

2024

# ANNUAL REPORT

ALBERTA  
EQUESTRIAN  
FEDERATION





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# About the AEF

## AN OVERVIEW

Albertans share a deep bond with their equine companions. Horses, donkeys, and mules are more than just a pastime—they are a vital part of our province’s culture and history, spanning generations.

Since its founding in 1978, the Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) has served as the leading authority for equestrian sport and activities in the province. Recognized by the Government of Alberta as the official Provincial Sport Organization for equestrian sport, we are dedicated to supporting riders of all levels, ages, and disciplines.

Our programs and services offer a wide range of benefits, including membership insurance, inclusive educational opportunities, recreational activities, and competitive events. We oversee the nationally recognized coaching and instructor certification program, which promotes rider development. Additionally, we collaborate with various discipline, breed, and interest groups to provide educational resources, clinics, and events. Through funding initiatives, we support individuals and clubs in maintaining and expanding trail systems, fostering educational programs, and facilitating competitions at all levels.

We are proud to serve and support our AEF community, which includes nearly 16,000 members across 425 Alberta communities. Our mission is to nurture the special bond between horses and humans, ensuring the passion for equestrian life continues to thrive throughout the province.



## Our Vision

We are the premier source for education, information, and support for the entire equine community.



# Our Social Responsibilities

THE WELFARE OF SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT



## Land Acknowledgement Statement

The Alberta Equestrian Federation acknowledges that what we call Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who have lived on and cared for these lands for generations. As we make our own footprints and hoofprints, we acknowledge those whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations, and we are grateful to work and live upon this territory together.

We acknowledge the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We are thankful for the means to learn from all the traditional peoples of these lands as we move forward together in reconciliation.



## Climate Emergency Statement

The Alberta Equestrian Federation acknowledges the world's climate emergency and resolves to contribute solutions to the climate crisis. We commit to demonstrating leadership to the equestrian community through sustainability in our operations, programs, and projects.

We will encourage and help the Alberta equestrian community to assess and implement their own positive changes for future generations.



## Equine Welfare Position Statement

All equines matter. The Alberta Equestrian Federation is committed to the respectful and humane care of all equines throughout their lifespan.





# Message from the President

JASON EDWORTHY

As I approach the completion of my first year as AEF President and Chair of the AEF Board of Directors, I am proud to reflect on the significant progress we have made in 2024. Your board has been hard at work, fine-tuning our five-year strategic plan, reviewing our vision and mission statements, and evaluating our current five-year goal, which we plan to revise in 2025. With guidance from Acera, we also initiated the development of a risk management policy. Additionally, we diligently crafted the 2025 budget, balancing the challenges of inflation with our responsibility as a non-profit organization to maintain financial stability. With input from Indigenous advisors, we also began updating our land acknowledgement statement.

Board members actively participated in various educational and community-building events throughout the year. In April, we met at Horse Expo in Red Deer, supporting staff at our booth and engaging with attendees and exhibitors. In October, we took part in an Indigenous ‘Walk and Talk’ at Fish Creek Park, where we gathered around a fire to enjoy berry soup and mint tea while learning from a Blackfoot teacher. On the board development front, we received a presentation from Equine Register Canada on traceability and initiated discussions on implementing a robust safe sport policy.

Across the province, 2024 was another challenging year marked by wildfires and other emergencies. The AEF Equine Emergency Disaster Task Force, composed of

board members, staff, and volunteers, mobilized to raise funds, distribute informational resources, and direct support to the areas most in need.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers who played an integral role in AEF’s success. Volunteers contributed through committees and task forces focused on equine emergency support, scholarships and awards, board nominations, industry, and recreation. In particular, the Recreation Task Force had a busy year, working to expand involvement, consulting on new equine campgrounds, redesigning equestrian trailheads, reviewing the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, organizing Trail Safety Days across the province, and providing input on proposed changes to the Panther River PLUZ trail system. Our positive relationship with the Government of Alberta is reflected by continual requests to participate in consultations. The AEF Recreation Task Force is exploring the possibility of expanding our role to ensure equestrian trails, along with hiking trails, remain open, available, and safely maintained across the province.

I am deeply grateful to our exceptional AEF staff, who work tirelessly to support our mission. Their dedication extends beyond office hours, often collaborating alongside volunteers on evenings and weekends. They have also made significant strides in fine tuning key initiatives outlined in our strategic plan. They completed several recreation-related projects funded by Alberta



Forestry and Parks, including five outstanding trail use and safety videos set for release this spring. Their expertise ensures seamless management of membership services, communications, coaching and competitions, financial operations, special events, and daily office functions.

Looking ahead, we welcome new board members at our AGM in March, with our first board meeting scheduled for April at Horse Expo in Red Deer. We are also excited to host the Stride With Us gala during Horse Expo, where we will celebrate and recognize outstanding AEF members for their remarkable achievements. Additionally, we are rolling out new member benefits this year—so stay tuned! Expect increased volunteer opportunities in Trails and Recreation, along with new projects led by staff in collaboration with volunteers. While we hope there will be no need for our Equine Emergency Disaster Fund, we

remain prepared with established protocols, messaging, and resources should the need arise.

Thank you, all our members, for your continued and dedicated support of the Alberta Equestrian Federation. Our mission is driven by you, your passion, and love of horses!

~ Jason Edworthy





# Message from the Executive Director

SONIA DANTU

As we close the chapter on 2024, I am honoured to reflect on a year of progress, resilience, and collaboration within Alberta's vibrant equestrian community. Together, we navigated challenges and celebrated achievements that reinforced our commitment to recreation, sport, health, and welfare in equine activities. On behalf of the Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF), I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our members, partners, and volunteers for driving our mission forward.

## OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

This year, the AEF team focused on aligning operations with strategic objectives to enhance services, improve responsiveness, and strengthen community support. Key initiatives included refining operational efficiencies and implementing new policies, such as the Safe Sport Policy Suite and an updated Code of Conduct and Ethics, reinforcing our commitment to a secure and inclusive environment.

In partnership with the University of Calgary, Equine Guelph, and other stakeholders, we expanded educational offerings in equine health, rider development, and safe sport practices. Many of these courses were available at reduced rates or free for members, exemplifying our mission to make learning accessible and impactful.

## EQUINE WELFARE AND ADVOCACY

Building on our 2023 Equine Health and Wellness position statement, we continued advocating for the humane care of all equines, ensuring alignment with established codes of practice and regulations.

The Equine Emergency Disaster Fund provided critical support to horse owners affected by wildfires, alleviating financial burdens and ensuring animal welfare. We deeply appreciate those who contribute to this fund or volunteer their time. Additionally, our trail maintenance and development efforts continued to promote environmental stewardship and equine well-being.

## MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our membership base grew stronger in 2024, enriched by new partnerships and increased engagement. A key highlight was our collaboration with Navigate Benefit Solutions to introduce customizable health, dental, and travel coverage for members in 2025. Business and facility members will also benefit from group options tailored to their needs.

The Wild Rose Competition Program flourished, and we piloted the Wild Rose Provincial Circuit for hunter/jumpers in partnership with Jump Alberta. These initiatives provided accessible, high-quality opportunities for riders to develop their skills and compete fairly. To support these efforts, we launched a provincial Equine Medication



Control program, ensuring safe and ethical practices in equestrian sports.

Enhancing communication was a priority, leading to a strategic plan that included improved social media engagement, newsletters, and resources like wildfire preparedness guides. These efforts strengthened transparency and trust within our community.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND FUTURE FOCUS

Despite economic pressures, we maintained affordable membership fees while implementing cost-saving measures, such as passing on credit card fees for transactions. Securing over \$160,000 in government grants and casino funding allowed us to sustain operations and invest directly in community programs.

We are immensely grateful to those who support AEF financially. Donations play a crucial role in athlete development, equine disaster funding, scholarships, and trail maintenance. Looking ahead to 2025, we will launch a membership drive and donation campaign to further support these initiatives. Tax receipts are available for eligible contributions, and we encourage participation in these efforts.

## AEF'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND GROWTH

This year, we deepened our commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) through staff training and integration of these values into programming. We welcomed new members, including a local Indigenous community group, reinforcing our dedication to inclusivity.

As we reflect on 2024's accomplishments, we look forward to the opportunities ahead. With your unwavering support, passion, and partnership, we will continue building a future where equines thrive and the equestrian spirit flourishes across Alberta.

With gratitude,

~ Sonia Dantu





# Association Highlights

ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGHOUT 2024

## Educational

- Hosted Canmore Trail Safety Day. This year's event, hosted in collaboration with the Bow Valley Riding Association, Canmore and Area Mountain Biking Association, Alpine Club of Canada, and Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley, united trail users at Cougar Creek Trail Parking Lot. Volunteers shared essential tips on safely sharing trails with equestrians, emphasizing right-of-way etiquette and mutual respect. Interactive discussions promoted "Share the Trails" principles to foster harmony among hikers, bikers, and riders. Together, we reinforced a commitment to keeping Alberta's trails safe, inclusive, and sustainable for all.
- Hosted a Hunter/Jumper Stewards Officials' clinic. Susan Hawes, head steward for Spruce Meadows, covered the importance of stewards at competitions, their roles and responsibilities, and how to maintain a professional relationship with competitors, coaches, other officials, and show organizers. The clinic was certified by Equestrian Canada and attended by six participants.
- Hosted two coaching cohorts that saw 31 candidates trained throughout 2024 by delivering three EC NCCP courses: Long-Term Equestrian Development, Plan an Equestrian Practice, and Analyzing Beginner Performance.
- In collaboration with Acera, we introduced a continuing education funding initiative to provide additional

support for our members. This initiative reflects our commitment to fostering education, inclusivity, and professional growth within Alberta's equestrian community. The funding was designed to empower members through three key categories:

- Continuing Education for Instructors/Coaches:  
This supports instructors and coaches in obtaining or maintaining professional credentials such as First Aid training, NCCP modules, and activities that contribute to Professional Development Points.
- Educational Courses for Horse Owners:  
This funding is for horse owners who wish to improve equine health and wellness through courses such as Equine First Aid, Equine Massage, and Equine Nutrition modules.
- Equestrian-related Educational Opportunities for Underrepresented Groups:  
This support is for athletes from underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers to Canada, and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals. Eligible opportunities include clinics, events, coaching sessions, and courses.

## Recreational

- The three grants from Alberta Forestry, Parks and Tourism specifically for trail use on public lands were finalized in 2024, funding the Unite the Trails, Share the Trails, and Responsible Trail Use projects.
- We hosted two Trail Safety Days, one in Canmore and one in Blairmore for the Share the Trails project.
- We distributed 40 Share the Trail signs to trail users in Alberta to be displayed across multi-use trails on public lands.
- Support was provided to the Bow Valley Riding Association to advocate for safe equestrian trail use in the Canmore area.
- Support was also provided to the Alberta Backcountry Horsemen association whose mandate is to protect the rights of equestrians to access public lands.





# Association Highlights

ACCOMPLISHMENTS THROUGHOUT 2024

## Developmental

- Wild Rose Competition Program – Addition of Wild Rose Provincial Circuit (Hunter/Jumper)

In 2024, the Wild Rose Competition Program expanded to include the Wild Rose Provincial Circuit for the hunter/jumper discipline, uniting Alberta's equestrian community through 27 competitions held across the province. This dynamic circuit showcased the talent and dedication of riders at all levels, culminating in a celebration of excellence at the Jump Alberta Year End Awards Gala. The AEF was proud to present over 50 awards to year end champions and reserve champions, honouring their outstanding achievements.

- The success of the inaugural circuit highlights the growth of hunter/jumper sport in Alberta and underscores the AEF's commitment to fostering competitive opportunities and recognition for riders. Thank you to all competitors, organizers, and supporters who contributed to making this milestone possible—we look forward to building on this momentum in the seasons ahead!
- The Wild Rose Dressage Provincial Awards Program pilot launched in 2024 with eight competitors enrolling in its inaugural season, fostering enthusiasm and engagement within Alberta's dressage community. As the program concluded, it paved the way for the expansion of the Wild Rose Dressage Provincial Circuit, which will offer enhanced competitive opportunities and provincial recognition for riders. A heartfelt thank you to the pioneering participants whose involvement provided valuable insights to shape this exciting new chapter for dressage in Alberta.
- AEF Equine Medication Control Program Launched

alongside the 2024 Wild Rose Provincial Circuit. This program upholds integrity, safety, and fair competition by enforcing equine welfare and medication standards. Through education, routine inspections, and collaboration with riders, veterinarians, and organizers, it promotes responsible practices aligned with provincial guidelines. The initiative fosters trust and accountability, reinforcing ethical sport and equine well-being. The AEF thanks all participants and partners for their dedication to these essential standards, ensuring a sustainable future for Alberta's equestrian community.

- Two English and Western Instructor and Competition Coach Cohorts were hosted throughout 2024. The goal was to involve participants at the grassroots level and provide more training opportunities in remote areas. The cohorts enabled us to train and/or certify instructors and coaches from all around Alberta.
- We conducted two in-person coaching evaluations in 2024, certifying English instructors and competition coaches.
- Our impact: third in leading the way in NCCP support and certifying 22 new coaches in Canada in 2024!
  - Four new English Instructors
  - Five new Western Instructors
  - 13 new English Competition Coaches
- We had 160 NCCP Instructors and Coaches that held Licensed Coach Status in 2024. This is up from 149 in 2023.
- We are still finalizing the Learn to Ride/Drive assessments completed in 2024. To date, we have 206 assessments (this number is expected to increase). This is up from 174 assessments in 2023.

# Our Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan

In 2024 we developed a master communications and marketing strategic plan. While pieces of the marketing plan were always in operation, the master plan pulled all aspects of communications and marketing together into a cohesive, comprehensive document. It defined clear objectives, effectively targeting our audience, and ensured consistent messaging that aligned with our mission and vision.

To achieve our objectives, we rely on guiding communications principles such as transparency, truthful communication, and two-way dialogue. These principles are embedded in our marketing strategies, which aim to raise awareness of our programs, strengthen member engagement, and position AEF as a leader in equine welfare and sustainability. AEF prioritizes quality over quantity in our communications, ensuring messages are impactful, timely, and relevant. Through effective public relations, corporate communications, and marketing, the organization builds trust and fosters strong relationships with members, partners, and the broader public.

Our core communications and marketing functions include brand management, digital engagement, media relations, and crisis communications. By maintaining a unified voice and clear messaging, we support our mission to unite and strengthen Alberta's equine industry. We emphasize public engagement and sponsorship management to enhance participation and build lasting partnerships. Our communications vision is to create a connected,

informed equestrian community, and this plan will help us as we strive to elevate the equestrian experience in Alberta for all riders, enthusiasts, and their equine companions. By outlining strategies to allocate resources efficiently, adapt to market trends, and build strong relationships with stakeholders, this master communications and marketing plan will help us increase visibility, maintain a competitive edge, and achieve measurable results.



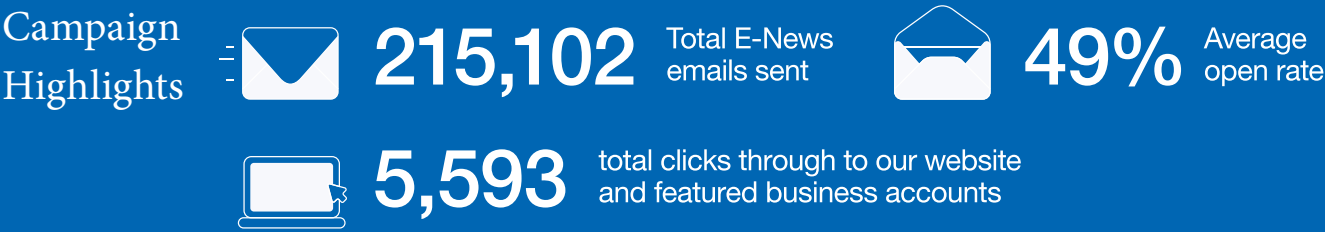


# Marketing and Outreach

E-NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

## Monthly E-News

Monthly community-related news, reflections, and updates for both members and enthusiasts with over 19,000 active users. E-News featured consistent updates on events and equine news while promoting our business members. The data below is reflective of engagement from January 2024 to December 2024.



## Email Communications

From Equine Emergency Help Directory and wildfire notices, requirements for Wild Rose competition coaches, funding opportunity announcements, membership renewals, and coaching updates — here’s a glimpse of all our email communication efforts.



## Social Media Engagement

Here’s a snapshot of our reach on social media, primarily focused on Instagram and Facebook.





# Dressage Performance Symposium

## COMMITMENT TO MEMBERS' WELL-BEING

Internationally acclaimed FEI 5\* judge and dressage clinician Isobel Wessels visited Alberta from October 4 to 6, 2024, sharing her expertise during the Alberta Dressage Performance Symposium. Hosted by the Alberta Equestrian Federation and supported by the Vysniauskas Family Foundation and Kestrel Ridge Farms, the event offered dressage enthusiasts a unique opportunity to learn from a world-renowned judge. Over two days, she provided personalized lessons to riders, emphasizing clarity and subtlety in communication with their horses. Wessels encouraged riders to use their inside leg more and focus on interpreting their aids clearly to the horse, laying the foundation for effective partnership and movement.

The event culminated in a symposium-style test day, where riders performed dressage tests of their choice and received real-time feedback from Wessels. Her calm, structured teaching style helped participants better understand the dressage training scale, refine movements, and improve scores. Throughout the weekend, she stressed the importance of softness, repetition, and patience in horse

training, noting that consistent effort leads to lasting results. She also demonstrated how small, deliberate adjustments—such as improving transitions or practicing shoulder-ins with proper angles—can significantly enhance a horse's performance and suppleness.

Wessels left attendees with a wealth of practical training tips, from teaching cues with repetition to using specific techniques for transitions and lateral work. She advised riders to remain flexible in their methods, avoid becoming overly rigid in their position, and prioritize rhythm and suppleness in their training. The symposium drew nine Alberta-based riders and over 40 auditors, who were inspired by Wessels' insights and reminders to return to the basics. As Wessels put it, "The main thing throughout your training is rhythm and suppleness," underscoring her philosophy of creating harmonious, effective partnerships between riders and horses.

# Increased Presence in the Community

To support the various members of our vast and diverse community, the AEF attended many public events in 2024. This helped to raise public awareness of the AEF, horse sport and recreation in Alberta, as well as biosecurity management and safe trail use. AEF staff attended various events such as:

- Banff Snow Days Skijoring event in January
- 2024 Horse Expo in April
- Tsuutina Pow Wow & Youth Rodeo in July
- Amberlea Meadows Alberta Dressage Provincials Championship competition in August
- The Spruce Meadows Masters Tournament in September
- The Xibition FutrNova Reining Futurity in September
- The 2024 Royal West in October

We are committed to continually enhancing our presence at community events and competitions throughout the province. We believe this engagement will strengthen our connections with both members and the broader community, while also fostering greater public awareness of equestrian sports in Alberta and the benefits of AEF membership. Through these efforts, we aim to not only grow our membership base but also cultivate stronger, more collaborative relationships with our members moving forward.

## Share the Trails and Responsible Trail Use Video Project

AEF has created a series of videos to help educate recreational trail riders on how to safely prepare for and responsibly enjoy the public trails in Alberta. The focus of the videos is awareness for beginner trail riders, encouraging them to seek additional resources and guidance from experienced riders. A production crew was contracted to advise, video, and edit content, and, with substantial input from the AEF's Recreation Task Force regarding topics, staff created scripts for the five videos. The videos highlight the basic knowledge riders need for safe and responsible trail riding, emphasizing the

importance of continual learning. AEF is grateful to Alberta Environment and Parks for providing funding for the video series. We are excited to provide the Responsible Trail Use series of videos on our website and social media channels the spring of 2025 to start educating our members and the public. This means not only safer trail riding for equestrians, but also safer and more enjoyable experiences for all trail users.





# Where Revenue Was Generated

AN OVERVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S REVENUE

Approximately 40% of revenues came from generous donations and grants for many of the above projects – thank you for the meaningful contributions.

AEF is grateful to acknowledge assistance from Alberta Forestry Parks and Tourism with a Crown Land Recreation partnership grant for \$40,670 which supported the completion of our equine trail projects.



## Reinvestments

Reinvestment in the Alberta equine community is an important way to significantly increase the value of the industry. We support growth and development by investing in numerous opportunities aimed at providing funding for projects, educational initiatives, clinics, events and opportunities that will enhance the overall well-being of the community. A few numbers from reinvestment:

**\$5,380** was generously donated by members towards the Equine Emergency and Disaster Fund. The AEF is honoured to be able to support equine owners in times of need, during emergencies and disasters, with the help of our members. Through this fund, the AEF was able to aid three members who were impacted by the 2024 wildfire in Jasper, and one member impacted by wildfire evacuations near Fort McMurray.

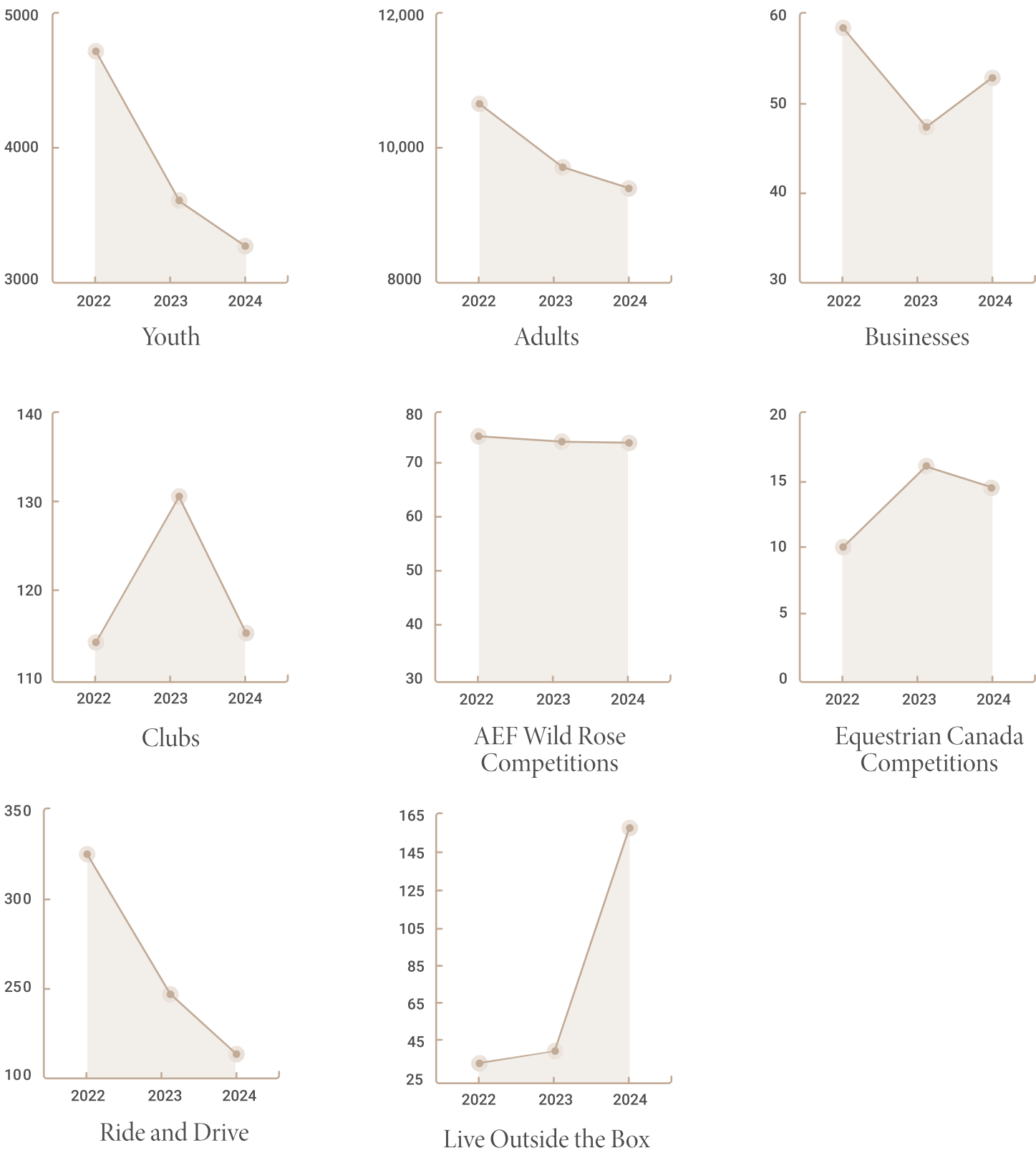
**\$15,000** was provided to trail/campground development and maintenance, liaising on various projects and continuing to advocate for equestrian use on trails across the province.

**\$18,513** went to individual and club members to ensure continued professional development and help restart programs. Another \$3,000 was provided through the new Acera Continued Education funding program; as well as \$4305.45 in the various Scholarship and Bursary programs that the AEF offers.

**\$429,679** supported athlete development and programs to encourage not only a healthy lifestyle, but to provide the skills, abilities, and reinforcement to keep working toward dreams of reaching the podium. Most notably this year was our contribution to assist with the Royal West Championships and our financial support of the new Prairie Region Medal Scholarship program.

# Membership Overview

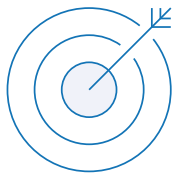
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# Our 2023-2028 Operational Plan

COMMITMENT TO MEMBERS' WELL-BEING



## Our 5-Year Goal

We are Alberta's most respected and trusted equine community with 30,000 members.



## Our Vision

We are the premier source for education, information, and support for the entire equine community.



## Our Mission

To assist in creating a positive environment for the enjoyment of equines. Through our leadership and proactive approach, we promote, facilitate, and co-ordinate equestrian-related activities for Alberta.

## Operational Plan Action Items Charted

- Heighten offering of member benefits to attract new members
- Increase awareness of the value of membership
- Continue to expand Wild Rose Competition Program
- Revamp Alberta Bits member magazine
- Implement enhanced social media plan in alignment with communications and marketing plan





# Our Community

## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS

Raymond Antonuk	Ernest Cunningham	Bill DesBarres	Marvin Donaghy	Lloyd Dreger
Betty Ellis	Lorraine Hill	Ike Lanier	Trish Mrakawa	Les Oakes
Irene Smith	Gerald Wilson	Tom Wraight	Sadie Bernice Lenz	



Honorary Lifetime Members are designated by the AEF Board of Directors for their outstanding lifetime achievements or contributions to the equestrian community in Alberta.

When the dream of establishing the Back Country Horsemen Society of Alberta is realized, it will be because of community support and collaboration with many industry and community stakeholders. Your Interim Executive Team is thrilled to announce that the Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) has offered us their support!

~ Terri

"I really enjoyed the presentation at Millarville racetrack hall last week. I learned a lot! I've probably spent close to \$800 in clinics in 2024 so far, so the funding info was a welcome surprise.

Again, thank you AEF!

~ Nicole

The AEF Dressage Symposium at Kestrel Ridge was great today!! What an opportunity! Hosted at the beautiful Kestrel Ridge facility; it's a do-not-miss event.

~ Shelagh

Thank you to the Alberta Equestrian Federation for the amazing days in Calgary. Great training in a wonderful place.

~ Isobel Wessels

The Alberta Equestrian Federation fosters a vibrant, collaborative community dedicated to advancing equestrian sports in our province. Participating in their recent review of the three-tiered sanctioning system was a privilege.

The AEF's commitment to bringing together passionate, accomplished individuals left me inspired and optimistic about the future of equestrian events in Alberta. I'm grateful to be part of an organization that is driving positive change and fostering progress across our community.

~ John

Sharing the trail is an important part of what we do at Banff Trail Riders.

- Meet nice people - thank them with a gift!!
- Meet people who need to better understand trail etiquette - educate them with a gift.
- This year our guides will have these to pass out as we ride.

Thank you to Alberta Equestrian Federation for producing and sharing these and for everyone being awesome trail stewards, sharing the trails here in Banff National Park safely and responsibly.

~ Julie

Thank you so much to the Vysniauskas family and AEF for the opportunity to ride and learn from Isobel Wessels. Such an opportunity doesn't come around very often and I am extremely grateful to have been given this chance to learn from someone of such knowledge.

So here is to good horses, good people, good horsemanship, good sportsmanship, learning opportunities, good community, and dressage.

~ Elexis

I'd like to thank the Alberta Equestrian Federation for such a great night of celebrating our equestrian community here in Alberta. Thank you to the organizers, the sponsors and supporters of equestrian sport and all the people that came out to support all the award recipients.

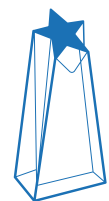
Congratulations to all the award winners. I felt very humbled to be among such an amazing group!

~ Dolly



# Awards and Recognition

CELEBRATING SUCCESS



## Provincial Awards

Suzanne Le Gars  
Outstanding Instructor/Coach

Molly Hamilton  
Outstanding Athlete/Rider

Karla O'Brien  
Sportsmanship Excellence

Brenda Henrikson  
Outstanding Volunteer

Vantage Point Equestrian  
Outstanding Stable/Facility

Jacey Rhinehart  
Above and Beyond Excellence

Scott Billing  
Outstanding Equine  
Support Personnel

Kavalia  
(Jeanine van der Sluijs & Angelique Vick)  
Outstanding Horse

## Scholarship Recipients

Sophia Lowie  
Educational Scholarship Recipient

Ava Scheerhoorn  
Educational Scholarship Recipient

Bella Donaldson  
2023 Jason Irwin Clinic Participant

## Marlene Waldner Western Youth Bursaries

Ryla Montgomery

Kasidee Plotts

Aberdeen Rauckman

# Ride and Drive

Ride and Drive rewards recreational riders, drivers, and vaulters of all ages an extra incentive to spend more hours in the saddle or behind the breeching for practice, exercise, therapy or just plain fun.

Five members reached their 2,000-hour milestones this year. Congratulations to Trina Banks, Diane Cunningham, Kylie Dombrosky, Charlotte Holloway and one more dedicated member on this amazing accomplishment.

Trina Banks

Diane Cunningham

Kylie Dombrosky

Charlotte Holloway





# Awards and Recognition

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

## Live Outside the Box

This fun program is free for youth members aged seven to 15. Live Outside the Box participants track and log horse time hours, other outdoor activity hours, and healthy servings to earn some great prizes. The participants this year logged a total of 7,050 horse time hours, 8,138 outdoor activity hours, and 13,033 healthy servings! Grand Prize Winners:

### Horse Time Hours

Kylie Dombrosky

Ryla Montgomery

Zoey Brandstetter

### Outdoor Activity Hours

Zoey Williamson

Saya Doran

Lincoln Fraser

### Healthy Servings

Saya Doran

Jennifer Finnie

Mya Tooley

Svea Josephson

Adalynn Miller

Honorable mentions – Paige Dombrosky and Jaxon Caldwell



**Special thanks** to our official program partner, **Acera Insurance** for ensuring the AEF continues to provide programs and opportunities like this to our members.

## Canter Away Current

Rewarding coaches and instructors who keep their NCCP credentials and requirements updated and current with provincial and national standards.

### WINTER CANTER AWAY WINNER

#### Dagmar Fortmuller

“I find pleasure in promoting our self-bred horses, teaching, and advocating ‘proper’ riding. I have developed so many horses and riders – all of them clients who return sooner or later by taking lessons or buying their next horse and always getting treated to a straightforward, no-nonsense answer.”

### SPRING CANTER AWAY WINNER

#### Carol Fritzke

“There is no greater joy than seeing a student have a “light bulb” moment when they learn something new in communicating with their horse and improving their riding skills. That’s why I find so much joy in this job!”

### SUMMER CANTER AWAY WINNER

#### Kimberly Cox

“Achieving Dressage Competition Coach Specialist, EC Basic Judge, and Learn to Ride assessor (Rider Levels) designations are validation of my commitment to long-term equestrian development. The AEF has supported me in achieving my role as a professional coach and official. Thank you to AEF for the help and resources to navigate through the coaching process.”

### FALL CANTER AWAY WINNER

#### Crystal Kroetch

Crystal is thankful that our provincial and national equestrian governing bodies have developed the coaching programs. She feels this is important to increase the knowledge of current coaches and give new ones a place to seek training. She says the coaching program is most beneficial to the general public of equine owners as they have a place to check credibility in our industry.



# Looking Ahead to 2025: Advancing Together

## FUTURE PLANS FOR THE COMMUNITY

In our last Annual Report, we highlighted our robust strategic plan and the progress we’ve made in executing it. As we look ahead to 2025, we are proud of the careful planning that has shaped our programs and services, positioning us to achieve our business objectives effectively. While change is inevitable, we have built a strong foundation to continue moving forward with confidence.

### Advancing Our Technolgical Capabilities

As technology evolves, so do we. We remain committed to implementing user-friendly platforms that streamline operations and enhance our ability to serve members. As a nonprofit, we strive to maximize efficiency and do more with less, ensuring that our resources are used effectively to benefit the equestrian community.

### Communication and Engagement

Effective communication is critical in fostering a strong and engaged membership. We will continue refining our communication plan and strategies to enhance two-way communication and active engagement, ensuring our members have a voice in shaping our future. Through strategic messaging, newsletters, and digital platforms, we will strengthen connections and transparency across the community.

### Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion remains a priority. We will continue implementing policies and practices that promote all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities in equestrian activities. Ensuring that every individual feels valued and has equal opportunities will be a cornerstone of our work.

### Promoting Safe Sport

The implementation of our safe sport policies is a key priority. We will continue promoting education and awareness to ensure a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all participants in equestrian activities. By reinforcing athlete protection, ethical conduct, and fair competition, we are committed to fostering a positive experience for all.

### Membership Growth and Financial Sustainability

Growing our membership base while maintaining current fees remains a top priority. We recognize the importance of keeping membership accessible while continuing to enhance the value and benefits we offer. Additionally, we will place a stronger focus on seeking new donations and funding opportunities to support key initiatives, including:

- Equine Emergency Disaster Fund: Providing critical support to horse owners in times of need.
- Scholarships and Bursaries: Supporting equestrians in their educational and training pursuits.
- Trail Supporter Program: Ensuring the preservation and maintenance of Alberta’s equestrian trails.
- Youth Programming: Encouraging young riders to engage and grow within the equestrian community.
- Athlete Development: Offering opportunities for riders at all levels to reach their full potential.

### Financial Stewardship and Sustainability

Despite economic challenges, we remain dedicated to financial responsibility. Maintaining a balanced budget while ensuring continued investment in our programs and services is essential. With over \$160,000 secured in government grants and gaming funds in 2024, we will build upon these successes while increasing efforts to secure additional donations and funding sources.

### Our Commitment to a Thriving Equestrian Community

As we move into 2025, we remain committed to strengthening our membership base, fostering a connected community, and ensuring equestrian activities remain accessible and sustainable. By focusing on strong governance, financial responsibility, and member engagement, we will continue to grow and evolve.

Thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we will ensure equines thrive and the equestrian spirit flourishes across Alberta.



# The Alberta Equestrian Federation Society

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2024

Assets			
CURRENT	2024	2023	
• Cash	\$ 136,210	\$ 406,648	
• Accounts Receivable	2,557	269,879	
• Goods & Services Tax Receivable	8,967	6,507	
• Prepaid Expenses	30,825	24,353	
• Investments, Short-term	60,862	57,744	
	<b>\$ 239,421</b>	<b>\$ 765,131</b>	
INVESTMENTS, Long-term	118,013	113,668	
CAPITAL ASSETS	76,095	87,017	
	<b>\$ 433,529</b>	<b>\$ 965,816</b>	

Liabilities			
CURRENT	2024	2023	
• Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$ 63,225	\$ 43,806	
• Unearned Membership Fees	7,633	474,876	
• Deferred Contributions	85,317	6,410	
	<b>\$ 156,175</b>	<b>\$ 525,092</b>	
DEFERRED REVENUES	404,276	525,885	
	<b>\$ 560,451</b>	<b>\$ 1,050,977</b>	

Assets			
NET ASSETS	(126,922)	(85,161)	
	<b>\$ 433,529</b>	<b>\$ 965,816</b>	

# The Alberta Equestrian Federation Society

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS – FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

Revenue			
	2024	2023	
• Grants	\$ 639,700	\$ 122,370	
• Memberships	809,767	765,693	
• Sport	103,051	382,435	
• Trail Support	58,347	25,841	
• Education	51,190	150,679	
• Advertising & Promotion	12,200	19,466	
• Sales	24,855	31,701	
• Administration	41,444	31,398	
• Other Income & Donations	43,151	76,390	
• Recreation	9,000	9,180	
• Casino	5,181	38,845	
	<b>\$ 1,797,886</b>	<b>\$ 1,653,998</b>	

Expenses			
	2024	2023	
• Salaries & Employee Benefits	\$ 671,978	\$ 613,990	
• Member & Director Insurance	128,646	142,263	
• Education	62,411	93,331	
• Advertising & Promotion	134,204	172,213	
• Office Administration	141,180	175,022	
• Sport	471,604	407,246	
• Trail Support	58,347	25,841	
• Rent	72,274	66,968	
• Cost of Goods Sold	15,226	45,456	
• Professional Fees	4,839	26,337	
• Meetings	43,719	48,810	
• Recreation	3,128	5,911	
• Breeds & Industry	3,067	990	
	<b>\$ 1,820,623</b>	<b>\$ 1,824,378</b>	

Deficiency Of Revenue Over Expenses			
	2024	2023	
BEFORE AMORTIZATION	\$ (22,737)	\$ (170,380)	
AMORTIZATION	19,024	21,753	
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(41,761)	(192,133)	



## Office Staff

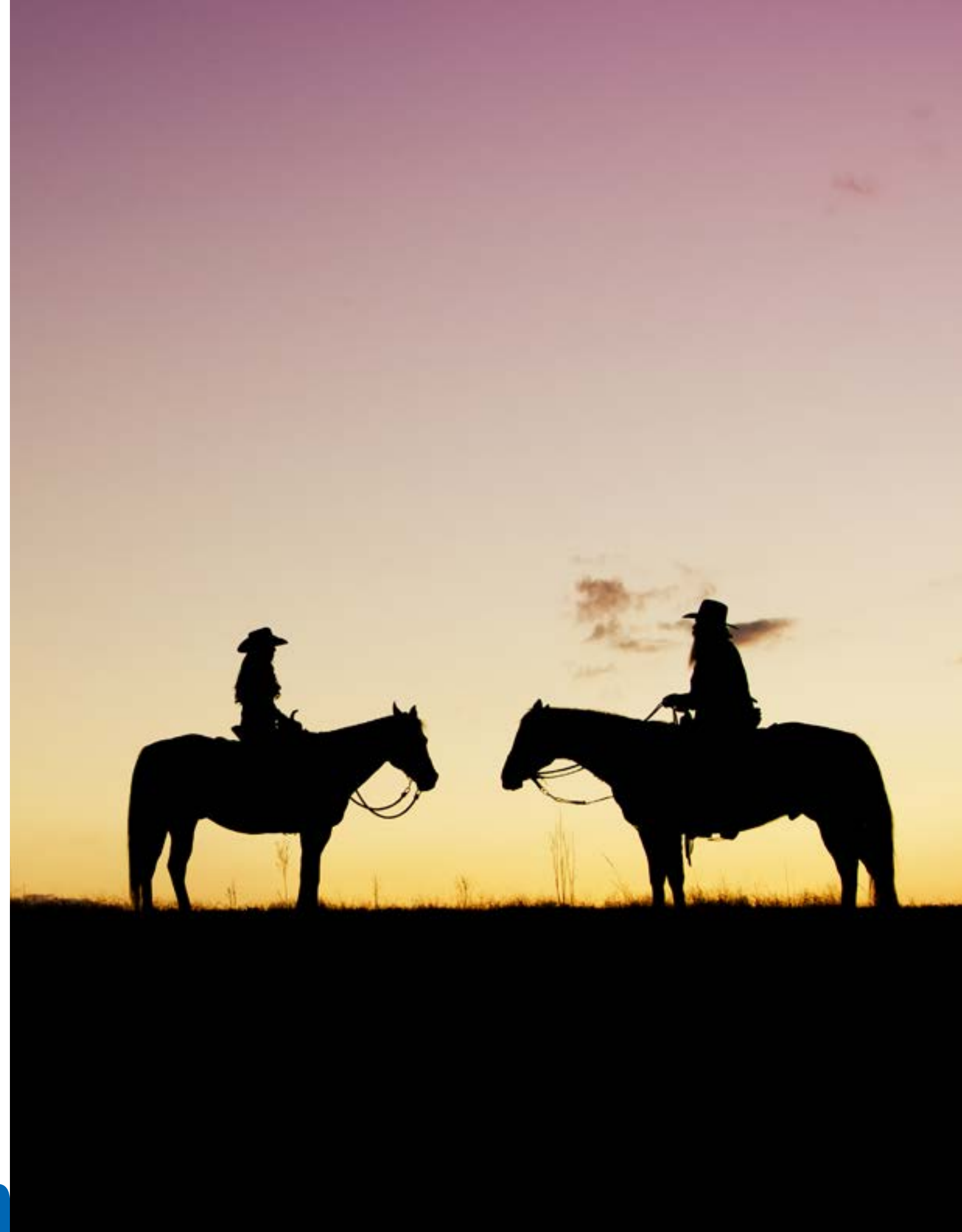
- **Sonia Dantu**, Executive Director
- **Darlene Legge**, Office Coordinator
- **Jessa Arnold**, Membership Manager
- **Kenda Lubeck**, Communications & Engagement Manager
- **Karina Fernandes**, Sport & Recreation Manager
- **Johanna Nimchuk**, Finance & Support
- **Gavin Pearson**, Project & Events Coordinator

## Board of Directors

- **Jason Edworthy**, President
- **Sandy Bell**, Past President
- **Jennifer Dimopoulos**, Secretary
- **Brooke Hartwick**, Treasurer
- **Kate Wood**, Director
- **Louise Caplan**, Director
- **Alisa DiBenedetto**, Director
- **Pat Buffalo**, Director
- **Claire Goddard**, Director
- **Ally Penic**, Director
- **Cailin Kopetski**, Director
- **Edna Kaiser**, Director
- **Sonia Dantu**, Executive Director
- **Flo Scherpenisse**, Recording Secretary

2024

Our Partners







#120, 251 Midpark Blvd SE  
Calgary, AB T2X 1S3



[albertaequestrian.com](http://albertaequestrian.com)