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For More Information and Photos
Contact: Christy Landwehr
720-857-9550 or clandwehr@CHA-ahse.org

**Certified Horsemanship Association Awards CHA School Horse of the Year
Award to Purebred Polish Arabian Sir Dar from Experience Equus in
Aledo, Texas**

(October 2015) – It wasn't just people that won at this year's CHA Awards Banquet during the CHA International Conference in Amarillo, TX on October 24, 2015. One special horse won an award and four additional finalists had a spotlight shone on what they do in their careers as school horses. Out of the five school horses nominated for the CHA School Horse of the Year Award sponsored by Stone Model Horses, it was Sir Dar who captured the final honors for Experience Equus of Aledo, TX. The award was presented to owner Darla Ryder, who is a CHA Master Instructor and Level 4 IRD Instructor, Clinic Staff, and CHA Lifetime member. She received a Stone Horse statue of Sir Dar created by the Peter Stone Company.

Sir Dar has been used in Western, English, jumping up to three-foot fences, dressage up to Training Level, lunge line, lead line, ground work, and with able-bodied and therapeutic riders from beginner to advanced. In addition, he has been used in CHA Certification Clinics and was known to have the ability to adapt to several types of riders at various levels and was great at role playing during the clinics.

“Having Sir Dar win the CHA School Horse of the Year validates the 19 years we have spent together serving able-bodied riders, riders with special needs, and mentoring equestrian programs doing what we were both meant to do,” said Ryder. Sir Dar was recently retired from the program at Experience Equus, and many will miss working with this extra-special lesson horse who has impacted so many.

One nominee wrote, “In my 45 years of teaching I have never worked with a horse as mentally stable, physically capable, and as willing of a spirit as Sir Dar. In the countless lessons given on him by myself, the programs he has been loaned to, and the multiple instructors who have worked with him, there has never been a word of concern spoken about him. I am one of his many fans.”

The CHA Stone School Horse of the Year Program honors all the wonderful equines that spend their days being patient with new riders and not-so-new riders. The sponsor of the

program, Stone Horses, creates “model horses for real horse people” and has been a longtime partner of CHA for this award.

Each equine finalist received a plaque from CHA and were honored at the CHA Awards Banquet. The five finalists included:

- Goliath, from the Life Adventure Center of the Bluegrass in Lexington, KY
- Happy Jack, from Victory Therapy Center in Roanoke, TX
- Milagro, from Graham Equestrian Center in Glenarm, MD
- Sir Dar, from Experience Equus in Aledo, TX
- Toby, from Blue Star Camps in Hendersonville, NC

For more information about the 2015 CHA International Conference, please visit [Facebook.com/CHAIstructors](https://www.facebook.com/CHAIstructors) and search hashtag #CHAIiCON on Facebook. For more information on the 2016 CHA International Conference, visit http://cha-ahse.org/store/pages/47/International_Conference.html.

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-ahse.org 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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