



NEWS RELEASE

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NJDA HONORS DR. DANIEL KEENAN **AS NEW JERSEY HORSEPERSON OF THE YEAR**

Others Also Awarded At 62nd Annual Luncheon

(TRENTON) - The 2018 Governor's Award for Horseperson of the Year was awarded to Dr. Daniel Keenan, who has been an equine veterinarian in New Jersey for more than 30 years. Dr. Keenan, whose practice is in Chesterfield Township in Burlington County, accepted the award at the 62nd Annual New Jersey Breeders Awards Luncheon on Sunday at the Hilton Garden Inn in Hamilton.

“Dr. Keenan’s vast experience and knowledge and great care for horses has made him a highly respected professional in the New Jersey equine industry,” NJDA Secretary Douglas H. Fisher said. “He is very deserving of the Governor’s Award for Horseperson of the Year.”

Dr. Keenan is a practice partner at Foundation Equine Wellness and Performance. He has served on many committees and boards concerning the equine industry in New Jersey and nationally, including his current memberships on the Board of Directors of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) and the Leadership Development Committee of that organization.

In the past he has also served on the Professional Conduct and Ethics Committee and the Educational Programs Committee of the AAEP; as a past President and Treasurer of the New Jersey Association of Equine Practitioners; as Vice President of the NJ Horse Council; as a member of the New Jersey Board of Veterinary Examiners; as a member of the Executive Board of the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association; as a representative to the New Jersey Agricultural Convention and on various other committees involving the equine industry in New Jersey.

Dr. Keenan earned his Bachelor’s Degree from Villanova University in 1980 and his Doctoral Degree from The New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University in 1984. Upon graduating from Veterinary School, he moved to central New Jersey and began working at The Walnridge Equine Clinic where he remained until 1988. He then started his own practice centered in the Bordentown area where he has remained.

In 2006 Dr. Keenan and Dr. Ron McAlister merged their practices to form Keenan McAlister Equine. Upon Dr. McAlister’s retirement in 2013, Dr. Lynsey Makkreel purchased Dr. McAlister’s portion of Keenan McAlister Equine. Dr. Keenan and Dr. Makkreel became ownership partners of what is now Foundation Equine Wellness and Performance.

Other awards presented were:

Secretary of Agriculture Award for New Jersey Thoroughbred Horse of the Year: Sunny Ridge – Bred in New Jersey by Dennis Drazin, Sunny Ridge has been a consistent runner who competed against top older horses in training. The gray or roan 5-year-old finished third in the Salvatore Mile at Monmouth Park and had a breakthrough performance by winning the \$100,000 State Dinner Stakes at Belmont Park by 3¼ lengths. The son of Holy Bull finished 2018 with \$241,500 in earnings and has won six of 21 career starts. Sunny Ridge has career earnings of \$1,178,902, the sixth most for a New Jersey-bred runner.

Secretary of Agriculture Award for New Jersey Standardbred Horse of the Year: Hurrikane Emperor – In nine career starts, Hurrikane Emperor has seven wins and has earned \$226,900. The 2-year-old had a dominating performance in the New Jersey Sire Stakes at the Meadowlands and then had a 1:49.3 mile in the \$250,000 Kentucky Sire Stakes Final at the Red Mile in Lexington, Ky., to become the first known dual sire stakes champion. In his final start of the year, Hurrikane Emperor won the Standardbred Breeders and Owners Association of New Jersey sponsored Homegrown Pace at Freehold Raceway. Hurrikane Emperor has career earnings of \$219,092.

Secretary of Agriculture Award for New Jersey Sire Stakes Premier Horse of The Year: Take A Wish – Take A Wish was the only horse to score double finals wins with victories in the finals of the Sires Stakes' Premier Division at the Meadowlands and the Standardbred Development Fund at Freehold Raceway. Take A Wish won \$87,395 in 2018 and the 3-year-old filly trotter was on the board in five of the six Sire Stakes races she entered. Take A Wish is owned by Dawn Anderson and Mark Schullstrom of Colts Neck, N.J., and was bred by Rivers Stable in Flemington, N.J.

Breeder of the Year: White Birch Farm – White Birch Farm in Allentown is a 600-acre Standardbred breeding farm founded by Joe and Marie Parisi. Their son Michael ran the farm in the years following Joe's passing. Michael passed away in 2015 and long-serving farm manager Steve Williams also passed this year. White Birch Farm also won this honor in 2004, 2011 and 2014 and was the United States Harness Writers Association Breeder of the Year in 2012 and 2013.

Horse Park of NJ Volunteer of the Year: Kim Wojcik-Sheridan – She has been a volunteer for several years at the Horse Park. She has performed a wide range of duties during her time there, including course preparation, gate keeping and being a jump judge as well as many other jobs at the park.

Superior Achievement Award – Standardbred Pleasure: Crossing the Delaware – He is a versatile standardbred winning in Dressage, Rookie Horse, Games Division, Driving and Team Challenge. Crossing the Delaware is a 5-year-old and is owned by Kelly Conn and has successfully participated in NJ Standardbred events.

Superior Achievement Award – Paint: Say No Way Jose – He is a 12-year-old American Paint Horse. Say No Way Jose has American Paint Horse Association Lifetime points in Amateur, Open and Youth Divisions as well as Register of Merits and Honor Roll Awards. He is owned by Patricia Burns, of Vineland.

New Jersey Equestrian of the Year: Riley Chenoweth-Hafner, Manahawkin – A 17-year-old Southern Regional High School junior, she started riding lessons at age 8 and has been the Ocean County Equestrian of the Year for each of the last four years.

New Jersey Agricultural Achievement Award: Toni Baker, Elmer -- \$500 Scholarship. An 18-year-old Salem County Vo-Tech senior, Toni has been active in 4-H and agriculture for her entire life. She has competed and won many awards in 4-H. She has helped raise and care for horses, swine, goats, cattle and other farm

animals as well. Contestants must be a New Jersey resident and a high school senior who is planning on pursuing a career in the agriculture field and/or sciences.

Bell Scholarship: *Geoffrey Leonberg, Moorestown* – The \$1,000 scholarship is presented by the Equine Advisory Board and named for Ernest C. Bell, a horse breeder and one of the founders of the Equine Advisory Board. Geoffrey who is from Burlington County and a senior at Rutgers University, started a cooperative program between Rutgers and Delaware Valley University that will allow him to be a farrier.

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