for youth**

We cannot discuss future plans without our greatest attention being given to the youth of our association. There is so much opportunity in this industry, it is our responsibility to not only give them awareness but more importantly support building their foundation in the ILQHA. The more people we have engaged, the more we can accomplish for our youth. The parents of our youth are also going to be a huge asset to building our goals.

Most of you know that I am a Mom with two boys, Logan and Connor. One of my goals is that the years they spend as Illinois Quarter Horse Youth members give them valuable and memorable experiences that help shape them as adults. I want them to remember being a part of the Quarter Horse Community and cement their love of the horse like all of us.

Hard work, responsibility and respect will take us a long way! We need each of your strengths to be successful as an association and I am committed to finding ways to make this a fulfilling and productive experience for each of you. I look forward to working with each and every one of you in the coming year. I am here to listen to your ideas or concerns. Please feel free to contact me at any time.