

Say Yes to Y.E.S.

By: Maddox Murphy

This past week I attended The Youth Excellence Seminar, or Y.E.S, in Amarillo, Texas. Y.E.S. is a leadership seminar sponsored by the American Quarter Horse Association. I attended for my third time along with my brother Brock Murphy, and another Missouri member, Grayson Glennon. We did not have as many Missouri kids as usual, so I encourage everyone to come next year! Obviously, since this was my third year attending, I love attending the Youth Excellence Seminar and I plan to keep going until I am out of youth.



To kick off the convention, on Tuesday night, we had a welcome reception where we ate pizza and were introduced to our speaker for the week. Our speaker's name was Sheila Glazov, and she taught us about our brain colors. It sounds odd, doesn't it? I'll explain more later. Then, we went back to our hotel, where we all had an opportunity to talk and to interact with each other.

Wednesday morning was day 2. We had to wear cool shirts that we received the first day that are specially made for the convention! After we were dressed and ready, we went downstairs to eat breakfast, and then it was time to get on the bus to go! We headed to the Amarillo Civic Center for director campaigning. All of the kids from around the country that want to run for a director position get to set up a poster board and give something to everyone who comes by. If you are not running, then you get to walk around the room and talk to the candidates. It is always fun!

Next, it was time for retiring officers to give their end of year speeches. These always make me sad, but they are always fun to watch. We then split up into groups where we did an activity. When we got into our big groups, they split us up into even smaller groups. They then gave us newspaper and tape and we had to build a horse that was tall enough that a bag of candy

could stand under it and strong enough to hold the candy on top of it! This was very hard because we couldn't talk to our team members while we were building! After the time was up they narrowed the winners down for our group, then later we picked the overall winners. This was a great team building exercise.

Next, we went back to the big room and our speaker came. She talked to us about what color our brain was. Now, learning about your brain colors sounds kind of funny. But it is actually very interesting! She told us that there are four brain colors: Blue, Yellow, Green, and Orange. If you are blue, you are compatible. If you are yellow, you are organized. If you are green you are competent. And, if you are orange, you are fun! She had us ask ourselves some questions and then pick which color we think we are. It ended up that most of us kids said that we were orange or blue. If you would like to figure out your brain color, you can take a quiz on Sheila's website! (sheilaglazov.com)

After Sheila talked to us, we split up into our regions to hear the director candidate's speeches. After they were done, the voting delegates from each state would go vote. Since Missouri only had 3 kids come, we all got to vote. Also during that time, we had a regional meeting where we talked about what we wanted to do this year. After the campaigning, we went to lunch. We had burritos! During lunch, we also got to video chat with the Region 11 Youth Members from Luxembourg who were running for directors. They gave their speeches for us, and I thought that they both did great and I thought it was amazing how although they couldn't come this year because they are still in school, we could use technology to talk to them!

After lunch, our speaker talked to us and explained brain colors to us more! We then had some of the youth members and their parents come talk to us about community service. It was really amazing to see how much people in our association have done to help others! After this, we got to go tour the AQHA Headquarters. This was something that I had not done before that I thought was very cool! After that, we went to the Hall of Fame and we had a scavenger hunt. After that, we got to go back to the hotel to get ready for the dance that night. Once we were ready, we loaded the buses

and went. We had burgers and then as soon as the DJ started, everyone was on the dance floor! Everyone danced for hours, and we all had a blast! Then we came back to the hotel and that was the end of day two.

The next morning, we got ready for day three, the final day of Y.E.S. We loaded the buses for the Civic Center. We started with officer campaigning. All of the officers were lined up and were talking to all of the people that would we voting for them! Then, all of the officers were nominated and it was time for speeches. The president of Missouri's Youth Association, Brock Murphy, gave his speech along with all of the other candidates. Once everyone was done giving their speeches, it was time to vote. We split up and started voting.

After we were done, we had our breakout sessions. This was when each group got to listen to one of our four speakers. We did two sets of speakers, and then we had a lunch break. We had a good lunch of sandwiches! During lunch, the AQHYA directors and officers that had gone to Washington, D.C. to attend the American Horse Council meetings talked to us about their trip. It sounded like they had a blast! After lunch, we went back to finish listening to our speakers. They all did very well, and I enjoyed listening to them and to their ideas about our association.

After the speakers, we went to shop at Cavender's. Everyone had fun shopping together. When we were done shopping we went back to the hotel to get ready for the Awards Dinner. Once we got there, they served us an AMAZING dinner! We had steak, baked potatoes, salad, and cupcakes all cooked for us by AQHA's staff. It was all so good! First, they announced the Aspire Award, awarded to the member who shows leadership and community interest and participation. This award was given to Ashley Anderson, who received a \$1,000 scholarship provided by Wrangler. They also gave awards to the retiring directors.

Then, they announced the new 2015-2016 director team! It was so exciting to see all of the new people, and I am very happy for all of them. After that, 2014-2015 President Kalee McCann, gave her retirement address. Kalee did an amazing job as the president. Each member of the retiring officer team received awards. They all did such a great job! Then it was the

time that we had all been waiting for! They were about to announce the new officer team for 2015-2016! The new team includes: Maddie Herlocker, Member, Iowa; Madison Thiel, Member, Ohio; McKenzie Merritt, 2nd Vice President, Nebraska; Brock Murphy 1st Vice President, Missouri; and Ann Elizabeth Tebow, President, Oklahoma. Congrats to the new officer and director team! I'm so excited to see what all of you do this upcoming year!

I had such an amazing time at the 2015 Y.E.S. convention. I hope to see even more people next year, because if you haven't come, then you have been missing out. Next year, I would encourage everyone to just "say yes to Y.E.S.!"

2015-2016 AQHYA Officer and Director Team

2015-2016 AQHYA Officer Team



Grayson Glennon, Calyn Halvorson, Maddox Murphy, Sawyer Seago, Meg Tebow, Ty Cornelius and Brock Murphy

Maddox Murphy, Meg Tebow, and Grayson Glennon

