



United Professional Horsemen's
Association, Inc.

2026 UPHA NATIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Shape the future of the equestrian industry, expand your opportunities for leadership, better understand the judges' perspective, explore new resources, and find inspiration at the 2026 UPHA National Conference, which will be held January 12-15, 2026, in Las Vegas, Nevada. This year's conference, hosted at the ARIA Resort & Casino, offers a blend of educational and informative content that attendees desire and engaging social events, such as a visit to the famously acclaimed Las Vegas Sphere, to reconnect with friends and celebrate the 2025 show season.

The conference will feature educational forums where top industry professionals will cover various topics to engage professional and associate members. Exciting events are planned, such as the Monday evening Welcome Event to see the Wizard of Oz at the Sphere, sponsored by Grace Arnold, LLC, an Associate Members Cocktail Hour Meet & Greet, and a trip to the Mob Museum.

The premier conference for horse people is waiting for you ... join us!

Conference Registration

Registration for the 2026 UPHA Conference is now open. Attendees can participate in membership meetings, educational forums and enjoy three continental breakfasts for just \$150. Discounted packages for awards banquets are also available, offering substantial savings.

Registration must be completed online through your UPHA member portal [HERE](#). Meeting materials will not be mailed. Non-members may create a free account to register. Early Bird registration with discounted rates are available until Friday, December 12, 2025.

Book Hotel Rooms Now:

The UPHA discounted room rate of \$159.00 plus tax for a standard room expires on December 12, 2025, or until the UPHA room block sells out, so please reserve rooms as soon as possible.

Office: (859) 231-5070
Fax: (859) 255-2774
UPHAOnline.com

123 East Main Street
Midway, KY 40347

Mail To:
PO Box 3728
Midway, KY 40347



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Make your hotel reservations [HERE](#).

To see the current Conference schedule and more information, click [HERE](#).

For questions, contact the UPHA National office at 859.231.5070 or jmellenkamp@uphaonline.com.

2026 CONFERENCE FORUMS: WEDNESDAY 1/14

These open forums invite riders, trainers, judges, breeders, and enthusiasts of every level to share ideas, ask questions, and discuss what's working and what we can do better together. Whether you are a professional or an amateur, your perspective matters.

Supply & Demand: Shaping the Future of the Breed

The balance between supply and demand plays a powerful role in shaping the future of every breed. From breeding decisions and sales trends, to market value and show participation, economic forces influence which horses are produced — and which careers they go on to have.

This forum brings together owners, breeders, and industry professionals to examine how current market dynamics are affecting the breed's future and what steps can be taken to promote sustainability, quality, and opportunity for the next generation of horses and owners.

“The Power of Positive Training and Coaching: Building Confidence, Communication, and Connection”

Great training and coaching are about more than improving performance — it's about inspiring confidence, trust, and a love for learning. This forum explores how positive coaching techniques can transform the trainer–rider relationship and create a more supportive, productive environment for both horses and humans. By focusing on clear communication, motivation, and emotional awareness, professionals can unlock better results, stronger client retention, and happier, more confident riders.

Whether you're a seasoned professional, a developing instructor, or an amateur leader in your barn community, this discussion will highlight how shifting from correction to connection can elevate the entire experience of horsemanship.



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Judging 101: What are Judges Really Looking For in the Ring?

Ever wonder what's going through a judge's mind when you walk into the ring? This forum takes you behind the clipboard to demystify the judging process and help exhibitors understand what truly matters in the show ring. Experienced judges will share insights into what they evaluate, how they make decisions, and the difference between a good performance and a great one.

Attendees will gain a better understanding of judging specs, presentation, and overall impression — as well as how small details, sportsmanship, and ring presence can influence results. By learning what judges value most, riders, trainers, and owners can better prepare, show with confidence, and improve the overall experience for both horse and rider.

Associates Activity-The Mob Museum

Experience the fascinating history of organized crime and law enforcement at The Mob Museum, located in the heart of downtown Las Vegas. This world-class interactive museum offers an inside look at the notorious rise of the mob, the heroes who fought to bring them down, and the continuing battle between crime and justice. Attendees will enjoy engaging exhibits, authentic artifacts, and immersive experiences that bring history to life.

Closed Professional Forums

To create an open, professional environment where industry leaders can discuss real-world business challenges, exchange proven strategies, and strengthen the financial foundation of their operations.

How to Crack the Nut-Beyond the Barn Doors: The Business Realities of the Horse World

Running a business in the horse industry isn't easy — but it's possible to make it both profitable and fulfilling. This session dives into the financial realities of operating within the equine world: understanding your costs, setting fair prices, managing client expectations, and finding smart ways to make your business thrive. Attendees will walk away with practical strategies for budgeting, billing, and saving, as well as insights into how to balance passion with profit.



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From the Ground Up: How Every Role Shapes The Horse Industry

Every role matters, understanding the importance of all jobs in the horse industry. This forum invites open discussion about how each job contributes to the bigger picture, why mutual respect across roles matters, and how the industry can better support and retain skilled professionals in all areas. Our collective goal is to broaden the perception of what it means to “work in the horse industry”, inspire future professionals, and strengthen the entire equestrian community by recognizing the importance of every job, both in and out of the saddle.

2026 CONFERENCE FORUMS: THURSDAY 1/15

"Generations in Conversation"- Ideas Across Ages: Shared Paths, Different Steps

Every rider has been shaped by the wisdom of those who came before — and the horse world's greatest trainers have stories that teach as much about life as they do about horses. This forum brings together legendary professionals to share the experiences, challenges, and turning points that defined their careers. Amateurs will gain an inside look at how training philosophies evolved, how great horsemen approached learning and problem-solving, and why timeless principles still hold true today.

Whether you're an amateur rider, an aspiring trainer, or simply passionate about horses, you'll enjoy hearing firsthand stories of perseverance, mentorship, and the deep bonds between horse and human that unite every generation of equestrians.