



LIBBY COLLINS

Coloring the Community

AjPHA President Sabine Lazo plans to bring a positive light to AjPHA through community service.

By LIBBY COLLINS

She might be the youngest AjPHA president in several years, but 15-year-old Sabine Lazo is hardly lacking in experience. The Caldwell, Texas, equestrienne has a lifetime of know-how in leadership roles. Now, Sabine is ready to put her background to work as the 2018–2019 AjPHA president.

From the Get-Go

Sabine's equestrian career started when she was just 2 weeks old. Her mother, Kelly, would carefully hold young Sabine in front of her in the saddle while riding through the arena. Kelly and her

husband are professional trainers, so horses have always been a way of life around their farm.

Known for her bubbly personality and outgoing nature, Sabine thrives in the environment created by her parents, who double as her trainers. Fellow barn mates are constantly at the Lazo house taking lessons or just hanging out; this closeness between the Lazos family and their clients is the foundation of their incredible relationship as a dynamic family that goes beyond bloodlines, Sabine says, and always having people around the house provided Sabine an outlet to grow as a person and a leader.

The constant last-minute horse changes have taught Sabine how to make the best of any situation, remain positive and grow in maturity—qualities required for strong leaders.

Having trainers for parents comes with other perks, Sabine says, like opportunities to own talented horses. Sabine's current mount, Original Hottie, is a 2014 black solid mare by Original Cowboy and out of Lopin Lucille (QH). "Jazz" was Sabine's saving grace before the 2018 APHA Youth World Championship Show.

"When my usual horse, The Ultimate Attitude, got sidelined just before the World Show, we brought Jazz into the program and she has done amazing," Sabine said.

Making the quick switch between horses before the Youth World Show is nothing new to Sabine. This talented teen has attended eight Youth World Shows, shown eight different horses and had to make a last-minute horse switch five times.

Even though "Cooper" was unable to compete, Sabine still made the most of this year's Youth World Show, and she and Jazz shared a few "firsts" together. Jazz had never been shown one handed in Western events before nor shown in hunt-seat equitation, Sabine says, but they successfully did both in Fort Worth. Despite the challenges, the duo brought home another first—Sabine's first all-around title; learn more on page 68.

The constant last-minute horse changes have taught Sabine how to make the best of any situation, remain positive and grow in maturity—all qualities required for strong leaders.

A Lifetime of Experience

Sabine might only be 15, but her experience in the leadership realm is vast. She currently serves as the president of the Gulf Coast and Texas Paint Horse clubs, the vice president of Caldwell High School's Interact Club and

has future plans to run for president of Caldwell High School's chapter of Business Professionals of America.

Sabine's résumé outside of showing horses and her new presidential position is also extensive. She works tirelessly to maintain top-notch grades and is an active FFA member, where she competed in horse judging this past year. She is an acting member of her high school's drama club and a reporter for the student council. Her favorite activity is her position as the founder and editor of the *Caldwell High Herald*, Sabine says. As a freshman, she and her friends started the *Herald* and have watched it grow into a 10-issue paper.

Each of these activities helped prepare her to take on this exciting new role in AjPHA, Sabine says.

"Each organization I have served in taught me lessons on how to effectively lead and treat people that will only benefit me during my time as president," Sabine said.

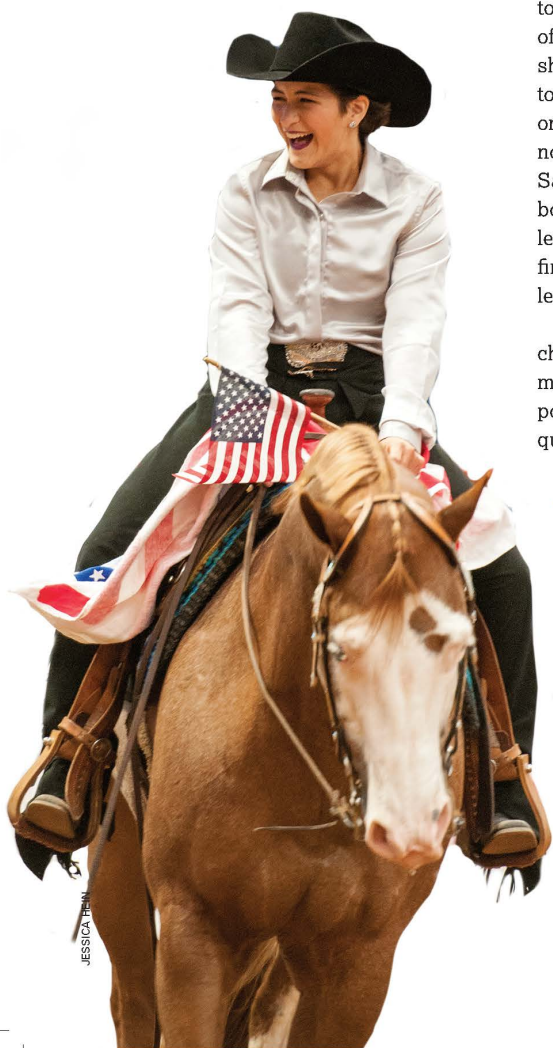
Road to the Presidency

The journey to Sabine's presidency and the 2018 APHA Youth World Championship Show were similar; neither were planned, but she made the best of both.

Sabine first got involved in AjPHA leadership when she was 8 years old, serving the Gulf Coast Paint Horse Club. Her end goal has always been to become AjPHA president and follow in the footsteps of her predecessors and close friends MacKenzie Chapman and Anna Lia Sullivan.

Sabine campaigned hard in 2017, creating fliers and planning speeches to make her case as the ideal choice for AjPHA vice-president. But when AjPHA bylaws came into play—presidential candidates must have served at least one term on the Executive

Sabine's involvement went into overdrive at the 2018 Youth World Show, where she helped lead AjPHA meetings, rode for Team USA in the Youth World Games and captured championship titles with Original Hottie.



Committee—Sabine suddenly became the only candidate that was eligible to run for the position of president-elect, she jumped at the chance.

"It was an honor to be considered for president," Sabine said. "I look forward to serving the organization that I grew up in."

Making the best of the unexpected is something at which Sabine shines, and that is exactly what she did.

Sabine quickly made changes to her campaign giveaways, modified her speech and reached out to her Youth Executive Committee friends to tell them about the new game plan, asking for their support. With her positive attitude and the backing of her friends, Sabine was named president-elect and began year-long to step into the new role of AjPHA president for 2018.

Color the Community

Sabine's presidential project encompasses one of her passions: community service. Community service has allowed Sabine to expand her horizons, learn to be more open-minded and be more accepting of others. It is a way to further education beyond the classroom by learning about people from different walks of life, while still helping others around you, Sabine says.


Sabine's presidential project, "Color the Community," seeks to incentivize community service hours performed by AjPHA members; she hopes to recruit adults, businesses and others who will provide donations to the American Paint Horse Foundation based on AjPHA members' service.

Community service is a great way to build life long connections, Sabine says. Sabine's past service with the Special Olympics came in handy when she teamed up with Past-President

Anna Lia Sullivan on her 2017–2018 service project, which focused on promoting APHA's CHAMPS program and supporting therapeutic riding facilities. Making friendships and getting to know people in organizations like AjPHA is one reason why Sabine cherishes community service, and she looks forward to exposing outside groups to the amazing, service-minded members of AjPHA.

"The goal is to spread the word about AjPHA outside of the horse world and get the word out that AjPHA members are good kids with a lot of responsibility and great morals," Sabine said.

With the help of the Director of Youth Activities and APHA Events Christine Gillett, Sabine plans to design an online program for Youth to log their service hours. Once this program is fully developed, details and instructions about how to log hours will be sent to the Paint Horse community, Sabine says. These community service hours might be in the form of helping at a soup kitchen, humane society, homeless shelter or even volunteering at an APHA horse show.

"I'd love the chance to get AjPHA's name out in communities in a positive light, while also being able to show fellow members the benefits community service has to offer," Sabine said. 

Libby Collins was the Summer 2018 editorial intern for the Paint Horse Journal.

[@jhein@apha.com](mailto:jhein@apha.com)

"I'd love the chance to get AjPHA's name out in communities in a positive light, while also being able to show fellow members the benefits community service has to offer."



RACHEL FLORMAN

Sabine's goal is to spread the word about AjPHA outside of the horse world and get the word out that AjPHA members are good kids with great morals.