

## Ruffner captures Reserve Championship at IHSA national competition

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Haley Ruffner, a sophomore on the Alfred University equestrian team, received Reserve Champion honors in the High Point Rider competition of the 2017 Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, held recently in Lexington, Ky. She is among just 16 riders nationwide to qualify for the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Collegiate Horsemanship Challenge, which will be held in Oklahoma City, Okla. in November.

Ruffner qualified for the AQHA Collegiate Challenge by placing fourth in Open Horsemanship at the IHSA National Championships, held May 4-7 in Lexington. The top eight riders in Open Horsemanship at the national championships were chosen to represent the IHSA at the Collegiate Horsemanship Challenge.

The Saxon sophomore enjoyed a successful national championship show. In addition to her winning Reserve National Champion in the AQHA High Point Rider competition, she finished in fourth place in Open Horsemanship and took ninth in Open Reining.

Last Sunday, Ruffner received national recognition when she was presented with the Achievement of Excellence Award, given by Equestriancoach.com. The recipient of this award is chosen by the judges and given to an Open Reining rider at IHSA Nationals who displays style, effective riding, and the potential to excel in the sport of equestrian. Among the prizes given for this award is a six-day internship with NRHA Hall of Fame rider Tim McQuay.

Two other AU sophomores also competed at the IHSA Nationals last week. Taylor Soderholm (Tully, NY/Tully) was third in Western Intermediate Horsemanship on Sunday, while Lauren Cole (Boston, NY/Springville) competed Thursday in walk-trot-canter and earned honorable mention.