

National Western Youth Ranch Horse Mentor Matchup **Scholarship Program Specifications**

The National Western Stock Show Youth Ranch Horse Mentor Matchup was created to provide local equestrian youth an opportunity to learn and compete during the National Western Stock Show through relevant hands-on educational activities with their equine partner and top equine professionals. Applications will be accepted until October 31, 2026. **Read the specifications below carefully BEFORE submitting an application. By signing and submitting an application, you agree to all the specifications.**

Champion Award: \$2,000 scholarship

Reserve Champion Award: \$1,000 scholarship

1. To be eligible, you must:
 - a. Be between the ages of 14-21 as of October 31, 2026, inclusive
 - b. Have access to a safe horse who is familiar with cattle
2. Interested youth will need to submit a completed application and a video showing the rider's ability and the safety of the horse/rider pair working cattle.
 - a. The video should be submitted via a link on the application (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.), be no longer than three minutes and allow others to view.
 - b. The video should show the interested youth riding the horse intended to be used in the program.
 - c. The video footage should have been taken within six months of submission.
 - d. The video should include at least 30 seconds of **each** of the following: reining maneuvers, ranch riding maneuvers, ranch trail obstacles and at least two of the three cattle work options with at least 30 seconds of each: roping, boxing or fence work.
3. Completed applications will be accepted until October 31, 2026 11:59 p.m. MST through the NWSS website: <https://nationalwestern.com/horse-shows/horse-exhibitors/horse-youth-programs/>
4. Applications will be reviewed and up to ten (10) individuals will be selected to participate and notified no later than December 1, 2026.

- a. Selections will be based on:
 - i. Horse/rider connection and potential
 - ii. Desire to be involved in the equine industry
 - iii. Professionalism
 - iv. Humane and respectful treatment of all animals and individuals

5. Logistics

- a. By submitting an application, interested youth agree to abide by National Western Stock Show Horse Show Rules & Regulations.
- b. Selected youth will be required to attend a logistics meeting prior to show, via conference call or Zoom.
- c. Selected youth will learn and compete on Saturday, January 9, and Sunday, January 1, 2027 in the CINCH Arena in the Events Center.
- d. Selected youth will be required to attend a rider's social gathering and meeting (time and location TBD).
- e. Selected youth will be responsible for transportation and care of their horse throughout the duration of the event.
- f. Competition tasks will be determined once finalists are selected and may include: ranch trail obstacles, reining maneuvers and cattle work such as roping, boxing, herd work and/or fence work.
- g. Western attire is mandatory for this event.

- 6. Any contestant who has not yet won the Champion or Reserve Champion award in this program is encouraged to apply in succeeding years.
- 7. Scholarship money will be awarded to the school of choice or held in escrow until registered for admittance.
- 8. Call or email the NWSS Horse Show Department with questions: 303-299-5525 or horse@nationalwestern.com