

Connecticut Horse Shows Association

ANNOUNCES 2009 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

BY GEORGE JENSEN



Jessica Gross

All her life, college has been a goal that Jessica has set for herself, not because her grandfather threatened to send her to military school if she didn't go (although that may have given her a little incentive), but because she wants to be able to gain as

much knowledge as she can in an area that she loves. Jessica graduated from Ledyard High School and enrolled in Cazenovia College in New York, where she plans to major in Equine Business Management. With this major she hopes to find the area in the equine world that she enjoys most, whether it is in nutrition, training, breeding, or whatever else might spark her interest. Jessica also chose this major because, if for some unknown reason she decided that horses weren't for her anymore, she would have the business management part of her major as a backup, which she could use in the business world.

A highly motivated young woman, Jessica has proven her willingness to give herself to others. She was actively involved with Student Congress where she was instrumental in planning spirit week, pep rallies, blood drives and turkey baskets. Jessica has shown her passion to be an effective and responsive member of this organization by seeking out a diverse array of students' thoughts, concerns and opinions and then communicating them to Student Congress. Jessica has a polite and pleasant demeanor and she interacts well with both her peers and adults—character traits which should help her achieve great things in her life. She also was the student chairperson of the Ledyard High School Agricultural Science and Future Farmers of America Horse Show.



CINDY MORRISON

Jessica Gross, CHSA Scholarship recipient.

After about a year of riding, her trainer suggested that she join the barn at a horse show to see if competing was something in which she would be interested. Following the show she talked to her mom. They decided that Jessica would ride in the next show, a Southern New England Horsemen's Association (SNEHA) show. She would ride in the Hunt Seat Walk-Trot division. At this show, each division had an equitation, pleasure, and trail class. For her first equitation class, she wanted to look her best: polished boots, ironed jacket and shirt, clean helmet, heels down, looking up, shoulders back, sitting up nice and tall, correct diagonals, the whole nine yards.

When the first class was over, the competitors lined up in the middle of the ring. The ringmaster started calling the placings for the class, starting with sixth. Placing after placing was called; Jessica's name and number were not called. Although she was a little upset, she knew it was her first show and that she probably wasn't going to do so well. Then the ringmaster called first place—Jessica Gross! She ended that day as Reserve Champion in her division. That was it! She told her mom that showing was what she wanted to do all summer. And that's what she's been doing for seven years. Presently she shows hunters and dressage with CHSA affiliated shows.