



Dear Principal/School Athletic Director:

I am writing on behalf of students enrolled in the American Endurance Ride Conference's (AERC) **Young Rider Team Challenge** to request your consideration to allow an excused absence on the date or dates students at your school may need to miss in order to compete at AERC-sanctioned competitions.

The American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) was founded in 1972 as a national governing body for long-distance riding, and works to ensure that AERC-sanctioned events are conducted in a safe, fair and consistent manner. AERC actively promotes and conducts educational efforts and research projects that will foster a high level of safety and enjoyment for all horses and riders.

The **Young Riders Team Challenge** involves teams of up to five students ages 14-21, these students can be from different schools and even different states in their AERC region, whose combined points at the end of each season (November 30) qualify them for various incentives and awards.

AERC's mission is to ensure the safe use of horses while demonstrating their endurance abilities on marked trails in a natural setting, with strict veterinary controls. Only those horses deemed "fit to continue" receive AERC completions, so participation also develops these young riders' judgment and horsemanship.

AERC maintain horse and ride records of event competition and completions, with the records of Young Rider Team Challenge participants easily accessed at www.aerc.org. The AERC website also provides the most recently updated rules and guidelines designed to provide a standardized format and strict veterinary controls.

Furthermore, Young Riders belonging to AERC are eligible to apply for the **Anne Ayala College Scholarship**, detailed under the Junior/Young Rider Awards program at <https://aerc.org/static/JuniorAwards.aspx>

If you have any questions about this program, or need more information, please contact AERC Junior and Young Riders Committee Chair Steph Teeter at 208-473-4877, steph@endurance.net, AERC Young Rider Team Challenge Coordinator Kelly Kimbler at 605-380-6721, kellykimbler@ymail.com or AERC Membership Committee Chair Mary Howell at 804-432-0236, countshiloh@gmail.com.

Thank you in advance for supporting participation in our **Young Riders Team Challenge** that offers numerous benefits to these AERC Young Riders and your students.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Henkel, AERC Executive Director
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