

Premium award winners from 2014 and '15 MHBA Yearling shows

The \$40,000 MHBA Yearling Show premium is split and distributed twice among the four show contestants who earn the most money as 2 and 3-year-olds.

The highest earners of 2016 received \$13,000 for first; \$4,000, second; \$2,000, third; and \$1,000, fourth.

Shown in 2014—3-year-olds in 2016

Judge: Tony Dutrow

Cathryn Sophia—\$1,139,720

(b.f., Street Boss—Sheave, by Mineshaft; 2nd in Class IV, shown by Robert T. Manfuso). *In 2016:* Won Kentucky Oaks-G1, Davona Dale S-G2, Forward Gal S-G2, Princess of Sylmar S, 3rd Cotillion S-G1, Acorn S-G1, Ashland S-G1

Just Jack—\$204,853

(dk.b./br.g., Great Notion—Mark Me Special, by Haymaker; reserve champion, 1st in Class I, shown by Dr. and Mrs. Michael J. Harrison). *In 2016:* Won Howard M. Bender Memorial S, 2nd Mister Diz S, 3rd Maryland Million Classic S

Moon Virginia—\$87,272

(b.f., Jump Start—Heavenly Moon, by Mojave Moon; 5th in Class IV, shown by Deborah S. Greene, Fred A. Greene Jr. and Hamilton A. Smith)

Flash McCaul—\$81,447

(b.c., Friesan Fire—An T M, by Cryptoclearance; shown in Class I by Country Life Farm and Fire Away LLC). *In 2016:* 2nd Private Terms S

Shown in 2015—2-year-olds in 2016

Judge: Donato Lanni

O Dionysus—\$111,272

(b.c., Bodemeister—Safe Journey, by Flatter; shown in Class II by Dark Hollow Farm). *In 2016:* Won Christopher Elser Memorial S, 2nd Marylander S

Old Line Gal—\$62,786

(b.f., Stay Thirsty—Buffgirl, by Quiet American; 5th in Class IV, shown by Hillwood Stables LLC)

Blackjack Buster—\$50,260

(b.g., Archarcharch—He Loves Me, by Not For Love; shown in Class II by Dark Hollow Farm)

Parade of Nations—\$48,846

(ch.g., Cal Nation—Parade of Colors, by Leading the Parade; shown in Class I by John E. Williamson III)

First Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program deemed a hit

By Sara Gordon

Six college students interested in careers in the Thoroughbred industry took part in the inaugural Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program June 5-10.

The program, offered by the Maryland Horse Industry Foundation within the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, attracted 13 original applicants and emphasized providing an introduction to the industry and the various careers associated with it.

Jordyn Egan, director of development for the MHIF, spearheaded the program and was involved from start to finish, including conducting the interview process and selection of participants for the program. She also served as the primary coordinator, trav-



The inaugural MTCP program graduates—Tabitha Gregory, Megan George, Sara Gordon, Katie Brooks, Sidney Boots and John Piassek. Their week included a trip to Sagamore Farm in Baltimore County.

eling with the group throughout the week.

“Our goal was simple, to introduce a group of equine-inclined youth to the variety of opportunities in the Thoroughbred industry and help them define the next steps on their career paths,” she said. “We had a feeling that there would be interest in the program, but were blown away by the quality of applicants.”

The six young adults selected for the program came together because of a common interest in being a part of the industry, but their career aspirations varied.

Tabitha Gregory of Frederick, Md., has a special interest in equine nutrition and metabolic processes. Katie Brooks of Columbia, Md., was

initially interested in a pre-vet track, but since gaining experience in reproduction, has become open to exploring new options. Megan George of Reisterstown, Md., plans to continue to follow her pre-vet track, but also wants to explore opportunities involving breeding and training. John Piasek of Cranford, N.J., is interested in the business side of the industry, including handicapping and racing journalism. Sidney Boots of Lexington, Ky., has a strong interest in fan education and agro-tourism, but she admits her passion for the industry keeps her eyes open to every opportunity available.

The program was uniquely tailored to suit each participant's area of interest, while remaining a broad overview of the industry. The first day included an introduction to the MHBA, along with the Maryland Horse Industry Board, Maryland Racing Commission, and the *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred* publication team. Students were educated about the purpose of each entity and provided an overview of the Maryland horse industry, from Ross Peddicord, executive director of the MHIB. The sessions also included an explanation of the regulations within the industry, as enforced by the racing commission.

The second and third days were filled with plenty of travel as the MTCP group ventured to and received behind-the-scenes looks at: Fair Hill Training Center, Northview Stallion Station, Heritage Stallions, Chanceland Farm, Country Life Farm, Merryland Farm, and The Mill of Bel Air. Participants saw the daily operations of a training facility away from the racetrack, a live breeding, as well as the opportunity to meet some of the state's top stallions.

At Fair Hill, participants had the chance to talk to trainer Mike Trombetta and watch as his horses breezed on the track. The day also included a tour of the Fair Hill Equine Therapy Center, with a chance to hear from Bruce Jackson



Students were provided close-up access to a cross-section of the industry while making field trips across the state. Tours included (from top): Mike Trombetta's training barn at Fair Hill; the Fair Hill steeplechase course with Joe Clancy; and a visit to Laurel Park, where Maryland Jockey Club president and general manager Sal Sinatra sat down to discuss racetrack management, and the group hung out with the track's starting gate crew.

about how he created the facility. A quick trip to the office of Joe Clancy allowed participants to hear from him about his roles with *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred* magazine, *The Saratoga Special*, and his other journalistic and business endeavors. Afterward, the group met Dr. Kathy Anderson of Equine Veterinary Care at Fair Hill, also receiving a tour of her facility that specializes in Thoroughbreds and Sport-horses.

During a visit with Michelle Jennings, an equine nutritionist at The Mill, interns learned how she assists clients in selecting the proper diet for their equines. Northview stallion manager Francisco Torres introduced the students to stallions Redeemed and Great Notion. Louis Merryman, general manager of Heritage, gave students a chance to watch a live breeding with the stallion Bourbon Courage.

"I was very familiar with the front side of racing, but not so much as to the backstretch, farming, and the like," said Piasek. "Getting to experience those aspects, and therefore gain a fuller understanding of how racing works in Maryland, was something I was looking forward to."

The following day was spent at Laurel Park, starting in the racing office with assistant racing secretary Jillian Tullock. Students met Willie White, the president of the MHBA, as well as David Richardson of the Maryland Thoroughbred Horseman's Association, and Tom LaMarra, the managing editor of THAracing.com. Students learned about the purpose of the MTHA within the state's industry, as well as the new programs that have been implemented, including *Beyond the Wire*, which focuses on Thoroughbred aftercare.

A common theme among all of the speakers was providing opportunities to include a younger generation into the industry. "It's always on my mind. . . how do we get the young people to appreciate this opportunity?" said White.



MTCP class outings (clockwise from top left): a visit with 2016 Maryland leading breeder Bob Manfuso (right) at Chanceland Farm; discussing equine nutrition at The Mill of Bel Air; learning about the Retired Racehorse Project from Steuart Pittman at Dodon Farm; and being introduced to Dark Hollow Farm residents by owner JoAnn Hayden (orange cap).

8 The afternoon concluded with a visit to Steuart Pittman's Dodon Farm, bringing the overview full circle with a visit to a Thoroughbred retraining facility and learn about Pittman's Retired Racehorse Project. The program promotes and awards the retraining of retired racehorses, culminating with a competition each fall, at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington. The project promotes the versatility of Thoroughbreds, even after their racing careers have ended.

The next morning started bright and early with a tour of Sagamore Farm in Baltimore County. Jocelyn Brooks provided MTCP with a tour of the breeding and training farm. The importance of detail in maintaining such a large facility was emphasized, touching on everything from the process of reseeded pastures to gate training young horses. After Sagamore, the group visited the Maryland Hunt Cup steeplechase course, with some insight provided by photographer Anne Litz.

"Everyone we met was so kind and I felt that they genuinely wanted us to be a part of the industry," said Gregory.

"We had so many people tell us that we could come back and spend a day with them and learn more about what they do."

A trip to Dark Hollow Farm, owned and operated by JoAnn and David Hayden, gave students a look at a smaller scale breeding facility. The Haydens personal story of their entry into the racing industry exemplified that it is not necessary to be born into a racing family and that it is possible to make your own way and be successful. The day wrapped up with lunch at the Grandstand Grille in Timonium, with sales consignee Bill Reightler, who discussed the lengthy process of participating in the Fasig-Tipton yearling sale, at the state fairgrounds in Timonium.

The week ended with a day at Laurel Park. Students sat down with Maryland Jockey Club president and general manager Sal Sinatra, who discussed racetrack management. MJC staffers Carrie Everly (marketing), Phoebe Hayes (horsemen's relations) and Danell Bajkowski (sales and operations) also added perspective on their various areas of expertise.

Students also had the opportunity to hear from Frank Vespe, the founder and publisher of *The Racing Biz* and Jim Steele, the manager of Shamrock Farm in Woodbine. The day concluded with a tour of the backside and a catered lunch, as a part of Maryland Horse Council's Day at the Races.

"The most important thing I learned during the week was that there are so many options in working in the Thoroughbred industry," said Boots. "I had an idea of some things that I could do with horses, but I think it was important to see actual people in those roles and hear from them [in] the different paths they took to reach that point. It made entering the industry a lot less intimidating."

New York-based racing apparel company Embrace The Race helped sponsor the program, outfitting the students in custom MTCP hats and shirts as a way to connect with industry newcomers.

"For us, it helps to be involved with anything that promotes racing and promotes people getting involved in racing," said Mike DeAnzeris of Embrace The Race. "I think it was a really good program and we're happy to be part of it."

Despite the short timeframe, the MTCP offered students insight and exposure to nearly every aspect of the state's Thoroughbred industry. Interns met many of the top leaders, made important connections with industry

professionals, and started the conversations necessary to navigate the steps needed for future employment within the sport.

This year's class will serve as ambassadors for the program, all committed to dedicating their career goals to become, in some form, a part of the Maryland Thoroughbred world. With two of the six participants from outside the state, Egan says she plans to open the program to attract others into Maryland, even considering heading out on the road to recruit students from out of state. Based upon the success in the first year, and the enthusiasm that it generated, the program's future looks bright in creating the bridge to guide young racing enthusiasts into becoming industry professionals.

"The inaugural group of six was made up of intelligent, kind, passionate people; the possibilities are truly endless for them," Egan said. "We are extremely grateful to the host facilities that welcomed us with open arms and look forward to doing it all again next year." 🐾

For more information, contact jbrand@marylandthoroughbred.com or see marylandhorseindustryfoundation.org/index.php/career-program.

Virginia Tech University student and MTCP participant Sara Gordon of Woodbine, Md., has a passion for the media coverage and publication side of the industry, with an emphasis on writing opportunities.