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Certified Horsemanship Association Certified Instructor Jill Montgomery Honored with the 2017 Van Ness Award from the American Horse Council

(June 2017) – The American Horse Council (AHC) honors individuals that have shown leadership and service to the horse community in his or her state with the Van Ness Award every year. This year’s recipient is Jill Montgomery of Pueblo West, Colorado, a Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) Level 3 Certified Instructor in English and Western and a Level 4 Certified Equine Facility Manager. She also serves as a CHA Assistant Clinic Instructor and the CHA Region 9 Co-Director.

“The Certified Horsemanship Association would like to take this opportunity to congratulate one of our own members, Jill Montgomery, who was presented with the Van Ness Award at the 2017 American Horse Council Meeting in Washington, DC,” said CHA President Beth Powers. “Jill is very active in CHA as well; she has served on our board of directors, as a Regional Director and is a certified riding instructor. She also is a site visitor for the Facilities Accreditation program and holds the qualification of being an Equine Facilities Manager Assistant Clinician. Jill has contributed much to CHA in guiding us into our next 50 years as a membership organization that strives to improve the lives of others through a positive safe experience with horses. Thank you for all you have done for us and the horse industry, Jill.”

Montgomery currently teaches riders of all ages, and specializes in developing youth and confident riders at the Arroyo Ranch. She has been teaching since 1978. She has served on CHA’s Research and Development Committee and also contributed to the *The Equine Professional Manual—The Art of Teaching Riding* and the *CHA Standards for Equestrian Programs*.

Through her business, JRAM Enterprises, Montgomery offers program and curriculum development, equine operation safety analyses, expert witness services, strategic planning, event planning, and consulting on equine facility management and more. She has also written dozens of articles and spoken at a variety of events.

According to AHC President Julie Broadway, Jill Montgomery has devoted her professional life to the horse industry and has an incredible influence on keeping equine activities accessible and enjoyable for everyone. “She continually seeks to educate and inform both horse owners

and the public of the joys and benefits of horses and is always working to ensure a favorable environment for the equine industry in the state of Colorado,” said Broadway.

Montgomery has been a Colorado Horse Council member for more than 20 years and served as its Vice President and Chair of its Legislative and Regulatory Committee. She has been on the Board of Directors for the Animal Welfare Council. Montgomery also helped found the Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance. She has also served as the Executive Director of the American Youth Horse Council.

She has been involved in the development of a number of cutting edge programs on behalf of the Colorado Horse Council and the Animal Welfare Council Board. Her leadership and authorship of “Colorado’s Unwanted Horse Environmental Assessment” has been widely utilized by many state horse councils and universities. This assessment also benefitted all Coloradoans by lightening the law enforcement and tax payer’s burden for caring for impounded horses.

Her involvement in working to ensure a favorable environment for the equine industry in Colorado began when she and a group of like-minded horsemen founded the Pueblo West Horsemen’s Association. She was also involved in the creation of the Colorado Horse Development Authority and the Horse Promotion Assessment Fee that is collected with brand inspections at the time of transfer of ownership or transport of equines for distances of 75 miles or greater.

She helped form a Political Committee, ColoradoHorses, to help elect a candidate who support the goals and objects of keeping Colorado a great state to own and keep horses. Additionally, her work on the issue of the unwanted horse in Colorado led to the formation of the Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance, a 501(c)(3) dedicated to assisting with the issue.

“This is a wonderful surprise, and I feel honored and grateful for this prestigious award,” said Montgomery. “I am humbled to be listed in the company of past recipients and with whom this recognition is named. I want to thank the AHC and all of those that thought of me enough to put my name forward for this honor. I have been blessed to work with many outstanding individuals in the horse industry, and my accomplishments are a reflection of the inspiration I gain from them.”

The award is named in memory of Marjorie Van Ness, who was a co-founder of the New Jersey Horse Council and one of the organizers of AHC’s Coalition of State Horse Councils.

CHA Instructors Change Lives Through Safe Experiences with Horses. The purpose of CHA is to promote excellence in safety and education for the benefit of the horse industry. CHA certifies instructors and trail guides, accredits equestrian facilities, publishes educational manuals, produces educational horsemanship DVDs and YouTube Safety shorts, and hosts regional and international conferences. For more information on the largest certifying body of riding instructors and barn managers in North America, Certified Horsemanship Association, please visit www.CHA.horse or call 859-259-3399. To find a certified horseback riding instructor or accredited equine facility near you, visit www.CHAINstructors.com.

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