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Youth Shine at Mustang Million

Seventeen-year-old trainer wins Freestyle Finals with Mustang adopted just 120 days ago.

Georgetown, Texas, September 23, 2013 - Jacqueline Donahue, 17, of Seymour, Tennessee, and her Bureau of Land Management Mustang yearling, Calibrated Cadenza, were crowned champions of the Mustang Million Youth Division on Friday, September 20. After two days of preliminary competition among 60 youth, the top ten scoring trainers advanced to the freestyle finals to show off skills they have worked on since adopting the Mustang yearlings nearly four months ago. Youth trainers traveled from 17 states and as far away as Oregon and Pennsylvania to compete for \$50,000 in cash and prizes.

The Youth Division at Mustang Million challenged trainers ages eight to 17 to train a yearling Mustang adopted at one of six nationwide adoptions held in April and May. Youth competitors began the journey with a 1-year-old wild horse and prepared for in-hand classes including: handling and conditioning, pattern and trail work. Competition tested the relationship between handler and horse and their willingness to complete in-hand maneuvers such as trotting, stopping, backing, 360 degree turns, loading in a trailer, and navigating over trail obstacles.

The Youth Division was divided into two age groups. Casey Hiser and Chrome Faith of Benson, North Carolina, were first overall in the age eight to 12 age group, and Allison Reynolds and Whispering Hills Million Dollar Baby were highest placing in the age 13-17 division.

Sara Angier, age 17, took home reserve champion honors with her buckskin yearling, Eli. Angier, the oldest of nine siblings, is a lifelong horse enthusiast and classically educated musician from Mount Pleasant, Texas. She and Eli placed third in both the handling and trail classes before advancing to the top ten finals, where they scored 262 total points in compulsory maneuvers and the freestyle performance. They were just 3.5 points behind first place.

The champion yearling Calibrated Cadenza, a dun gelding, was adopted by Karen Cole of Talking Rock, Georgia, at the Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Mustang Million adoption-auction on May 4. Donahue says she was attracted to the BLM Mustang's calm, quiet eye and was happily surprised when they were able to adopt him for just \$400. "He was super calm and easy to work with – the hardest part was training with the see-saw," says Donahue. Eli's calm nature and adaptability were key to the pair's success.

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Donahue has competed in three previous Mustang Heritage Foundation Youth & Yearling

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Mustang Challenges, including winning the Georgia event earlier this year. Competing in Mustang Million was Donahue's first time in Texas, and she says the field was much more competitive than previous events she's participated in. "It was an amazing experience for me – the Mustang family is so helpful and supportive, and the other kids were so cool. I feel very, very privileged." Donahue took home \$10,000, a Gist Silversmiths belt buckle, Vetericyn, and Classic Equine accessories.

Complete event results are available at www.mustangmillion.com. Photos and videos are available at www.facebook.com/extrememustangmakeover.

The purpose of the competition is to showcase the beauty, versatility and trainability of these rugged horses that roam freely on public lands throughout the West, where they are protected by the BLM under federal law. The BLM periodically removes excess animals from the range to ensure herd health and protect rangeland resources. Thousands of the removed animals are then made available each year to the public for adoption. More than 5,500 wild horses have been adopted through Mustang Heritage Foundation events and programs since 2007.

Mustang Million was made possible through a partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the generosity of our sponsors Ram Trucks, Western Horseman, Zoetis, Vetericyn, Roper Apparel & Footwear, Twister Trailer, RES Equine Products, Gist Silversmiths, Martin Saddlery and Smith Brothers.

About the Mustang Heritage Foundation

The mission of the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the goal of the Extreme Mustang Makeover events are to increase the adoption of Mustangs across the country. The Mustang Heritage Foundation created the Extreme Mustang Makeover events to showcase the recognized value of Mustangs through a national training competition. The nonprofit organization also created the Trainer Incentive Program and the youth programs to raise awareness about America's Mustangs. For more information, visit www.mustangheritagefoundation.org.

About the Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing 258 million acres of public lands, located mostly in the West. Wild horses and burros roaming public rangelands are managed in a manner consistent with BLM's overall multiple-use mission, as set forth in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. For more information, visit www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram.html or call 866-468-7826.