

## **Leslie Martien – President**

I initially got hooked on working equitation at a local play day in Colorado in 2013. I attended the Haras Cup in 2014 and also attended educational clinics and seminars by Nuno Matos and Claudia Elsner Matos which further cemented my interest in the sport. I have spent the past seven years of my horse experience as an enthusiastic amateur dedicated to WE.

I have been a member of High Country Working Equitation since 2014, serving as Secretary for 4 years and currently as Vice President. During this time, I have been a contributor to and editor of the newsletter and gotten involved at local shows as a competitor, scribe, TD, scorer, and shadow judge. I've met many wonderful people along the way who make the WE experience so rewarding.

On the national level, I have served on the boards of both WE United as a Regional Director and the Confederation for Working Equitation as a member of the Executive Committee. In addition, I have been a member of the Rules Committee for the past 3 years.

It has been a privilege to work with an incredibly dedicated group of working equitation enthusiasts to bring about the merger of the two national organizations to create USA Working Equitation. I can think of no better way to serve the national working equitation community than to work for the members of our new organization in the capacity of president. We have already done much of the hard work but there is much more that we can accomplish. I would love to continue to be part of the team that leads us forward. Thank you for your consideration.

## **Kris Blacklock – President Elect**

Thank you for the USAWE nomination. I'm very excited, humbled and honored as you have an excellent slate of knowledgeable, dedicated and highly qualified candidates from which to choose. Appreciation to all who have volunteered their talents and paved the way for this epic USA Working Equitation milestone merger.

So, you may be asking...

"Who are you?"

I'm a 63 yr. lifelong learner who resides on a 55 acre farm in South Central Wisconsin. I'm employed full-time as a project manager. I've coordinated Dressage, Eventing and Western Dressage demos at the Midwest Horse Fair that draws 60k attendees from across the country and world.

"What is your experience with Working Equitation?"

I'm an enthusiastic volunteer, supportive competitor and dual licensed official (Technical Delegate and 'L' accredited Judge). I've served as WEU Region 5 Director for (2) years; Awards Chair for (5) years (three years WEU and two years CWE), actively submit rule change

proposals that clarify rules for competitors and licensed officials, leveled the playing field for gaited breeds, offer WE clinics with licensed official clinicians and volunteer as show crew (scorer, gate steward, timer, etc.). I've participated in (3) licensed official (3 - 5 day) training sessions (2018 TX, 2019 CA and 2020 TX).

My self-trained riding partners (Gambler's Jackpot, a 13 yr. Rocky Mountain Horse (gaited) and Boon Ocean Blue, a 7 yr. Quarter Horse) have both earned L1 Introductory National Leaderboard/Ranking Championship and National Championship honors. Ocean earned L2 National High Point Reserve Champion and National Championship honors. Both horses earned Cattle Trial National Championship honors (TX and CO). We have competed in (8) states – IL, CO, KS, MI, NE, OR, TX and WI. On a borrowed Canadian Horse, I participated in the 1st WE Cup in Eugene OR and earned 5th place L1 Introductory honors.

We discovered Working Equitation in the fall of 2017 through a Pedro Torres Working Equitation Academy (5) day clinic. WE is a sport that embraces our riding aspirations as it is dressage based, offers purposeful progressive training levels, includes performing obstacles challenges with horsemanship finesse as well as speed plus puts all this training to test within the Cattle Trial. WE encourages and supports riders of all ages, all levels, all breeds of equines regardless of rider tack/attire preference.

“What are your goals as President-Elect?”

In addition to the prescribed President-Elect responsibilities (performs duties assigned by the Board of Directors and understudy to the President), I plan to help guide, lead the way and promote the sport.

Recruit, encourage, support and recognize rider/horse pairs at all levels so the sport continues to grow and flourish within all (7) performance levels across the USA.

Develop a strong network within the USAWE executive committee, board of directors, committees, membership, licensed officials, coaches and volunteers as each have much to offer.

I encourage each of you to volunteer at the local, region and national level. Dream...Believe and Achieve. Remember to reward try, celebrate each step of your journey and support others along the way.

### **President Elect – Barbara Price**

Thank you to all who nominated me for the position of USAWE President-Elect. It's an honor to be nominated by some of Working Equitation's top individuals.

I love the discipline of Working Equitation (WE), and have great respect for its historical significance and unique capacity for fostering diversity in horses and riders of all levels. No other equine discipline has captured my interest and enthusiasm like WE. I've been actively

involved with the development of the sport here in the US since 2014 as a rider, judge, coach and volunteer, and want it to continue to grow and thrive.

WE has reached an unprecedented turning point with this consolidation into one governing body. The past associations have done invaluable work introducing and developing the discipline, and now the opportunity has arrived to create a new, nationwide association. Exciting times!

Going forward, I believe it's imperative politics be minimized to ensure the future of the sport. As an entirely volunteer association, the success of USAWE will require many to work together and forego the notion of personal gain or advancement. It's a pivotal time to take the sport to the next level. But it must be done professionally, with support for a diverse member base, and mindful of the camaraderie and fun that makes WE unlike other disciplines. Short term to me that means skilled leadership, a continued focus on enhancement of officials training and credentialing, grass roots efforts to bring riders to the discipline through strong regional groups, and encouragement of show managers and other event leaders. It also means responsible management, transparent financial controls and statements, and more.

In my equestrian life, I've been actively judging WE since 2014, starting out as one of the first credentialed judges in the US. I'm a licensed WE United 'R' judge and a Confederation for Working Equitation 'r' judge. I've served on the board of WE United; including Region 2 Director and three years in the President rotation. Presently, I'm a member of the US Working Equitation Rules Committee and was part of the group that consolidated the US Rule Book (a huge step forward for the US). In years past, I served on the IALHA Board of Directors, was a District Commissioner with USPC, and an adult amateur rider/student in the dressage and hunt seat disciplines.

Professionally, I retired late last year after 30 years as a corporate marketing and communications executive, much of it with or for Fortune 100 companies. Currently I'm a partner in a real estate development venture. I have a deep understanding of the business, personnel and financial intricacies necessary to successfully run an organization.

I appreciate your consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

### **President Elect – Michael Vermass**

I am a S Judge and have been involved in Working equitation since it's beginning and was one of the first R judges in the USA. I also understand the sport from an exhibitor's point-of-view, as I have shown in WE and coached competitors.

I have volunteered my time as a member of the WE United Licensed Officials Committee.

During the past nine years I have seen great progress in the sport's growth. However in the last 3 years I also noticed some important issues that need to be addressed to insure future growth and stability of the organization.

If I get elected I want to work on keeping working equitation drama free, close loopholes in policies and procedures as well as the bending or breaking of the rules, work to make scores from judges more uniform and make sure every rider gets a fair score regardless if they are a fellow judge or board member. These practices definitely have to stop.

If elected and while president I would suspend my judging due to conflict of interest because ethically it is the right thing to do.

I am running for the members and the sport, not for my self interest or financial gain.

I also want to find a way to make it easier for show management to organize shows and make it cost effective.

I am super excited about this new group and want to do my part to finally put the past behind us and make the future of working equitation a stronger reality in the USA.

### **Julie Alonzo – Secretary**

When I rotated into the role of WE United President earlier this year, I did not anticipate the many challenges we would face in 2020. From a global pandemic and social unrest in many cities across the country to massive wildfires that led to nearly 1 in 8 people in my home state of Oregon being displaced from their homes in the month of September, things have been turbulent to say the least.

This year has also had some very bright spots, however. One challenge that has been overwhelmingly positive is the collaborative effort to unify WE United and the Confederation for Working Equitation into a single national organization. The successful creation of USA Working Equitation (USAWE) is the delightful result of many hours of discussion and consensus building. Our meetings were sometimes tense, yet always productive.

Throughout the consolidation process, I have been impressed by the willingness of leaders from both organizations to embrace transparency. To that end, we have been soliciting and sharing member input; publishing all meeting minutes and proposals; and working hard to keep people informed every step of the way. I'm grateful to have been able to participate in the consolidation project and optimistic about the future of working equitation in the United States. I am running for Secretary because I am passionate about maintaining this momentum and ensuring that our members remain informed and engaged.

One of the documents to come out of the consolidation work is a new Community Code for USAWE:

USA Working Equitation (USAWE) is dedicated to good horsemanship and committed to fostering camaraderie and good sportsmanship in all our events. To that end, we ask all of our members to:

- Make decisions, in training and competition, with the welfare of your horse foremost in your

mind.

- Support others; encourage those new to the sport and actively seek ways to help them learn.
- Be considerate of those contributing their time to put on events. Be courteous to officials, organizers, staff, and volunteers.
- Be honest in your dealings with others and demonstrate personal integrity in your words and deeds.
- Volunteer whenever you are able. By donating your time at local events or in service to the national organization, you are helping to grow this sport.

I believe whole-heartedly in the philosophy behind this code. Good horsemanship, camaraderie and good sportsmanship, supporting others, encouraging those new to the sport and actively seeking ways to help them learn... these are all actions that I hope all of our members will embrace. They are what has drawn me to the working equitation community and what I've dedicated countless volunteer hours over the last decade to foster.

If elected Secretary, I pledge to continue to live up to this community code and to continue to demonstrate personal integrity in words and deeds while donating my time locally, regionally, and nationally; thereby helping to grow this sport.

I look forward to supporting the wonderful volunteers willing to serve in leadership roles.

### **Doreen Atkinson – At-Large Director**

I am honored to accept the nomination of At Large Director for USA Working Equitation (USAWE). I began competing in Working Equitation (WE) in 2012 when I found WE to be the perfect combination of horse sports. I currently am an "S" judge for WE in WE United and the Confederation and will continue as an "S" judge in USAWE. In my travels to many states and to Canada as a judge and clinician, I have met a lot of wonderful like-minded people that are genuinely excited about WE. Because of WE, I have met many of you and your horses as well as visited beautiful parts of North America.

My goal for USAWE is to help it grow into a well-run organization, providing all members with guidance and education to organize clinics, seminars, demos, exhibitions, and shows. Being the chairperson of the Licensed Official Committee for 2 1/2 years, I reviewed applications, maintained records, corresponded with the Licensed Officials, and worked on the merged Licensed Official Committee. I would like to see more education and training opportunities for our Licensed Officials and coaches with seminars, symposiums, and more in person training. I believe our Licensed Officials can be the best officials out there and can help USAWE get the horse world's attention. Working Equitation should be included in Pony Clubs, 4-H Clubs, as well as local clubs. I would like every region to have regional shows and to have a world class National Show. I have served on several clubs' Board of Directors and have the experience that can help USAWE by listening to our members and recruiting our gifted members to put their talents to work for USAWE.

Competitively, I earned my USDF Bronze and Silver medals, Working Equitation Platinum medals, and won many regional and national championships. I am a WE Masters level rider and champion in both WE organizations. I participated in the Lusolove International Cup virtual competition and earned 9th out of 51 riders from all over the world. I attended several Working Equitation seminars with WAVE judges and became one of the three original judges of WE in the United States. I hope one day to be an approved WAVE judge.

I graduated from Texas A&M University with a bachelor's degree in Biomedical Science and worked in the veterinary field for 35+ years. My husband and I owned and operated a veterinary clinic until his passing. I also managed and operated several different types of businesses, utilizing my financial, client, and employee management skills. I have the experience and the ability to manage several projects at the same time. I am an energetic, loyal, kind, honest, and friendly person.

I am always available to answer questions about WE. I love horses, and I love sharing my knowledge and my passion of horses with others, especially in Working Equitation. Thank you in advance for your vote for At Large Director of the wonderful new organization USAWE.

### **Karen Boso - At-Large Director**

I am honored to accept the nomination for At-Large Director of our newly unified group – USA Working Equitation. Thank you to the many members who volunteered for both the Confederation and WE United and thank you to those who worked countless hours bringing the best of both groups together as one.

My husband Mike and I were attracted to the sport of Working Equitation when, like many of you, we watched videos of Speed rounds online - we were hooked. We love the versatility and the inclusiveness of the sport for both breeds and disciplines. Since our indoctrination we have hosted numerous clinics, shows, and our now popular Horseless Introduction to Working Equitation Clinics at our farm (KarMik Acres, Woodstock IL). I served as the first Regional Director – Great Lakes (Region 5) for the Confederation and was also part of the Marketing, National Show and Licensed Officials Committees. Since I am addicted to horses and learning, I dedicated myself to learning the sport inside and out by becoming a Judge and Technical Delegate, show host and manager, scribe, scorer, ring crew, teacher, and most fun of all, a competitor. I've had the privilege to shadow many of our S Judges and to scribe at the first Confederation National Show as well as for WAVE Judge António Vicente at the Andalusian World Cup 2019.

As an At-Large Director, I would like to work with the various committees to focus on the following issues: marketing the new organization to build its brand and increase membership, unify the judging and rules enforcement, cultivating new volunteers, and act as a membership liaison to bring member's issues to the Executive Board. Over the last few years we have lost quite a few top-level WE riders to other disciplines. I'd like to see USAWE attracting upper level riders back to our sport. I have spent many years in senior level corporate marketing, business

consulting, and volunteering on teams in many areas. My past experience and passion for the sport make me an excellent candidate for an At-Large Director.

It's important to me for the new organization to be "for the members" and not fall into the traps we saw in past organizations. I would like to see USAWE have many voices heard with new volunteers actively involved to increase the flow of ideas. I believe continuing to rotate in new volunteers will develop USAWE into an outstanding organization and grow the sport of Working Equitation in the US. Everyone has something to offer. Now is the time to allow the old guard to get back in their saddles – compete and to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

I truly appreciate your vote. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me at Karen@KarMikAcres.com or 847-800-7348. I would love to hear from other members and know what's important to your journey in Working Equitation. You're also welcome to join us on Facebook at KarMik Acres, KarMik Boso or Working Equitation Midwest. Join the fun!

### **Barbara Caiado – At-Large Director**

As our new organization is forming, it is a fascinating time to be considered for membership on the Board. It is with knowledge of the historical perspective, investment in the present, and a clear vision for the future that I humbly accept the great honor of running for At-Large Director. I am ready to serve. I have grown, learned, and benefitted tremendously from my time as a member of both WE United and the Confederation, and I hope to begin to repay this debt of gratitude in whatever small way I can by representing the many members who have given so generously of their time to me. In speaking with past and current members, I have gained an excellent understanding for what the position entails and am prepared to fulfill these duties to the best of my effort and ability.

My primary goal would be to represent the interests of the constituent members of our new and exciting organization. I want to reach out to the membership, youthful and experienced, and demonstrate how they can make a difference and do have a voice in the organization. I will accomplish this by making myself available as frequently and as easily as possible, whether through email or telephone, conversations at the conference, or any other means necessary, I want members to feel their voices will be heard and their opinions are valued.

Similarly, as in our democratic system of government, to be effective participants in the leadership it is essential that the membership be apprised of the discussions, policies, and procedures that will shape the future of our beloved sport. I believe a well-informed constituency will result in greater involvement and investment in the present and future of our organization. I will approach my role as a member of the Board with the perspective of being a facilitator. I have performed the administrative aspects of my position at DP Saddlery with the attitude that my job in the role of president is to remove any bureaucratic barriers or impediments so that my talented colleagues can utilize their skill sets to their maximum potential. That being said, I will not sit idly by during Board meetings, but rather will be an avid listener and thoughtful contributor representing both the majority opinion of the constituency and my own perspective.

The merge of our two organization has been an extremely important subject in my life for many years now, and I have actively sought out ways to make this happen. I strive to see our US “Workers” grow in this sport on an international level. We deserve to be represented on an international level; our riders deserve their chance to shine. I know that merging our both wonderful organizations is the first step into the right direction, and I look into the future of our sport with excitement!

I appreciate your consideration and hope you will join me in actively participating in the future of Working Equitation in the United States.

### **Trisha Kiefer-Reed – At-Large Director**

" 'Go back?' he thought. 'No good at all! Sideways? Impossible! Go forward? Only thing to do! On we go! ' "

The Hobbit  
JRR Tolkien

My name is Trisha Kiefer-Reed and I am humbly accepting the nomination for At-Large Director, USAWE.

Forward can be exciting, but forward can also be intimidating as it sometimes means pressing into unknown territory. I recall having similar thoughts a year ago when I was elected to serve as President Elect for WE United. What an amazing and forward moving year it has been!

I certainly never anticipated that my year as President Elect would end up with the opportunity to run for a different position in a brand-new organization. Over the past 12 months (and over 60 hours of intense meetings!) I have had the opportunity to connect and collaborate with many others from across the U.S. as we worked to forge a merger that builds on the strengths of the prior organizations to create an ever brighter future.

This work has been rich, time-consuming and deeply rewarding. Seeing how far reaching the love for Working Equitation is across our country has been nothing short of remarkable.

The smiles I see from riders who realize what this sport can mean for them validate the importance of making this opportunity available to everyone. Each one of our Regions is so unique in its geography, climate, and horse culture. Having lived in Colorado, Alaska and Montana, I have first hand knowledge of some of great variety in our nation. I would love to be able to support these individual communities and their Regional Directors to help grow the sport.

I believe in the power of good people working together to build community. I am passionate about integrity and supporting people in their horsemanship journey, irrespective of their previous experience. I am committed to promoting Working Equitation and excited about representing our members from across all regions.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

## **Jane O'Boyle – At-Large Director**

I didn't think I would be accepting this nomination but I have some really good friends in my corner and they have convinced me that I can probably do something positive and give back to the sport that I have come to know and love.

I want to thank all that have volunteered their time in the past and stand behind those that will be volunteering in the future.

Born in 1960 in Ridgecrest, Ca., one of nine children, I opted out of Girl Scouts in order to take riding lessons at Bottom Acres, the local riding school. At the age of 8, I was given six stalls to keep clean in order to earn my weekly lesson. Our lesson horses were trained by an old Vaquero and this was the age of versatility. We rode western and hunt seat. We jumped, we rode bareback, we showed in rail classes and we played games. Our stable sported a riding group that presented the flag at local events. We rode in parades and put on a horse opera one year. I never had my own horse, but we had free use the stable horses and their tack. Every year during the summer the whole ranch went to the high country in the Sierra Nevada mountains to spend six weeks riding trails and moving cattle, if we were lucky.

Fast forward to 1997, I married, acquired two young horses, and proceeded to move all over the country with my husband as he finished up his career in the USAF. We ended up in Manhattan, Kansas and I was finally able to set up my training facility and start taking outside horses, focusing mainly on colt starting and trail work. I discovered Working Equitation in 2016 and have been introduced to a whole new level of horsemanship.

I am a certified trainer and instructor under the Confederation for Working Equitation Professionals Program. I served on the Licensed Officials Committee for the Confederation and briefly worked on the Youth Development Program. I own five horses that I have started myself, I have a working knowledge of Dressage, Eventing, Roping, Reining, Cutting, Centered Riding, Cowboy Dressage, and more. I have successfully shown my Purebred Arabian through 4th Level Dressage, my Quarab mare, QH gelding and pinto pony in Cowboy Dressage, specializing in the Vaquero Division, and the same three in Working Equitation, Intro through Intermediate A. In all sports we earned numerous championships and reserves, supporting the fact that you do not need specialized horses to compete, you simply need determination, hard work and knowledge. My current project is a six year old TB mare.

In addition to the prescribed duties of the At Large Director, I hope to encourage unity, consistency, inclusiveness and growth for any and all riders, regardless of their age, ability or discipline.

This sport is exciting and challenging. I'd like to help share that for the future.

## **Suzanne Vlietstra – At-Large Director**

Working Equitation is the right equestrian sport for right now, and I'm excited for the chance to help it grow in the US. My experiences in the horse industry and enthusiasm for Working Eq are

outlined below.

As an equestrian business owner for over 40 years (founder and past president, Hobby Horse Clothing Co. Inc. western show apparel; current owner, Rancho de Felicidad, Inc., 60-horse boarding stable near Los Angeles) I understand the trends and nuances of horse sports. I recognize the relationship between passion, planning, and implementation necessary to tell the world about Working Equitation. I'm experienced with researching, budgeting, implementing, and measuring the success of business plans, with an emphasis on communication as the author of more than 100 articles on horses and horse businesses published in both trade and consumer publications.

As a life-long equestrian, born with the horse-lovin' gene, I understand that Working Equitation has much to offer every breed, every rider of every age, and every horse club, trainer, and stable. I've competed in AQHA, APHA, PtHA, NRHA, USEF/AHSA, USDF, WDAA, AHA, AHR, and ADS events (most of the horse-show alphabet!) and know that Working Equitation has great appeal, value, and relevance for equestrians across the equestrian spectrum... if they are educated about our exciting sport.

As a Working Eq competitor, I've experienced what it takes to offer clinics and shows to grow WE, and what equipment, experts, and facilities are needed to make a WE event a success. I love the sport, and competed in 2019 with the Haflinger mare Aurelia of Genesis from local shows to winning Novice A Amateur Ease of Handling at the 2019 North American WE United Championships... and then managing to DQ in the speed! Competing, I came to understand that the people in our sport are remarkable not only for their skill and dedication, but for their kindness and willingness to share Working Eq with newcomers to make the sport stronger. You're an extraordinary group!

As an older-and-wider rider, an amateur who needs help with my horses but still wants to show, I believe Working Equitation is the ideal equestrian sport to help people like me stay active. Horse sports today are supported primarily by aging Baby Boomers who have the time, resources, and experience to remain involved with equestrian sports, and if elected to help with the new USAWE I'll dedicate my time and energy to learning, listening, and helping our organization grow and thrive. I'll also use my experience as a current board member of the American Haflinger Registry, and board member of a community Scouting organization, to realistically give of my time and expertise to further the goals and objectives of USAWE.

The enthusiastic members, excellent structure, and thoughtful guidelines which our combined WE organizations bring together present a great opportunity to help more horse people get excited and get involved with Working Equitation. I look forward to being a part of our sport's success!

### **Susan Watkins – At-Large Director**

My name is Sue Watkins, and it is with great pleasure I accept the nomination for Director At-large of our new USAWE organization. I know the importance and responsibility of this position and when elected I look forward to interacting with all members and representing everyone in a

welcoming and professional manner.

In this critical opening stage, the pressure is on you the voting membership to set the foundation for an awesome future. Choosing leadership that has a vast knowledge of all breeds and horsemanship styles should be a priority as that is the essence of this sport internationally. My personal equine experience includes multiple degrees in Animal and Equine Science as well as a Professional Certification in Horse Show Management from UC Davis. I have trained every breed/discipline from Movie and Circus trick Horses, English, Dressage, Jumping, Western, Roping/Cattle work and Driving to Extreme Super Horse Competitions and for the last 10 years a focus solely on Working Equitation.

My track record shows I have a vast knowledge of Working Equitation from all angles as a L1-L5 Champion Rider, Trainer of L1-L4 Champion Horses, National Clinician, as well as a Carded Judge and licensed TD with all past WE organizations. I have the knowledge, dedication, and experience to represent you wherever you are located and no matter what discipline you ride. The proof being I have over 25 Working Equitation Championships, High Points and National Top 10 placings on multiple breeds riding in both Western and Dressage Discipline Attire. I have studied with WE masters from Portugal, Brazil, and the USA, learning the sport directly from its roots.

My Working Equitation leadership experience includes from all top positions on Association Executive Boards, Show Manager, Judge, TD, Course Designer, Secretary, Scribe, Score Keeper to simple volunteer. I was the first to put on recognized WE shows in California, and the first in the country to have a judged, awarded, Phase 4: Cattle Phase included in an open show.

The knowledge and enthusiasm I have for this sport is clear by this partial list of achievements. From my prior extensive involvement with WE associations, my eyes are wide open to the responsibilities of this position, I am excited to use this vast experience to represent all of you as we move up to the next level of Working Equitation in the USA.

When you place your trust in me for this position, my primary focus will be as a Liaison and Spokesperson for all of you equally. I promise I will be very proactive in representing all members ideas and concerns to the Executive Board and Committees as we continue developing the new USAWE association. To learn more about me, my leadership and my horsemanship please visit any of my Facebook pages. You will never see anything political, or indecorous, only uplifting, educational horsemanship information and pictures of the equines we cherish. Also feel free to contact me anytime with questions or ideas, my email is: horseysue@gmail.com.

### **Kristine Strasburger – Regional Director, Region 1**

I am pleased to accept the nomination to run for election to the position of USAWE Region 1 Regional Director.

About Me:

I was introduced to the sport of Working Equitation by my sister, Julie Alonzo, the current WE United President. Over the past few years, I have participated in the sport of Working Equitation as a show scorekeeper; as a show announcer; as a show competitor; as a clinic assistant and as a clinic instructor. I have competed at the Introductory Level in Working Equitation since 2019 in Oregon, Montana, and Canada. My childhood was built around riding horses with my sisters: participating in 4-H Horse projects and shows, and riding with my family in our local riding club hosted Gymkhana events, endurance rides, and overnight pleasure trail rides. I love how Working Equitation provides me the opportunity as an adult to become a better rider and learn riding skills I never had the opportunity to learn before. My current equine companion is Kodi, a 15-year-old grey-white Percheron/Quarter Horse who I've had since 2018. I work from home for a nonprofit organization that provides coaching and training for church leaders. My role there is heavily administrative and organizational. I served as a medic in the Army from 1988-91. I have two grown sons and celebrate 29 years of marriage to Keith this year.

What I am currently doing to promote WE in my local area:

In order to promote Working Equitation in my local area and provide more opportunities for Working Equitation skills practice and competition in the Inland Northwest, I formed Idaho Panhandle Working Equitation, Inc. (IPWE), an Idaho Nonprofit Corporation, in January 2020. [www.ipwe.us](http://www.ipwe.us)

IPWE hosted two clinics in 2020, and is planning to host clinics, schooling shows, and licensed Working Equitation shows in the Idaho Panhandle region beginning in 2021. IPWE will strive to provide opportunities for public education and enjoyment of the sport of Working Equitation at all levels, including working with existing organizations to open doors of opportunity for more people to enjoy the sport of Working Equitation.

I created the WE United 2020 Promo video in order to have an exciting and interesting visual introduction to the sport of Working Equitation to present at a meeting of my local county 4-H Horse Leaders. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9vFGGr-BEXo>

I taught a Working Equitation block at the Kootenai County 4-H Horse Retreat in June of 2020 and am slated to teach the sport of Working Equitation at this event again in 2021.

Why I want to serve USAWE as the Region 1 Regional Director:

- I have a flexible schedule and time available to devote to USAWE activities and board service.
- I am interested in helping Working Equitation grow as a sport in the United States.
- I would like to help others strengthen and grow the sport of Working Equitation in their local areas.
- I have experience working for nonprofit corporations and bring valuable skillsets to the organizational level team.

## **Robin Bond – Regional Director, Region 2**

Hello USAWE Members,

I, Robin Bond, accept nomination for Region 2 Director.

This is an exciting time for Working Equitation in the United States. Many passionate people

have worked incredibly hard to bring us to this point. As a trainer, coach and competitor, I focused my attention thus far on bringing new riders to the sport, coaching my clients to be successful, and honing my own abilities on several horses at all levels. It is time for me to broaden my focus and give back to a sport that has given so many people a way to celebrate their relationship with horses.

First, some background:

My early foundation was in jumping and dressage. In 1994, I changed my specialty to western. I competed at the national level in reined cowhorse, internationally in extreme cowboy racing, and throughout the west in ranch versatility and reining.

When Working Equitation came to my attention, I was all in. My WE accomplishments include bronze and silver rider medals, state and national top ten finishes at multiple levels and a number of highly successful amateur riders under my guidance. Along with Doreen Atkinson and Amy Star, I was a member of the 'Calamity Janes,' the United States team that finished fourth in the Lusolove International Ease of Handling virtual competition. Training horses and riders has been my sole occupation since 1994.

Next, why I am seeking election to the Board of Directors:

As a rider, and a coach of riders, I have participated in every level of the sport. I understand the mission statement of the World Association for Working Equitation and have spoken at length with international judges, trainers and competitors, particularly about the roots of the sport and the goal to showcase each nation's tradition of working cattle on horseback.

My goal is to balance the need to have a sport that is welcoming to novices of various riding styles, yet still honors the high level of training necessary to compete at Masters level in all four phases. Our national goal was to create a single organization for the United States to earn the protocol from WAVE and become eligible to field a team at international events. I am committed to help make this a reality.

Finally, how I plan to help:

USAWWE needs people who are knowledgeable and passionate. We must bring together a group that works well together, listens to each other and carefully weighs the merits and deficiencies of our actions.

I bring a strong code of ethics, a history of honorable conduct, and a willingness to appreciate differing points of view in order to achieve logical solutions that forward our goals.

I will listen to the concerns of Region 2 participants, and faithfully represent them to the board.

I will help increase educational and show opportunities throughout Region 2.

I will strive to help our sport achieve greater consistency in judging and performance.

### **Jessica Mosbaugh – Regional Director, Region 2**

What an exciting time for Working Equitation in the USA! The consolidation of WE United and the Confederation for Working Equitation is an eagerly awaited event and it is with great honor that I would choose to support our growing, new organization as Region 2 Director.

As a member of WE United for the past 3 years I have had the privilege of travelling to many shows and meeting many wonderful people in our Region, and in our neighboring Region 1. Through these friendships I have been able to experience the true, positive Spirit of Working Equitation. This year I was a member of the Region 2 Committee and the WE United Ethics committee. I recognized a need to organize and promote events throughout our Region and established our WE United Region 2 Facebook page as a point of reference for our members. I created a calendar for all Region 2 Events and a map to help members locate other members in their area. And after seeing the need for shows in Northern California, I took on the task of organizing a series of shows throughout the summer. My goal was to unite our members. Build it and they will come... and come they did! We had an amazing summer, and many memories and friendships were built. Our shows grew throughout the summer bringing a unification to our area.

As Region 2 Director I would love to encourage and support the growth of more events in other areas of our Region. I would work to unite our Region through clinics, competitions, and gatherings that promote the positive spirit of our sport. I would love to help local chapters grow the sport in their area, and I would make sure we had representation on the Board of USAWE.

Region 2 is a strong Region full of opportunity. We have many talented riders and some beautiful facilities. It would be an honor to work with our members. This will be a year of growth for USAWE and I look forward to taking an active role.

Thank you for your consideration.

### **Cindy Branham – Regional Director, Region 3**

Cindy Branham is a John Lyons Certified Trainer & Clinician from Tecumseh, Kansas, with over 25 years in the Equine Industry. Her and her husband Ryan Branham own and operate The Rockin RC Ranch, Home of Mustang Redemptions INC., a multi-faceted education, gentling, training, and adoption program that redeems the value of wild horses and gives hope to people of all ages.

“I am excited for the opportunity to continue to expand and help grow the sport of Working Equitation in Region 3, and help to facilitate unity between all current members and people interested in becoming members of our great sport.

2020 has been a challenging year for all of us! However, it was a great opportunity to pour myself into the consolidation of the organizations WE United and The Confederation for Working Equitation into one unified National Organization, USAWE. It is so encouraging to work with so many WE horse enthusiasts who have the passion to build our sport! We have worked together to build a solid foundation. I so look forward to continuing the construction process of USAWE into a magnificent National Organization built on camaraderie and a passion for the great sport of Working Equitation.

“WE is not only great for setting and accomplishing goals to further improve our horsemanship;

but an opportunity to build lifelong friendships between horseman and horsewoman from every aspect of the equestrian community worldwide. ”—Cindy Branham

Working Equitation has become the forefront in Cindy’s training and coaching program. She specializes in teaching WE Clinics and private training sessions focusing on understanding how to better communicate with the horse to further develop a balanced and trusting partnership between horse and rider. Cindy is one of the Co-Founders of Working Equitation Kansas. Over the past five years she has helped promote Working Equitation across Kansas hosting 5 successful B-Rated shows averaging 30 competitors at each show. WEKS has had 5-7 B-rated shows a year since it began, including WE clinics and educational opportunities.

#### **Kiki Pantaze – Regional Director, Region 4**

My name is Kiki Pantaze, and I am so honored to have been nominated to run for the position of Region 4 Director of USAWE. As the Region 4 Director of WE United, I have been actively involved in the merger process and the formation of USAWE. I look forward to continuing to advocate for my region and help USA Working Equitation to continue to develop and grow.

#### **Lidia Taylor – Regional Director, Region 5**

I am honored to accept the nomination for the Regional Director position in the Great Lakes Region (Region 5) of the newly formed USA Working Equitation. Regional Director has power to impact the future of our sport in a significant manner. Not only is Regional Director a promoter of the sport in their territory, but they also have a role in general policymaking as a part of the Board of Directors. I believe that my experiences in various facets of business and non-for-profit world, along with my dedication to the sport make me an excellent fit for the Regional Director position for Region 5.

My Working Equitation journey began in 2016 in Oklahoma, and I have never looked back. The absolute inclusivity of our sport has always been a huge attraction, as well as its demanding nature from a training standpoint. In the ensuing years I became a Technical Delegate and a Judge. I have volunteered my time to assist with Working Equitation demonstrations, free clinics, and to judge a schooling show series for the Central Plains Dressage Society. I also served on the Working Equitation Committee for the same organization.

Upon moving to Indiana in summer of 2018 I quickly realized I was the only Working Equitation clinician and licensed official in the state. I organized several Intro to Working Equitation clinics and founded Indiana Working Equitation Association, LLC. We had our very first schooling show in October 2019; sadly, COVID19 derailed our 2020 show plans. I regularly volunteer at the Illinois show series hosted by KarMik Acres. In 2019 I spent 4 days volunteering at the Hoosier Horse Fair helping with the Working Equitation clinics and lectures.

In addition to being a riding instructor with over two decades of experience, a judge, and a TD, I also hold a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with experience working in both, corporate and small business settings. Over the years, I have served many non-for-profit organizations by taking part in organizing fund-raisers and educational events. My organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to multitask will be put to good use in the position of a Regional Director.

Should I be elected as the next Region 5 Director, I shall continue the work of popularizing the sport in the area through providing and promoting educational opportunities for riders of all levels, as well as, serving as a liaison between riders and the region's trainers, instructors, and show organizers. With the formation of the USA Working Equitation, we have a chance to move our sport forward with new volunteers providing fresh perspective and original ideas. These elections are a pivotal moment for Working Equitation in this country – we have an opportunity to use the lessons learned from prior organizations, to move past the failures, and to capitalize on successful initiatives as we build the new, unified entity. I hope to receive your vote so that I could become a part of the change for the best for the USA Working Equitation.

### **Alex Tyson - Regional Director, Region 5**

Hello! My name is Alex Tyson, nominee for Region 5 Director:

I am a CHA Certified riding instructor who operates a horseback riding school in southeast Michigan. I have shown in a variety of disciplines from hunter jumper, pleasure, dressage, and barrel racing. As a youth I even was able to qualify for and participate in the NBHA Youth World Championships for barrel racing. I have competed at the Retired Racehorse project's Thoroughbred Makeover in 2018 and received a TCA award for being the highest placed horse in Ranch work that came from a TCA aftercare organization. I have been a middle school equestrian team coach through MIHA for the past 9 years. Recently, I have gotten into gentling mustangs and training them through to competition level.

I discovered Working Equitation in 2018 and have never looked back. I always felt disenfranchised by other horse sports and "WE" is the only sport I have felt truly at home doing. I feel it is the ultimate test of well-rounded horsemanship. Being a specialist in any one thing won't serve you well in this sport; it gives people who are good horseman on average horses as much chance to succeed as those more financially fortunate. To that end, I have molded my entire riding program for all my riding students to gear toward Working Equitation. I have even coached a youth rider to qualify and compete in the 2019 WE United North American Championships in San Diego, California. Yes, Michigan to California! I, myself, have competed up to Intermediate A and was the WE United Region 5 champion at Novice B in 2019.

The past few years myself and Karen –Rach Sinclair have been showcasing Working Equitation through a booth and performances at the Michigan Expo as well as introductory clinics and incentives for youth involvement. I have written a few articles about working equitation and its growth in the area in a local tristate publication. If elected, I would try my hardest to continue to make Working Equitation visible at major horse events, as well as spearhead ideas for youth participation, prizes, etc. I feel pretty strongly that Working Equitation is for everybody, but if we

can get more kids excited about it, we will not only have a bigger sport; but contributing to the horse industry as a whole by promoting horsemanship in young people.

### **Kimberley Hillyer – Regional Director, Region 6**

My name is Kim Hillyer, and I am very excited about Working Equitation; I would be proud to represent Region 6 in USAWE. I bring over 40 years of diverse equestrian experience including over 15 years horse club non-profit leadership experience, and my commitment is to help grow this amazing sport and national organization.

Working Equitation took hold of me in late 2018 and ever since I am “all in.” I became one of the founding members of Northern Virginia Working Equitation (NOVAWE) based in the Prince William County Virginia area, two hours from my Iron Rock Farm in Dover, PA. In addition to traveling a couple times a month to Virginia and/or Maryland to show or attend WE clinics, I am working to promote the WE sport in the central PA area by offering WE playdays and clinics.

As a Pennsylvanian I am well centered in Region 6 geographically. I am professionally qualified, as a long-standing former non-profit executive horse club board member, to represent Region 6 in this inaugural first term of USAWE. Having a diverse background of Pony Club (A Pony Club Rating), Dressage (to PSG), Eventing (to Preliminary), and Working Equitation (to Level 3) enables me to understand the diversity and needs of all Working Equitation riders.

In my first year in WE, I competed at Level 2 open, finishing 5th in the Confederation for Working Equitation’s year-end standings and Region 6 Reserve Champion. In 2020, I moved up to Level 3 and have enjoyed success in schooling shows, currently leading in NOVAWE’s Partner Show standings in my division.

After moving to PA in 1990 from the Middle Tennessee area, and switching from Eventing to Dressage in 1995, I served on the board of the USDF Group Member Organization, called International Equestrian Organization (IEO). There I was either President or Vice-President for roughly 15 years. During my tenure, IEO membership doubled and the IEO’s bank balance went from \$500 to over \$9,000. I was also instrumental in developing Western Dressage in the IEO by influencing IEO schooling shows to offer a WD division.

Currently I have two APHA geldings, Bell Fire, and Bell the Cat, who are brothers. I competed at USDF Dressage GMO schooling shows with Bell the Cat winning multiple year-end Championships in Western Dressage. Bell the Cat was the US Western Dressage Champion a couple of years in a row in the North American Western Dressage organization. Bell the Cat is now my WE mount and loves it as much as I do.

I have been blessed with a horse life that includes my roper husband Dan, and two sons aged 12 and 21, and horses of different breeds doing different types of work. Working Equitation is a fabulous cumulation of all I know. I pledge to represent USAWE and serve as liaison to all Region 6 USAWE members, Affiliated Organizations, and WE enthusiasts for USAWE’s best interest.

### **Rebecca Algar – Regional Director, Region 7**

My name is Rebecca Algar, I am a resident of Ocala, Florida.

I first saw WE in 2010, and have been active in it since 2011. I am an "S" judge and a licensed TD, and, as well as the USA, have attended and shadow judged or TD'ed in Mexico, UK, Portugal, Germany and Austria, as well as teaching clinics in Europe, to broaden my knowledge of the sport. I am also a competitor and trainer and achieved my Gold Medal in 2019.

I am currently serving on the Licensed Officials Committee with WE United.

I am very excited to see WE go forward as one association, and hope to see our membership expanding as a result.

I would like to bring a voice for my area members to the association, as well as keeping them up to date on activities and WE news, if elected.

### **Heather Walters – Regional Director, Region 7**

WE Enthusiasts,

My name is Heather Walters, and I am the current WE United Region 7 Director. I am running for the USAWE Region 7 Director for the one-year term. I have been riding/competing horses for over twenty-four years and training for nineteen years. My training philosophy is a combination of natural and classical techniques. I have trained with many trainers in my career gathering knowledge and applying it to training techniques used on each horse/rider I work with. I have developed a methodology that incorporates the horses' natural movement and increasing strength, flexibility, and balance within the horse's physical capabilities. Having competently climbed the levels in Dressage on multiple horses, my latest is home-raised and trained from Training to FEI. With my current horses ranging from six years old to twenty and competing in schooling shows to FEI National Dressage and Intro to Advanced Working Equitation, I offer a valuable insight into the average horse aiming for success. My students range from seven years old to 60+ years, ranging from Dressage work to foxhunting and cross-country training. I have an excellent ability to translate the goal or feeling into a commonsense technique or situation to achieve understanding and success in riding goals.

I am a current USDF Bronze and Silver Medalist, earned on my self-trained FEI horse. I completed the USDF L-Graduate Judge program graduating with Distinction in 2017 and has intentions to become a Licensed USEF Judge in Dressage and USAWE Working Equitation. I am part owner of Southeast Baroque Horse Shows LLC that hosts shows in the Southeast ranging from Dressage, Andalusian/Lusitano, Dressage Sport Horse Classes, and Working Equitation. We host working equitation schooling shows, playdays, and Rated shows with levels ranging from Intro to Advanced levels. I have enjoyed helping fellow enthusiasts learn how to manage and run a schooling show. Had the pleasure to judge schooling shows and teach clinics to introduce new people to the concept of WE improving their overall quality of work, bend, and accuracy. My long-term goal is to encourage more riders to join this great new sport and enrich our community to continue to have playdays, clinics, and shows throughout all the South.

### **Laurie Wilson – Regional Director, Region 7**

My name is Laurie Wilson and I have been a mobile horse/mule trainer in Georgia for the last 20 years. I fell in love with working equitation and in 2019, started Working Equitation of Georgia (WEGA), a non-profit group whose primary objective is to grow the sport of working equitation through workshops, clinics, play days, and shows. I built all of the WE obstacles, procured a trailer to house and haul all of the obstacles to clinics and play days and helped create our WEGA logo. I also successfully completed Trish Hyatt's on-line WE Course Design webinar and have designed all the courses for our play days, clinics, and schooling shows. Since we began, we have hosted several clinics, play days and participated in 2 successful schooling shows with Judge Heather Walters. My mule Toby Jack and I competed in both schooling shows and were grand champion in Intermediate A. WEGA now has a dedicated group of students and we are excited to expand our reach with more events scheduled for the end of this year including 2 beginner cow clinics!

As Region 7 Director, my primary focus would be to help USA Working Equitation expand in the southeast with all of the momentum that I have gained through WEGA. It is an exciting and challenging time with the union of the two former governing bodies and I would like to help make sure this transition builds unity and excitement with new participants as we move forward by creating a fun and positive atmosphere.. Because I am a "mobile" horse/mule trainer with "mobile" WE obstacles, I would continue to try to reach as many new pockets of interested riders to build awareness, excitement and membership for USAWE. I thank you for your nomination as the Region 7 Director for USA Working Equitation. You can visit our Facebook page Working Equitation Georgia for more information on myself and WEGA.