

Equest's Stacey Elizabeth Johnson Memorial Award

What: The Stacey Elizabeth Johnson Memorial Award is presented annually to the Equest client who embodies Stacey Elizabeth Johnson's spirit of determination, fun, excellence and ability to rise above and beyond her challenges.

About Stacey: Stacey was born with Van Buchem disease, a hereditary disorder which, for her, presented numerous physical and cognitive challenges. As a result, Stacey was considered disabled. But not to Stacey. In the middle of the word disabled is the word **ABLE** and Stacey was the epitome of how **ABLE** a person can be despite numerous struggles.

Stacey began riding at Equest in 1991 at the age of 12. She was a great student, a joy to teach, brave, trusting, and she loved the horses. Stacey worked hard in her lessons and advanced rapidly in her skills. Before long Stacey began competing in horse shows. Through the years she competed in English equitation, western horsemanship, dressage, western riding, trail, showmanship, reining, and jumping. She won many championships and awards at shows that included Chisholm Challenge, Special Olympic Equestrian the American Quarter Horse Association Equestrians with Disabilities classes, the National Snaffle Bit Association shows, the Dixie Nationals in Mississippi and the World Palomino Horse Shows.

Her zest for life was over the top. Stacey cherished animals and people, and she loved to laugh. She adored parties, games, activities and fun. She was always the first one on a dance floor and the last to leave. Stacey had a servant's heart and wanted to help whenever needed. After serving over 3,000 volunteer hours, in 2005 Stacey was inducted into the Equest Volunteer Hall of fame.

Stacey passed away on September 14, 2025, at the age of 46.

Award Winner Criteria:

1. A child or adult rider currently enrolled at Equest
2. Works hard and progresses in her/his equestrian skill development regardless of obstacles he/she must overcome.
3. Absolutely adores the horses
4. Demonstrates exuberance for life, to the best of their ability.
5. A plus if the rider is a show ring competitor, but not mandatory.

How Winner is Selected: Criteria will be considered by the instructing staff and nominations taken. The winner will be selected by vote among the instructors.

Award: Memorial Trophy to take home, plate engraved on Equest trophy or plaque to remain at Equest and \$1000 scholarship for riding fees. An additional \$500 annually will be allocated for competition expenses for the Equest show team.