



To Honor...To Memorialize

“The Gift That Keeps on Giving”

By Stephanie Rodrigue, Louisiana, National High School Rodeo Foundation President

Each year, at the National High School Rodeo Foundation Awards Ceremony on Friday of the National High School Finals Rodeo, a printed program is distributed that lists the named, honorary, and memorial scholarships that will be presented. While one may wonder of the complexity of putting a scholarship together, it really is a very simple process that makes a huge and lasting impression. The Foundation Scholarships are comprised of a small number of categories.

A group of scholarships awarded are contractual between National Sponsors and the National High School Rodeo Association. It is always encouraging to know that NHSRA National Sponsors are deeply embedded in both the importance of education, as well as the futures of those graduating seniors who exit NHSRA competition. Among these National Sponsorship Scholarships are the Cinch Academic Scholarships, the Western Specialty Insurers Awards, the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association “Tip of the Hat” Awards, Professionals Choice Student Athlete and Equine Athlete Scholarships, the ProRodeo Hall of Fame Western Heritage Award, the Teskey’s “Top Hand” Awards and the Dutton Bits Student Officers’ Scholarships. Other scholarships are results of longtime partnerships with NHSRA, such as the Rodeo Cowboys Alumni Association honoring the memories of John Hatley and Lane Frost, the Rodeo Historical Society, the Western and English Sales Association,

and the Kate Scott, DVM, Animal Welfare Scholarship.

Other scholarships memorialize those who are no longer with us, but were associated with the National High School Rodeo Association and/or National High School Rodeo Foundation in some significant way. Among the National High School Rodeo Foundation Memorial Scholarships are the Claude Mullins Memorial Award, the highest valued scholarship awarded that memorializes the individual who is primarily credited with the inception of the National High School Rodeo Association and the National High School Finals Rodeo. As a school superintendent in Texas, Mr. Mullins insisted that education be a required component of the National High School Rodeo Association. The Keith Maddox Memorial Scholarship was created and is facilitated by the Maddox Family and “The Hat Man” of Fort Worth’s famous Best Hat Store. The Roger Hart Scholarship memorializes one of the long-term presidents of the National High School Rodeo Foundation. The Gene Litton, Earl Northrup, Harold “Gabby” Hayes and Ken Norris Memorial Scholarships honor gentlemen who were significant to both the National High School Rodeo Association and National High School Rodeo Foundation and truly created the path forward that both organizations still travel today. Other memorial scholarships honor past members of the National High School Rodeo Association

who passed away with a love for the sport of rodeo and whose memories remain in the hearts of the families and friends they left behind. Keeping their memories alive are Georgia’s Rick Spence and Megan McCain Memorial Scholarships and Louisiana’s Billy Duhon, Corbin Carpenter and J.D. Hebert Memorial Steer Wrestling Scholarships.

Scholarships are also awarded by the Foundation to honor those who have and continue to contribute in some way to the National High School Rodeo Foundation, including Wyoming and Arizona’s Pat Litton and Georgia’s Ray and Cindy Spence Service Awards. Both of these honor individuals who volunteered their time and effort to handle the daily tasks of paying scholarship claims to universities, colleges, technical and other post-secondary institutions and schools. The level of services rendered simply should not go unnoticed.

Once an entity or individual makes the decision to sponsor a scholarship, they are welcome to help construct the parameters of the requirements for a particular scholarship, such as the focus area of education or the state or province of the applicant. Scholarship donors are always highly encouraged to attend the Awards Ceremony and personally present the scholarships. For more information on scholarship sponsorship, contact Foundation President Stephanie Rodrigue at 337-540-4623 or via email at stephanied.rodrigue@gmail.com. Invest in the future by investing in education! 🤠