

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2006

Photos available upon request

MEDIA CONTACT:

Cindy Schonholtz, AYHC Executive Director

800-TRY-AYHC (879-2942), 719-594-9778

info@ayhc.com, www.ayhc.org

AYHC Honors Kent Sturman as a Distinguished Service Award Winner

The American Youth Horse Council from time to time chooses someone who has gone the extra mile to serve the American Youth Horse Council as well as the youth who make the horse industry so vital. Kent Sturman, the Executive Director of the National High School Rodeo Association, is committed to furthering the horse industry into the future through forming youth-horse connections. His dedication to youth horse programs and industry involvement and innovation earned him the 2005 American Youth Horse Council Distinguished Service Award.

This coveted award recognizes an adult offering outstanding service, vision, innovation, and leadership to the youth-horse industry. The person also must have been affiliated with AYHC. Individuals are nominated by and voted upon by the AYHC board.

Sturman, the 2006 recipient, was honored at the 2006 National Youth Horse Leader's Symposium, hosted by The University of Florida, Feb. 3 - 5, 2006 in Gainesville, Florida. He was presented with a framed, limited-edition western print donated by *Western Horseman*, Protégé animal clippers donated by *Oster Products* and a plaque.

The Colorado horseman earned an Associate of Applied Science Degree from Northwest Community College in 1982. Kent is an alumnus of 4-H & FFA program with a total of 16 years of involvement, serving as a leader for five years. He continues to give back to these youth programs as a volunteer judge for the Eastern National 4-H Roundup and other national programs. In addition, Kent has served on the Friends of Rodeo board of directors for 15 years and is a current board member and founding member of the Animal Welfare Council.

Sturman's dedication to the youth horse industry is second to none. He's been an AYHC board member for more than 14 years, serving as President from 2002 – 2004. As chairman of the AYHC Fundraising and Nominating committees, he has remained engaged and productive for the association. Kent has touched countless lives while overseeing the student officer program for the National High School Rodeo Association where he coordinates officer travel and activities while molding these students into productive youth adults that serve as role models for the industry.

"Kent's industry experience, drive to get the job done, and vision for bigger and greater things have set the pace for continued advancement of the American Youth Horse Council." AYHC President, Ashley Griffin goes on to say that, "Sturman's professionalism and willingness to serve the organization with the continuity and enduring values is what is needed to move the AYHC forward in this competitive time." Kent gives unselfishly to all aspects of the equine industry. His eagerness to share knowledge and expertise with anyone who has a desire to learn is unparalleled.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

Corporate Sponsors

PFIZER ANIMAL HEALTH ▲ STONE MODEL HORSES

PRIMEDIA EQUINE ▲ BLAZE MAGAZINE

▲ ANIMAL WELFARE COUNCIL

SYMPOSIUM SPONSORS:

Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders & Exhibitors

◆ American Junior Paint Horse Association
◆ Florida Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners ◆Horsecity.com
◆ UlcerGard - Merial
◆ American Quarter Horse Youth Association
◆ Storey Publishing ◆ Purina Mills
◆ Penn State Equine Science ◆ Oster Products
Cornell University ◆ NY State 4-H Program ◆ Paso Fino Horse Association
National High School Rodeo Association ◆ Certified Horsemanship Association
◆ Western Horseman

Hosted by: University of Florida Extension

###