

# 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTOR CANDIDATES BIOGRAPHIES



**Candida Covino Aversenti**  
Hellertown, PA

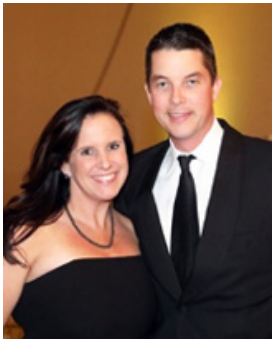
Candida Covino Aversenti began showing American Saddlebreds in 1963 in equitation, then later in the three- and five-gaited divisions. Ms. Aversenti's involvement with the breed has been a family endeavor with her parents, husband and children, and now as a grandmother to her granddaughter. She is a member of USEF, UPHA, AHHS, ARHPA, KASPFA, and worked on the National Horse Show Committee and is the trustee of the American Saddlebred Museum. Candida

has been serving on the following committees, Convention Planning, Development, Marketing Committee, Strategic Plan, Nominating Committee for Officers, Finance, and Human Resources and Compensation.

She attended Endicott College, Boston College, and the Paralegal Institute of New York City. Candida is the CEO and Chairman of the Board for General Magnaplate Corporation. Before this position, she was the assistant to director of Labor Relations at Standard Brands and the Director of Marketing For General Mangaplate Corporation. She has an extensive background in the corporate world.

Her vision for the ASHA is getting more and more people interested in the American Saddlebred, specifically by reducing the costs of entry. She would like to find ways to get the public to watch American Saddlebred shows, therefore opening our pool and exposure to bring more people into the American Saddlebred business. She also hopes to promote the Select Series shows around the country, as well as novice horse shows, such as the Rock Creek Novice Horse Show.

**Kristen Cater**  
Dunbarton, NH



Kristen, and her husband David, have developed Cater Stables into one of the largest training and lesson facilities in the Northeast. She has served as Chairman of UPHA Chapter 14, was on the Executive Committee of the 2011 UPHA National Convention in Boston and was on the Executive Committee of the Super Convention held in 2016. Kristen has been a part of every major project done at UPHA Chapter 14 since she has been a member, including the Symphony of Champions productions. She has also served

on various other committees and projects, including the US Saddle Seat World Cup.

Most recently, Kristen has served one (4 year) term on the ASHA Board of Directors and has sat in one of two "seat at large" chairs on the ASHA Executive Committee. If re-elected to the ASHA Board of Directors, Kristen hopes to continue to work on breed promotion to the outside world in all disciplines, and to help the inner workings of our industry become more cohesive.

Kristen currently serves on the following committees: Standard/Rules, Code of Ethics and Conduct Task Force, Convention Planning, Licensed Officials and Organization Task Forces, UPHA Equitation Committee, USEF Equitation Committee, USEF World Cup Committee, and UPHA Governance Committee.

**Nancy-Leigh Fisher**  
Oconomowoc, WI



Nancy-Leigh has been involved with Saddlebreds for more than 60 years in numerous capacities. She has been an exhibitor, sponsored classes, worked as a volunteer, spent time on countless committees and supported special events. She has competed in horse shows since childhood and now enjoys watching her daughter and granddaughter do the same.

In addition to showing, Nancy-Leigh has bred

American Saddlebreds for many years, is still raising foals and she stands a stallion as well.

Her specific areas of interest if elected to the Board of Directors would be extending the marketing programs to ensure breeding for the future supply of quality horses. Because the future of our breed is most important,

Nancy-Leigh would also work diligently to grow the breed by encouraging maximum youth participation in diverse programs and projects.

**Priscilla Marconi**  
San Juan Capistrano, CA



Priscilla hails originally from the Pacific Northwest and now lives in Southern California. Most of her adult life has been spent in the world of equestrian sports. She is a multi-titled world champion in the American Saddlebred arena and enjoys competing under her amateur status. Not only does she compete, but she is deeply involved in purchasing young stock, having them trained, showing, and then selling them.

As a former board member and Chair of both Covenant House California and Covenant House International, along with the advisory councils for Childhelp and Children's Hospital of Orange County's Pediatric Mental Health program, she has been able to work closely with at-risk children. Her passion is strong for serving under privileged kids and strives to do whatever she can to influence those in her community to help the plight of these youth.

Priscilla is the CEO of the Marconi Automotive Museum & Foundation for Kids and enjoys her involvement in the exciting and creative events that the Foundation produces. Throughout the year, she brings great energy to her team. She is the driving force that keeps the staff mission focused and infuses them with her passion, ideas and excitement.

It is her goal to live life with intention. She strives to be part of the solution in whatever endeavors she is involved with, be it homeless causes or the health and welfare of the American Saddlebred community.

**Helena Moreno**  
New Orleans, LA



Helena Moreno is an elected city leader in New Orleans and a former award winning journalist.

Helena began her career in New Orleans as an investigative reporter for NBC affiliate, WDSU-TV. She was part of a team awarded an Emmy for outstanding coverage during Hurricane Katrina. Too often, however, her reports turned up problems in the political system. In 2008, she decided to not just report, but do something about it. Setting aside her

promising broadcast career, she entered public service.

In May of 2010, she was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives. Her work to fight domestic violence in Louisiana is featured in the award winning documentary film called Five Awake. Helena has also been recognized for her work on corrections reform, public safety, drug policy, health care, early childhood education and care for the elderly. In 2017, she overwhelmingly won the vote for a seat on the New Orleans City Council and is currently serving as an at-large member.

Helena was introduced to the American Saddlebred as a child in Houston at Roby Stables where she learned to ride and showed under the direction of trainer Sue Roby. Currently, she is an active owner, breeder, exhibitor and vocal advocate for the breed.

If elected to the ASHA Board, Helena will use her experience in media, communications and messaging to help further promote the American Saddlebred. She also hopes to use her policy and governmental relations knowledge to bring together key stakeholders to support ASHA. Fundraising and effective budgeting will also be a priority for Helena. She has served on both State and City committees overseeing large budgets and has vast experience fundraising for various causes, non-profits and campaigns.

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**James L. Nichols**  
Metairie, LA

James Nichols has been involved with American Saddlebreds for over 40 years as a trainer, owner, breeder and exhibitor. He started working in the business in the early 1970's with several trainers and learning the horse industry. Shortly after, he started his own training facility and continued training horses for numerous clients over the years.

James became a licensed judge in the early 1980's. He actively judges around the country at many of the major recognized horse shows.

James has been a lifetime member of the ASHA for over 35 years. He served on the UPHA Executive Board for 14 years, as well as served as President. He is currently President of the American Road Horse and Pony Association, on the USEF National Breeds and Disciplines Council, ASHA Rules Committee and USEF Roadster Committee. James has been recognized with many awards over his lifetime, including being inducted into the UPHA Hall of Fame and in 2018 was awarded the ASHA C.J. Cronan Sportsmanship Award.

If elected to the Board, James would utilize his expertise and experience in the industry and on boards to promote our breed. James's vision for the ASHA is to increase membership, registrations, breeding and awareness to secure longevity of the American Saddlebred.



**Clif Paulsen**  
Cedar Falls, IA

Clif Paulsen has been riding and exhibiting American Saddlebreds for over 35 years. He currently serves as the Chair of the Iowa Limited Breeders Stake, the Vice President of the Iowa Futurity, and is a member of the Iowa Fall Classic Horse Show Committee. Clif is the owner of Cedar Valley Veterinary Center and earned his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Iowa State University.

Mr. Paulsen is wholly committed to the advancement of the breed, and believes that

ASHA is the public voice and promoter of the breed, but he also believes that the primary role of the ASHA is to assist its members so that they may promote the breeding and exposition of American Saddlebreds. Clif is a valuable member of any leadership team he is a part of and passionate about the American Saddlebred breed.



**Martin Schaffel**  
Tampa, FL

Martin Schaffel, President and CEO of Audio Visual Innovations, Inc., founded the company in 1979. He began his career in management with a national retailer and later joined a large office products distributor. He has since built a successful business in the sale of audiovisual products to the corporate, education, military and government markets nationwide. Martin has served on the Board of Directors for Berkley Prep, Performing Arts Center of

Tampa, Northstar Bank, Prepared Insurance, AVISPL, University of Florida Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and VOALTE, among others.

Martin has been involved in the American Saddlebred Industry as owner, breeder, and exhibitor since 2002 and has been providing business mentorship in the Saddlebred industry for the past ten years. Martin would contribute his wealth of experience in marketing, development, and management to the ASHA Board, and hopes to broaden the Saddlebred Market and maximize the quality of the experience for everyone involved in ASHA.

Martin currently serves on the following committees, Office Space Task Force, Code of Ethics and Conduct Task Force, Strategic Plan, Human Resources and Compensation, and Registry.



**Joan Todd**  
Cincinnati, OH

Joan's love for the American Saddlebred began very early, when she began to take riding lessons at age 7 with Jane Ginther at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, just a few years before Hartmeyer Stables was built outside Muncie, Indiana. Her older sisters had Quarter Horses and Morgans, but seeing the Hartmeyer family's gorgeous American Saddlebreds made an indelible impression on this horse-crazy little girl.

Joan successfully showed Morgans as a juvenile, but a ride on a friend's Saddlebred set her mind to owning one. As a college student, she acquired a green 2-year-old, and, at Jane Ginther's urging, called Marcella Lahr to help her train him, sealing her passion. That fueled deeper involvement in showing, including the burgeoning western and hunt divisions. Her handsome gray hunter mare, <sup>CH</sup>Emily Grey, is still remembered. Joan was invited to serve on the ASHA Pleasure Horse Committee and the new Hunter Pleasure Committee, which soon were combined. Joan was a member and heavily involved in the ASHA Charter Club Council Committee, and continues to serve on the Pleasure Horse Committee. Joan also has served on several horse show committees in Indiana and Ohio, and for many years was on the board of directors for the Indiana American Saddlebred Horse Association. She has shown successfully in several divisions with trainers, and as an AOT, all the while promoting the American Saddlebred to as many people as possible.

Her experience working on a Morgan breeding farm also sparked her desire to raise her own foals, a dream she fulfilled running her own breeding operation, Dream Acres, in Greenfield, IN. She understands the challenges of farm ownership, standing a stallion, the thrill of raising a successful foal, and the inevitable heartbreak that can come as well.

Professionally, Joan has had a long career in journalism, media relations, marketing and strategic communications. She ran a news bureau for United Press International, was editor of several successful magazines, and provided crisis management and media relations for a Fortune 100 company. She also led a large state university marketing and communications division. Now Joan runs her own strategic communications firm, devoting her professional experience to private clients from her new home base in Cincinnati.



American Saddlebred  
Horse Association  
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