



National Youth Cutting Horse Association

NYCHA Youth Convention Out-of-Arena Contest

Information & Rules

\$6,000 in scholarships to be awarded

Public Speaking – Essay – Art – Photography

2025 NYCHA Convention Theme - *Catching Fire*

What sparked your passion for the sport and how did Cutting “catch fire” in you?

The out-of-arena contests are open to **all NYCHA youth members** in good standing with an active membership. With the exception of the Public Speaking Contest, you do not have to attend the 2025 Great American Insurance Group Summer Cutting Spectacular or the Youth Convention to participate in the out-of-arena contests. Scholarships will be awarded in both Junior and Senior divisions in all contests.

The NYCHA out-of-area contests allow you to develop and sharpen your skills and showcase your talents outside of the show pen. Your participation, both in and out of the show pen, furthers the mission of the National Youth Cutting Horse Association.

Age Divisions:

Senior (14-18) as of June 1, 2024

Junior (13 and under) as of June 1, 2024

Contests Prompt:

In the sport of Cutting, the horse and rider move as one—quick-thinking, sharp, and relentless. The second a cow is separated from the herd, instincts take over in a showcase of precision, partnership, and grit. But beyond the arena, Cutting is more than a sport—it’s a fire that fuels passion, perseverance, and transformation.

These contests invite you to express how Cutting has “caught fire” in you. Was it the thrill of your first clean cut? Was it the moment you and your horse became one? Is it the way that the sport has helped shape your discipline, confidence, or identity?



NYCHA Essay Contest

First Place Junior Champion- \$500

First Place Senior Champion- \$500

Topic: Catching Fire

Reflect on how the sport of Cutting has caught fire in you and shaped your journey, both in and out of the arena. Has it taught you resilience, patience, or the drive to keep pushing forward? What defining moments fanned the flames creating purpose out of passion? Share how your fire for the sport turns discipline into instinct, obstacles into fuel, and the sport into a way of life.

Guidelines

1. Eligibility
 - a. The NYCHA Essay Contest is open to youth members in good standing with the National Cutting Horse Association.
 - b. Previous winners are eligible to enter the contest in subsequent year(s).
2. Entry Application
 - a. There is no entry fee for the NYCHA Essay scholarship contest.
 - b. All entries must be postmarked/submitted to the address below no later than midnight (CST) on June 30, 2025.
 - i. NYCHA Youth Director, Rianna Storey, 260 Bailey Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107
 - ii. You are permitted to email your essay to rstorey@nchacutting.
 - c. Each essay entry must be submitted as a Word Document.
 - i. Please use 12-point Arial or Times New Roman font.
 - ii. Document can be double spaced.
 - d. Please include the following in your heading at the top of the first page:
 - i. Name of the Youth member
 - ii. NYCHA Member Number
 - iii. Age and date of birth.
 - iv. Phone Number
3. Contest Format

Name 1234567 16, 1/22/2007 1 (234) 567-8900
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- a. **Essays must be the original work of the student.** Plagiarism or use of AI assistance (yes, we can tell it was used) will not be tolerated and is cause for automatic disqualification.
 - b. Essays will be scored in the following areas:
 - i. Writing Style: Well-organized and focused, begins and ends effectively, no grammatical errors, use of appropriate vocabulary and tone.
 - ii. Originality: Demonstrates creativity or originality, strongly shows the writer's attitude or point of view in a meaningful and original way.
 - c. The NYCHA Essay Scholarship contest will be evaluated by a qualified judge with no NCHA affiliation.
 - d. The National Youth Cutting Horse Association, and their partners, reserves the right to reprint submitted essays and release the winning essays to media for publication.
4. Notification of Contest Winner
 - a. A list of contest winners will be posted to the NYCHA social media accounts once judges scoring is final. Winners will be recognized at the NYCHA Banquet.
 5. Awarded Scholarships
 - a. Scholarships will be held under the students' name with the NCHA Foundation until the student is ready to utilize their available scholarship funds. All scholarship payment requests must be made via the on-line portal, located under the "Scholarship" tab of the NCHA Foundation web page. All scholarship payouts will be made directly to the educational institution of choice.
 - b. Students have until their 25th birthday to utilize scholarship funds.
 - c. For questions or assistance accessing scholarship funds, contact – scholarships@nchafoundation.org

NYCHA Photo Contest

First Place Junior Champion - \$500
First Place Senior Champion - \$500

Topic: Catching Fire

Capture the "fire" of Cutting in motion. Whether it's the sharp intensity of a turn, the unwavering focus of a horse, or the unspoken connection between rider and mount; let your image tell a story of skill, determination, and raw power. How does your photograph bring to life the energy, grit, and heart that define sport?

Guideline

1. Eligibility



- a. The NYCHA Photo Contest is open to youth members in good standing with the National Cutting Horse Association.
 - b. Previous winners are eligible to enter the contest in subsequent year(s).
2. Entry Application
 - a. There is no entry fee for the NYCHA Photo scholarship contest.
 - b. Contestants MUST submit a hard copy of their photo via mail. Photo entries must be postmarked by June 30, 2025, to the following address:
 - i. NYCHA Youth Director, Rianna Storey, 260 Bailey Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107
 - ii. When mailing your artwork, please package it correctly to prevent any damage.
 - c. One photo submission per NYCHA youth member.
 - d. Your photo will not be returned.
3. Contest Format
 - a. Photographs submitted must have been taken within the last year.
 - b. All submissions must be printed as an 8" x 10" at minimum.
 - c. Photos will be judged on composition, exposure, and originality.
 - d. Photos may be in color or black & white.
 - e. Please do not frame/mount photos.
 - f. Place the photo in a sheet protector for mailing.
 - g. On a separate sheet of paper, please include the following:

Name
1234567
16, 1/22/2007
Location
Photo Title
 - h. By submitting an image, the National Youth Cutting Horse Association, and their partners, reserves the right to reprint and release the winning photos to media for publication.
 - i. The winning photographer will be credited and recognized in the media or promotional materials where their image may appear.
 - j. The NYCHA Photo Scholarship contest will be evaluated by a qualified judge with no NYCHA affiliation.
4. Notification of Contest Winners
 - a. A list of contest winners will be posted to the NYCHA social media accounts once judges scoring is final. Winners will be recognized at the NYCHA Banquet.
5. Awarded Scholarships
 - a. Scholarships will be held under the students' name with the NYCHA Foundation until the student is ready to utilize their available scholarship funds. All scholarship payment requests must be made via the on-line portal, located under the "Scholarship" tab of the NYCHA Foundation web page. All scholarship payouts will



- be made directly to the educational institution of choice.
- Students have until their 25th birthday to utilize scholarship funds.
 - For questions or assistance accessing scholarship funds, contact – scholarships@nchafoundation.org

NYCHA Artwork Contest

First Place Junior Champion- \$500

First Place Senior Champion - \$500

Topic: Catching Fire

Capture the intensity, movement, and heart of Cutting through your medium of choice. How does the fire of competition, connection, or personal growth show in the horse, the rider, or the action?

Guidelines

- Eligibility
 - The NYCHA Art Contest is open to youth members in good standing with the National Cutting Horse Association.
 - Previous winners are eligible to enter the contest in subsequent year(s).
- Entry Application
 - There is no entry fee for the NYCHA Scholarship Art contest.
 - One artwork submission per NCHA youth member.
 - Artwork will not be returned.
 - Artwork must be the NCHA Youth members own work and have been drawn, painted, sculpted or otherwise created within the last year.
 - When submitting your artwork, please include a sheet of paper with the following:
 - NCHA Youth Members Name
 - NCHA Membership Number
 - Age and date of birth
 - Title of your art piece
 - The winning artists will be credited and recognized in the media or promotional materials where their artwork may appear.
 - Artwork will be judged on creativity and originality.
 - The NYCHA Artwork Scholarship contest will be evaluated by a qualified judge with no NCHA affiliation.

Name
1234567
16, 1/22/2007
Artwork Title



- h. By entering the contest, you agree to grant the National Cutting Horse Association, and its partners, the use, reproduction, and ownership of the artwork submitted to the National Cutting Horse Association.
- 3. Notification of Contest Winner
 - a. A list of contest winners will be posted to the NYCHA social media accounts once judges scoring is final. Winners will be recognized at the NYCHA Banquet.
- 4. Awarded Scholarships
 - a. Scholarships will be held under the students' name with the NCHA Foundation until the student is ready to utilize their available scholarship funds. All scholarship payment requests must be made via the on-line portal, located under the "Scholarship" tab of the NCHA Foundation web page. All scholarship payouts will be made directly to the educational institution of choice.
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 - c. For questions or assistance accessing scholarship funds, contact – scholarships@nchafoundation.org

NYCHA Speech Contest

Public Speaking Contest – Scholarship Payout

1st Place Senior Champion - \$800.00

2nd Place Senior Reserve Champion - \$500.00

3rd Place Senior Division - \$200.00

1st Place Junior Champion - \$800.00

2nd Place Junior Reserve Champion - \$500.00

3rd Place Junior Division - \$200.00

Speech Topic: Catching Fire

Cutting becomes a fire that fuels your passion, pushing you to challenge yourself and drive change in the sport. As a youth member, you are the future of the sport. Use your speech to describe how Cutting has caught fire in you, sparking your desire to leave a lasting impact. Share how you will help grow and uphold the values of the sport, and how you can inspire others with the same drive that ignited your journey.

Guidelines

1. Eligibility

- a. The Public Speaking Contest is open to NYCHA members 18 years of age and under.
 - i. Junior Division: participants must be 13 years of age or under as of June 1, 2024.
 - ii. Senior Division: participants must be 14 to 18 years of age as of June 1, 2024.
- b. The NYCHA Art Contest is open to youth members in good standing with the National Cutting Horse Association.



- c. Previous winners are eligible to enter the contest in subsequent year(s).
2. Entry Application
 - a. The entry application for the Public Speaking Contest is available online at www.nycha.us.
 - b. Entries are due by midnight on June 30, 2025.
 - c. Please include your name, NYCHA member number, age, date of birth, and phone number on the top right-hand corner of your speech.
 - d. In addition to your online entry form, a copy of your speech must be submitted to NYCHA Foundation Executive Director, Julia Buswold, by midnight on June 30, 2025. Please email a copy of your speech to jbuswold@nychacutting.com.
 - e. **No late entries or speeches will be accepted.**
3. Contest Format
 - a. The Public Speaking Contest will be conducted in person.
 - b. Speeches will be evaluated and scored by a panel of judges.
 - i. There will be a brief question and answer session with the judges following your speech.
 - c. Contestants will be judged on the following:
 - i. **Time** - Ability to deliver their speech within the allotted time (2 ½ - 3 minutes). Time penalties will be assessed in the form of one point deducted for every 10 seconds over, or under, the time allowed.
 - ii. **Content** - Does your speech follow and answer the prompt?
 - iii. **Audibility** - Is the voice expressive? Was the speaker natural, conversational, and sincere? Did the speech flow smoothly with no unnecessary pauses?
 - iv. **Presentation** - Ability to maintain composure and deliver your speech to the judges. Were the speaker's main talking points easy to follow? Do they have good eye contact? Are gestures natural and do they contribute to the talk? Did the speaker use correct grammar and vocabulary? Overall quality of presentation and answers.
 - d. Contestants will be placed in a randomly drawn speaking order, within their age group, and will be evaluated and ranked by the judges.
 - e. Only the contestant, judges, and timekeeper will be allowed in the contest room.
 - f. A brief question-and-answer period will follow each speech.
 - g. The question-and-answer portion is not included in the time allowed for the speech.
4. Notification of Contest Winner
 - a. A list of contest winners will be posted to the NYCHA social media accounts once judges scoring is final. Winners will be recognized at the NYCHA Banquet.
5. Dress Attire
 - a. Contestants should wear presentable clothing. Business attire or Official NYCHA attire is recommended. Example – clean jeans or slacks, button down or blouse, groomed hair.
6. Presentation Time
 - a. Each speech shall be a minimum of two and a half (2 ½) minutes in length and a maximum of three (3) minutes. Time point deductions will apply as follows:
 - b. Under two and a half minutes - one point per ten seconds
 - c. Over three minutes - one point per ten seconds
7. Props



- a. The use of pets, signs, electronics, objects, or props of any kind are prohibited. Any violation of this rule will result in contestant disqualification.
8. Speech Topic
 - a. Each contestant will enter a single speech. The contestant's speech must clearly address the given topic and make it clear to the judges.
9. Tie Break
 - a. In the event of a tie, the judges will meet to review their notes and decide on a clear order of place. The ruling of the judges is final.
10. Awarded Scholarships
 - a. Scholarships will be held under the students' name with the NCHA Foundation until the student is ready to utilize their available scholarship funds. All scholarship payment requests must be made via the on-line portal, located under the "Scholarship" tab of the NCHA Foundation web page. All scholarship payouts will be made directly to the educational institution of choice.
 - b. Students have until their 25th birthday to utilize scholarship funds.
 - c. For questions or assistance accessing scholarship funds, contact – scholarships@nchafoundation.org

****All entries are the property of NYCHA and will not be returned. All entries may be used for media/promotional purposes.

****All contestants not meeting the above guidelines will be disqualified.

****NYCHA is not responsible for damage to photos or artwork during shipping. Please package accordingly to ensure the safe arrival of your entry. Should an entry arrive damaged, the contestant will be notified.

All photos, artwork, and accompanying cover sheets must be postmarked by June 30, 2025, and mailed to:

National Youth Cutting Horse Association
Attn: Rianna Storey, NCHA Youth Director
Contest: NYCHA Out of the Arena Scholarships
260 Bailey Avenue,
Fort Worth, TX 76107