

Q&A



Cullen Santino Le Roy

How long have you been involved in NRHYA?

This is my third year to be involved in NRHYA and I am loving every second!

What is your favorite activity to participate in as an NRHYA member?

I love having the opportunity to compete with my mare Smokin N Tinseltown, who I call Tinsel!

Was it easy for you to be a leader when you first began your journey with NRHYA?

No, leadership is something I want to be able to do well, but interacting with people is a little scary for me. I had to push myself to make eye contact, speak clearly and get involved in conversations.

What has been one of the biggest challenges for you to overcome while being an NRHYA member?

I struggle with remembering some very important things. In the beginning it was patterns, and I still struggle when I have more than three to four patterns to run

Cullen Santino Le Roy from Lowell, Indiana is a 15 year old member of the National Reining Horse Youth Association (NRHYA) and Varsity Reining Club (VRC). Cullen competes in NRHA Para Reining, along with numerous leadership activities in NRHYA. Lerin Thomas, NRHA youth programs advisor, had the opportunity to sit down with Cullen and talk about his mare, his leadership roles in NRHYA and what he likes to do outside of NRHYA in his free time.

in a weekend at a show. I think that my critical thinking skills, especially when I have to act quickly, is one of my biggest challenges I am working on overcoming.

What is your favorite part of VRC?

My favorite part about VRC is being able to earn points for doing things I love, especially community service. I really love helping people in need!

What are some activities you participate in that happen in your region or affiliate?

I like to help out my affiliate by creating social media artwork for them and help at shows by spreading the word about NRHYA and VRC. My affiliate also added para-reining classes last year and that means a lot to me.

Who has been your biggest role model in NRHYA so far?

I feel that my biggest role models are the NRHYA officers. They are kind, welcoming and have a lot of knowledge to share about reining. I am hopeful that I can one day be as outgoing and knowledgeable as them. They are great leaders!

What are some hobbies you have outside of NRHYA?

Outside of NRHYA, I show chickens and goats. I have an emotional support goat that I like to share with others, so we take him to different places. I am very

involved in 4-H and compete in judging. I am the 4-H recreation committee chair in my local club and the reporter for 4-H Junior Leaders this year.

What would be one piece of advice that you would give a young person who was on the fence about joining NRHYA?

I would tell them NRHYA is like a family. The awards, recognition and scholarships are all amazing, but meeting new people and being able to share ideas with people who have the same interests as you is something that every young person should be able to experience. ♦



Cullen Le Roy

In 2016, Cullen Le Roy and his coach, NRHA Professional Brett Walters, sent his story—'My Reining Journey'—to the NRHA Reiner staff. Touched by his words, which nailed the significance of the human-horse bond, the NRHA Reiner team published his story in the 2016 December issue. Cullen Le Roy's article earned the Reiner the 2016 American Horse Publications Honorable Mention Award.