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Young Connaway Sportsmanship Award Recipient Represents Remarkable Resilience and Courage in the Face of Heartbreak

When Laura Connaway of [Connaway & Associates Equine Insurance Services, Inc.](#) came up with the idea of introducing and supporting a new junior sportsmanship award at the three [Experience Equestrian League \(ExEL\)](#) events in 2024 at the Germantown Charity Horse Show grounds in Germantown, TN, little did she know the remarkable story of a courageous young girl with a big heart — and ambitions to match — that would emerge.



Savanna Springfield with her parents, Ayana and Brown Springfield, and Laura Connaway. *Photo courtesy of ExEL.*

The 11-year-old Savanna Springfield of Oakland, TN, was awarded the prize at the ExEL Winter Wonderland show on December 6-8, 2024. The judges and officials selected the awardee at each show as the young rider who was deemed to have shown outstanding sportsmanship throughout the competition. Savanna and her pony Candy Crush, a 12-year-old American Paint, were a clear choice. Her courage and character in the face of adversity, heartbreak, and nerves, plus her fantastic attitude at the show, shone like a beacon.

The run-up to the ExEL Winter Wonderland show was extremely traumatic for the horse-mad youngster. Tragically, she lost her little brother to a drowning accident just three months earlier, and her pony had been out for a year with a significant hock injury that required surgery and extensive stem cell therapy.

Since the show was close to Christmas, Savanna dressed “Candy” with festive bridle decorations, but during their first trip around the ring it became clear that the pony was not enjoying her adornments and uncharacteristically refused a couple of jumps. Instead of being angry, Savanna exited with a smile, giving Candy lots of love. She removed Candy’s holiday decorations and returned to the competition ring to produce a lovely second round.

“Savanna has always been a bright light in our lives, but she seems more resilient than ever because of the therapy she receives from the bond with horses,” said Savanna’s mother, Ayana Springfield.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Laura Connaway Answers Your Horse Insurance FAQs

Since 1992, Laura Connaway of Connaway & Associates has been working with her team to bring a personalized touch to the horse insurance market, offering competitive coverage for horses, horse farms, and equine liability.



It's important to understand the role insurance coverage plays, and know when to advise of any changes in a horse's situation. *Photo by stokkete/Adobe Stock.*

As an insurance agent, the most important part of the role is to inform and educate clients so they understand the coverages that are available to suit their individual needs. Laura addresses several of the most commonly asked questions in this article, including:

- When do I need to notify my insurance company of changes in my horse’s condition?
- Should I call my vet or my insurer first in case of a medical emergency?
- I would like to change my horse’s insured value. How would I go about it?
- My horse has changed careers. Do I need to let my insurer know?
- I’m buying a new horse — how does that affect its insurance coverage?
- What happens if my horse is stolen or needs to be put down?

[Read the Full Article](#)

Connaway Expands 2025 Sportsmanship Award to More Shows and to Amateurs

Connaway & Associates is delighted to announce the expansion of its support for the sportsmanship award at the five Experience Equestrian League (ExEL) events in 2025. The newly introduced Connaway & Associates Amateur Sportsmanship Award will be presented alongside the Connaway & Associates Junior Sportsmanship Award at the five ExEL shows held at the Germantown Charity Horse Show grounds in Germantown, TN, bringing the total number of awards to 10.



Laura Connaway — herself an amateur grand prix show jumping athlete — was keen to expand the series in 2025.

A beautiful wooden award tray will be presented to one winner from the pony, children’s, and junior classes at each of the 2025 shows, held in March, June, September, October/November and December. One amateur winner will also be awarded at each of the five shows. The recipient in each division will be selected by the judges and officials as the competitor deemed to have shown outstanding sportsmanship throughout the competition.

Laura Connaway, a prolific amateur grand prix jumping athlete herself, said, “I am so excited to add a new category to this sportsmanship award for the 2025 season. What I hope to find are competitors whose positivity shines through even when things do not go as planned, just like our December 2024 winner, Savanna Springfield.

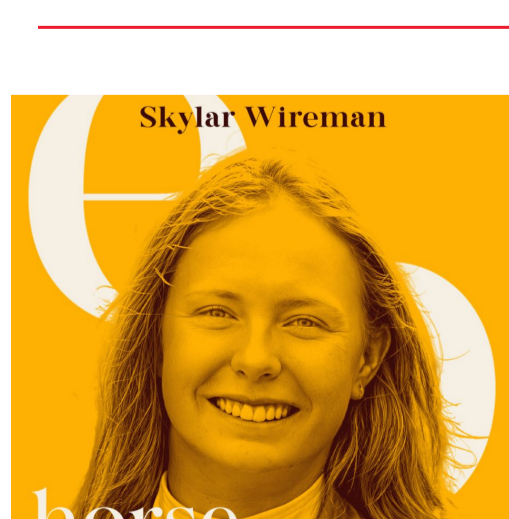
“Good sportsmanship is about taking on all learning opportunities, and I look forward to celebrating riders at each show who exhibit good sportsmanship, respect for their horse, and support for fellow competitors. Sportsmanship means the fair and generous treatment of others, so I’d like to see and encourage kindness toward both people and horses through this program,” she added.

Connaway’s affiliation with the Experience Equestrian League shows and expansion of the partnership is a perfect fit because the ExEL shows, which began in 2018, were specifically designed to bridge the gap between riding at home and riding at a rated show. Focused on a fun and educational experience, ExEL is centered on allowing horses and riders to grow, learn, and succeed. ExEL features a variety of classes and caters to all levels of hunter-jumper riders.

Exemplary Sportsmanship

Connaway & Associates would also like to applaud ExEL show founder and organizer Brittany Kasprack Coleman for her own recent award. In December 2024, she was awarded the [United States Hunter Jumper Association’s Amateur Sportsmanship Award](#), which recognizes amateur owners and competitors who exhibit excellence and integrity by supporting their fellow competitors and volunteering their time and resources to various aspects of the industry.

Kasprack Coleman established ExEL and has recently introduced college recruitment at the show series, allowing high school-aged riders to showcase their skills and meet college representatives. As an amateur rider, Kasprack is committed to her own growth within the sport, actively working toward her judging card while successfully competing in the grand prix ring. Congratulations on this meaningful recognition!



Podcast Corner

“It’s worth the reward”: Skylar Wireman on making it to the top on a limited budget, doing the work herself, and focusing on fun

Connaway & Associates is proud to support selected episodes of the [Horse Person](#) podcast, with the latest featuring the emerging talent, Skylar Wireman. The show featuring athlete has worked her way up the ladder to five-star level without extravagant wealth, and while prioritizing horse welfare. Whether it’s camping, beach rides, or playing gymkhana games, Wireman focuses on keeping fun central to her horses’ training.

[Listen to the latest episode of the Horse Person podcast, sponsored by Connaway & Associates.](#)

Much of her competitive success has been on borrowed horses, catch rides, or homebreds she has developed herself. In this episode, Wireman discusses her background, course riding strategy, the balance between being a trainer and a competitor, and how to choose shows with limited funds.

Listen in around the 24-minute mark for Laura Connaway’s discussion on age restrictions on insurance policies in horses and how they may be changing.

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

About Connaway & Associates Equine Insurance Services, Inc.

At Connaway & Associates, teamwork allows horse people to protect horse people. Since 1992, Connaway & Associates has built a strong reputation as a reliable partner in competition and in business. Connaway & Associates is licensed in 48 states and offers competitive insurance coverage options through several A-rated admitted insurance carriers. Connaway & Associates does the work so its clients can enjoy their passion for horses. For more information on Connaway & Associates and its offerings, visit [www.connaway.net](#).