

First	Last	Desig.	City	State	Status	Governance Exp.	Current Committee Member	2023 Attendance
Betsy	Checchia	Jumper	Albuquerque	NM	Amateur	X	Y	100%
Rachel	Loftin	Jumper	Paradise Valley	AZ	Amateur	X	N	
Kristina	Matthews	Jumper	Parker	CO	Amateur	X	N	
Jill	Pezel	Jumper	Fort Lupton	CO	Professional	X	Y	67%
Julie	Williams	Jumper	Scottsdale	AZ	Amateur	X	N	

USHJA Zone Nominee Biography Form

Name: Elizabeth (Betsy) Checchia

City & State: Albuquerque, NM

USHJA Number: 145788

Zone: 8

Professional/Amateur Status: ☐ Professional ☒ Amateur

Primary Designation (select one): ☐ Hunter ☒ Jumper

How are you currently involved in the sport? Please list your equestrian experience.

I currently show a jumper in the 1.10m Amateur Jumpers, and have a young hunter that just did his first USEF rated show with a professional rider. I've showed both hunters and jumpers for more than 30 years, both in rated and unrated shows. I've also foxhunted, evented, and ridden in pairs races and old-fashioned point-to-points. I also managed a 60-stall lesson and boarding barn in Maryland from 1990-1995.

Do you have prior governance experience on a Board, committee, or task force? If so, please list.

I've been a member of the Zone 8 Committee since 2014. I'm currently the Vice Chair of that committee. I was just asked to join the Emerging Jumper Rider Task Force. I've also served as a Board member and officer of the Washington Bridle Trails Assn. and as a Board member and President of the Arizona Hunter Jumper Assn.

Do you have non-equestrian business experience? If so, please list.

I worked as an independent contractor for several U.S. Defense Department intelligence organizations on projects related to U.S. POW/MIA personnel, and on intelligence support to U.S. Customs and Border Patrol operations.

What is the biggest challenge the sport is facing in your opinion?

The expense of showing at USEF rated shows has put them out of reach of many hunter/jumper/equitation riders.

How do you hope to contribute on the Zone Committee?

Since I've always been an amateur, I believe I can provide the viewpoint of amateur riders to the Committee and USHJA. As a current member of the Zone 8 Committee, I've worked to provide information to Zone 8 riders through Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), and will continue to do so if I'm elected or appointed to the Committee.

What is your favorite thing about the sport?

I really enjoy my horses. I kept them at home when I lived in Virginia, and still do all my own grooming at home and at shows. They're amazing creatures!

USHJA Zone Nominee Biography Form

Name: Rachel Loftin

City & State: Paradise Valley, AZ

USHJA Number: HJ204509

Zone: 8

Professional/Amateur Status: ☐ Professional ☒ Amateur

Primary Designation (select one): ☐ Hunter ☒ Jumper

How are you currently involved in the sport? Please list your equestrian experience.

I currently show bi monthly in the med and high amateur jumpers as well as have a daughter in the rated ponies. I have been a USHJA member since 1990

Do you have prior governance experience on a Board, committee, or task force? If so, please list.

I have sat on many charity boards including the American Heart Association, PANDA, public school boards for the Scottsdale School District and rebuild task forces for Scottsdale public schools.

Do you have non-equestrian business experience? If so, please list.

My husband and I have a generator business and I also run my families trust and manage commercial real estate business.

What is the biggest challenge the sport is facing in your opinion?

I believe one of the biggest challenges we face he is losing the horsemanship side of our sport. With boutique training facilities and big circuit shows we are losing the Pony club knowledge that I grew up with.

How do you hope to contribute on the Zone Committee?

I hope to promote our zone and try to bring back top shows to our zone.

What is your favorite thing about the sport?

I love the lifelong friendships that we make with both our horses and our peers.

USHJA Zone Nominee Biography Form

Kristina Matthews
Parker, CO
HJ244897

Zone 8

Amateur

Jumper

1. How are you currently involved in the Sport? Please list your equestrian experience.

Adult Horse of the Year title for the past three years. Additionally, winning the Colorado Hunter Jumper Association's Adult Jumper of the Year award for nine consecutive years has been a true honor. But beyond the awards and accolades, what really fuels my passion is the constant desire to learn and grow. I'm thrilled to still be showing and caring for my three amazing horses here in beautiful Colorado. Every day with them is a new adventure, and I couldn't be more excited for what the future holds.

2. Do you have Prior governance experience on a Board, committee, or task force? If so, please list.
Served on the Colorado Hunter Jumper Association's Board of Directors from 2012-2017 as the Banquet Chair.

3. Do you have non-equestrian business experience? If so, please list.

I am a broker/realtor in Colorado and have owned and managed an equestrian lifestyle boutique. I have a master's degree in forensic psychology from the University of Denver.

4. What is the biggest challenge the sport is facing in your opinion.

In my opinion one of the significant challenges in equestrian sport is maintaining fairness and integrity. This includes ensuring that competitions are conducted under standardized rules and regulations that are consistently enforced across different events and regions. Another challenge is the rising costs associated with participating in equestrian competitions, including entry fees, travel expenses, and the expense of maintaining and caring for horses at a competitive level. This can create barriers to entry for aspiring riders and limit the diversity of participants in the sport. Additionally, there are ongoing discussions and efforts within the equestrian community to address issues such as doping and medication control, fair competition, and the ethical treatment of horses both during training and competition. Striking a balance between competitive goals and the health and happiness of the horses remains a significant challenge in the equestrian world.

5. How do you hope to contribute to the Zone Committee?

I am excited about the opportunity to leverage my experience and passion to contribute to the success of Zone 8. If selected for the board of directors, I envision working collaboratively with fellow board members, volunteers, staff to advance the organization's goals and objectives. Specifically, I am keen to explore initiatives that promote educational opportunities, enhance competition standards, and foster a culture of inclusivity and diversity within the equestrian community. By leveraging my experience, insights, and network within the sport, I am confident that I can make a meaningful and positive impact on the organization.

6. What is your favorite thing about the sport?

I appreciate the sense of community and camaraderie within the equestrian world. Regardless of age, background, or skill level, there's a shared love for horses and the sport that unites riders from all walks of life. From cheering each other on at competitions to offering support and encouragement during times of challenge, the equestrian community is like a family, bonded by a common passion.

UNITED STATES
HUNTER JUMPER ASSOCIATION



2023 Committee
Attendance:
67.1

USHJA Zone Nominee Biography Form

Name: Jill Rezel
City & State: Fort Lupton, CO
USHJA Number: HJ157559
Zone: 8
Professional/Amateur Status: ☒ Professional ☐ Amateur
Primary Designation (select one): ☐ Hunter ☒ Jumper

How are you currently involved in the sport? Please list your equestrian experience.

I currently run a large training barn. We do the hunters, jumpers, and equitation.

Do you have prior governance experience on a Board, committee, or task force? If so, please list.

I currently serve on the USHJA Zone 8 committee, the Affiliate Committee, and am the President of the Colorado Hunter Jumper Association.

Do you have non-equestrian business experience? If so, please list.

I have a business degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder and worked as a Human Resource Manager.

What is the biggest challenge the sport is facing in your opinion?

I feel like the biggest challenges in our industry are accessibility to all levels of riding and horse welfare.

How do you hope to contribute on the Zone Committee?

I enjoy being able to be involved in all aspects of our zone committee decisions.

What is your favorite thing about the sport?

The horses!

USHJA Zone Nominee Biography Form

Julie Garella-Williams
Scottsdale, AZ
HJ100035

Zone 8
Amateur
Jumper

1. How are you currently involved in the Sport? Please list your equestrian experience.

I currently own an Adult Jumper and compete in the .90-1.0 meter and Adult Equitation classes. I have been a lifelong equestrian, getting hooked on the sport at 8 years old when I was sent to summer camp. Since then, I have participated in the sport in the following ways: As a junior I rode and showed on the New England circuit in the Equitation, Jr. Hunter and Jr. Jumper divisions. Prior to attending college, I groomed for a top hunter jumper trainer who also had a spot on the USET with his jumpers (Bernie Traurig). During college I taught in the public lesson program held at my college's riding stables (Smith College), coached and IHSA team for 3 years (Becker Jr. College), and ran summer riding programs (Camp McCready and Camp Glen Arden) before settling on a career in the investment banking business. As an Amateur during the 1990's and early 2000s I showed on the "A" circuit throughout Carolina's, Georgia and Florida competing primarily in the hunters through the 1980s and 1990s before taking a break due time constraints with my career. In 2010 I retired from my banking career and wanted to find a path back to the horses. I had always had an interest in horse care and began to acquire some business interests in products that were noninvasive, non-prescriptive had had proven efficacy. I formed MacKinnon products and through that entity now own the brands Ice Horse, Hoof Wraps Brand and SteriHoof. We sell direct to the consumer, through tack shops and to veterinarians throughout the United States and around the world. The well-being of horses is a true passion of mine and as a project during COVID I started a series of free, non-promotional webinars called For The Love Of The Horse focused on horse health. I reached out to others in the horse community and asked if they would help promote the webinars and the result was quite stunning. Top veterinarians, clinicians and researchers donated their time for these events. Several well know brands with a stake in the health horse space and several media outlets partnered with us to promote the webinars. The content was objective and non-promotional. I produced 15 episodes and had over 16,000 horse owners and care givers sign up to watch and learn with us with 80% of the attendees signed up for more than one event. I keep the site live with webinars available free of charge as a resource to horse owners and caregivers. Please visit www.lovethehorse.com to see the content. In late 2023 I joined the board of the Arizona Hunter Jumper Association and am currently serving as Vice President.

2. Do you have Prior governance experience on a Board, committee, or task force? If so, please list.

Board or Committee roles Specific to Hunter/Jumper Community:

Current: Vice President Arizona Hunter Jumper Association

Past Board Member:

Giants Steps Therapeutic Riding Center, Sonoma California Giant Steps Charity Horse Show- Finance Chair, Menlo Park Horse Show Blowing Rock Horse Show

Non-Equine Non-Profit Board Roles:

Current: Board Member Desert Botanical Garden, Serving on the Development and Education Committees
Selected Past Board Member positions: Trustee and Finance Chair for the Williston Northampton School, Women Presidents Organization, Women's Leadership Board/Harvard Kennedy School

3. Do you have non-equestrian business experience? If so, please list.

Request CV from liaison if desired.

4. What is the biggest challenge the sport is facing in your opinion.

Broadly, I see that our sport has several challenges and from where I sit, they appear intertwined: Cost of the sport and the loss of the riding schools and lower-level riding programs which has occurred for a multitude of reasons are certainly high on the list. Some challenges can be overcome, others are simply the

evolution of a sport in an everchanging world. Strategically, I believe the biggest challenge we face is encouraging the next generation horseman to participate in our sport. USHJA has put a solid foundation in place with the Outreach Program, Education initiatives and encouraging horsemanship as cornerstone. Now the task is to amplify the message and demonstrate results which will excite members, potential members, horse show managers and constituents to get involved and broaden the community, at all levels to rally behind our sport. Tactically, I believe USHJA has done a commendable job of organizing a pathway and providing tools for the next level of growth hunter jumper community. It's going to take "boots on the ground" to get us there which is why I am interested in furthering my commitment to this organization.

5. How do you hope to contribute to the Zone Committee?

I have had considerable experience with governance and decision-making roles for nonprofit organizations, understand the dynamics involved and believe my experience can help strengthen our zone's practices. Beyond governance I am seeking a role on the Zone Committee to help our zone motivate our membership base and encourage members to take more active roles in making the competitions, educational activities, and opportunities available through USHJA more frequent and accessible.

6. What is your favorite thing about the sport?

For me, it's all about the horse. There is a never-ending learning cycle between the horse and rider, the more one learns the more you realize how much more there is to learn! Our sport is one that you can participate in at all ages and all levels (which I have) with the goal of "personal best" and never run out of ways to develop you horse and grow your knowledge.