

IFHRA Approves 2018 Scholarship Fund Awards



11 February 2018, Abu Dhabi, UAE ~ The International Federation of Horse Racing Academies (IFHRA) has approved seven students to receive the Racing Scholarship Fund (RSF) during the year 2018. The program is aimed to boost young professionals from the equestrian fraternity.

The list was finalised at an IFHRA board meeting held at Eastern Mangroves Suites-Abu Dhabi by Jannah, Anantara Eastern Mangroves Spa and Resort, on Friday, 9 February 2018, on the sidelines of the UAE President Cup endurance ride and Flat race, scheduled for 10 and 11 February, respectively, in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital.

The selected students include Stephen Brown from Australia, Niamh Cassidy from Ireland, Jamie Gormley from British Racing school and Thomas Ryall from Northern Racing College, both from the UK, Kit Choon Khaw from Malaysia, Austin Motley from the United States of America and Nil Torries Reyes from Peru.

The meeting was attended by several member countries including Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Malaysia, New Zealand, Morocco, Peru, Puerto Rico, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, Uruguay, US, UAE and UK. IFHRA currently enjoys a membership of 56 countries.

The meeting began with opening remarks by **Ms. Lara Sawaya**, Executive Director of the HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Flat Racing Festival, Chairperson of the International Federation of Horse Racing Academies (IFHRA), General Manager of Wathba Stallions and Chairperson of Ladies & Apprentice Racing Committees in the International Federation of Arabian Horse Racing Authorities (IFahr), who hailed the success of the programme during 2017, which had a group of 15 students that traveled all over the world.

"We are very happy with the success of the 2017 programme. In order to make the program more

professional, we decided to reduce the number of students to 10 this year, out of which seven have been finalised,.” said Sawaya.

The deadline has been extended up to March 7 for the selection of three more candidates as there was ambiguity in terms of minimum and maximum age for the applicants.

Ms Sawaya, however, clarified. *“IFHRA has set the age bracket from 16-30 for all its applicants and this will be adhered to strictly by all means”.*

Discussion on minimum and maximum age of the candidates came under the scanner for a while with some member-countries requesting that worthy candidates should be accommodated in the program citing various reasons. However Ms Sawaya asserted that the rule cannot be changed under IFHRA guidelines.

“The success of our 2017 meeting strengthens our belief that we have to work harder and be more committed in the coming years. I am very happy to state that several beneficiaries of the RSF programme are doing well in different countries having taken advantage of the training they obtained during their stint at the program.”

IFHRA comes under the umbrella of **HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Flat Racing Festival**, which has entered the tenth year in 2018, having started in 2008.

Ms Sawaya also requested the IFHRA member-countries to submit nominees for the Female Apprentice Jockey Darley Award based on the performance of the 2017 season before 26 February 2018. The award will be presented at Kodak Theatre in Hollywood in April first week.

Ms Sawaya further added that henceforth all the respective schools will be responsible for handling the financial aspects of the candidates during the Mentorship Program. *“An amount of \$5,000 will be handed over to the schools per student for the programme and they should liaise with the prospective candidates,”* she said.

The meeting was moderated by Remi Bellocq, IFHRA General Secretary and attended by all board members.

Two other issues which came under focus were insurance for the jockeys and on-line course curriculum for students, both of which will be sorted out very soon, according to Ms Sawaya.

The RSF program is part of the HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Flat Racing Festival with the aim to provide professional mentorship opportunities for students outside their own countries. The students must be either currently enrolled in or have recently graduated from an IFHRA member Racing Academy or national representative.

Any candidate between the age group of 18-29 and employed within the racing industry either as an amateur jockey or apprentice jockey or involved in some other racing activity is eligible for this scholarship fund. The His Highness Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Racing Festival-supported mentorship program lasts a maximum of eight weeks and takes place in a country other than where the incumbent resides.

According to the RSF guidelines, the candidate should have finished at least one year or graduated from a racing academy based in his/her home country or other entity that provides horse racing or related industry workforce training.

The next IFHRA board meeting will be held in May, 2018, during the World Arabian Horse Racing Conference scheduled to be held in Madrid, Spain, from 20 April - 7 May 2018.

At the outset Ms Sawaya and IFHRA members offered their heartfelt condolences over the recent death of jockeys and trainer from Bahrain in a Saudi Arabian road accident.

The HH Sheikh Mansoor Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Global Arabian Horse Flat Racing Festival is sustained by the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority and coordinated by Abu Dhabi Sports Council, with National Feed and Flour Production and Marketing Co. LLC as associate sponsors, The National Archives as the official partner and Emirates airline as the official carriers, Al Massood Automobiles and Nissan Middle East as official car partners, in cooperation with Emirates Racing Authority, IFAHR, Emirates Arabian Horse Society, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi Youth Council, General Authority for Sports and sponsored by Ayadi LLC, Global United Veterinary Services LLC, Nirvana Travels and Tourism LLC, Wathba Stallions, Abu Dhabi Falconers Club, Emirates Falconers Club, Mohammed Bin Zayed Falconry and Desert Physiognomy School, Al Awani General Enterprises, Kabale, Omeir Travels, YAS Channel, Racing Post, Paris Turf, Al Wathba Centre, the UAE's General Women's Union, The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, the HH Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies Sports Academy, Abu Dhabi International Hunting and Equestrian Exhibition 2018, Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club, Eastern Mangroves Suites-Abu Dhabi by Jannah, Anantara Eastern Mangroves Spa and Resort.

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