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NEWS LOCAL

Teen wins national award



By Megan Voss, Sherwood Park News
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Sydney Young recently won the Arabian Horse Youth Association's youth of the year award. (Photo Supplied)

She has accomplished a lot in her young life so far.

This year's winner of the Arabian Horse Youth Association's (AHYA) youth of the year award is Sydney Young, who is from Sherwood Park.

Honoured in a ceremony in November, the teen received a \$1,000 scholarship from the association.

"I could say I was excited — I fainted when I gave my speech, I was so happy when I was at the award presentation," Young said.

"It's kind of something that I've been working towards for probably about the last 10 years of my life. (It has) been my entire life goal — everything I do has kind of been with this at the end of the rainbow."

What made the experience slightly difficult was that Young found out she won two months before the award presentation, but could not tell anyone.

"It's been that one thing that you wait for your whole life," she said.

The youth of the year award is based on academic and community achievements as well as contributions to the Arabian horse industry. During high school, Young studied overseas in Southeast Asia, spending three months travelling and studying international business, English, world issues and physical education. Prior to travelling, she went to Africa, and has also spent time volunteering for Hearts in Action, a summer camp for kids with disabilities.

Young said she enjoys working with horses because it is different from the many other things she does on a day-to-day basis.

"It's not like riding a bike where it's always consistent," she said.

"You never know what that horse is going to do that day. Sometimes you come in and they're grumpy or they're tired or sometimes they want to follow you around all day."

Young was the AHYA Region 17 youth vice director from 2010 to 2013, and has been the youth director since August 2014. Since then, she has also started a youth regional show committee and has organized many fundraisers during the Region 17 championship show.

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