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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**USTA District 8 Announces 2020 Award Winners Ahead of
NY Sire Stakes Virtual Banquet**

Schenectady, N.Y. – United States Trotting Association District 8 has announced the winners of its 2020 year-end awards. For the second year in a row, George Ducharme has been named Trainer of the Year; Pari-Mutuel Driver of the Year goes to Jason Bartlett; and Leon Bailey is the County Fair Driver of the Year.

Ducharme earned a combined \$382,482 in the New York Sire Stakes and Excelsior Series this year with 77 starts. His stable was led by 3-year-old trotting filly Without A Warning, who took home \$231,162, and 3-year-old trotting colt Berkery J, who earned \$90,530. Ducharme was also the leading money earner at his home track, Vernon Downs, with \$132,121 in purses and a 36.2 winning percentage. Overall, Ducharme's horses have banked \$1,298,188 this season and he sports a .403 UTR average.

Bartlett has \$1.44 million in combined New York Sire Stakes and Excelsior earnings this season and 53 victories on the circuit. He drove the winners of no less than 40% of the NYSS program finals—five County Fair Champions, three Excelsior Series Champions and two Sire Stakes Champions, including Hobbs (3-year-old trotting colt) and King James Express (2-year-old colt pacer). For the year, Bartlett has guided almost 300 winners to nearly \$4.7 million in earnings.

Bailey finished atop the New York County Fair earnings chart with \$66,456 in 91 starts. He drove 33 winners, including New York County Fair Champions Mr. Dunnigans (3-year-old pacing colt) and Miley Rose (2-year-old pacing filly), whom he also trained. In addition, Bailey also earned his first driving championship at his home track of Vernon Downs. This is his first USTA award.

Awards will be recognized during the joint NYSS and USTA District 8 virtual banquet taking place this Sunday (Nov. 8) on [Facebook Live](#). The evening will honor champion horses, trainers, drivers, owners and breeders of the NYSS, the Excelsior Series and the New York County Fair Series. USTA District 8 Awards for Horse of the Year will be announced live as part of the broadcast. Also honored that evening will be these USTA divisional champions:

Aela Jamieson – 2-Year-Old Trotting Filly

Owner: Andy Miller Stable Inc, Dumain Haven Farm, Little E LLC
Trainer: Julie Miller

Steel – 2-Year-Old Trotting Colt

Owner: Pinske Stables, Crawford Farms Racing
Trainer: Julie Miller

Albergita Hanover – 2-Year-Old Pacing Filly

Owner: Seth E Coen, George Derocker, Camelot Stable In, Decker's Corner Stable
Trainer: Linda Toscano

Sauvignon Bluechip – 2-Year-Old Pacing Colt

Owner: Robert Sholes, Edward Davis, David Dziengiel
Trainer: David Dziengiel

C And T's Credit – 3-Year-Old Trotting Filly

Owner: Peter Barbato, Samuel Bova
Trainer: John Stark Jr.

Chaptiama – 3-Year-Old Trotting Colt

Owner: Purple Haze Stables LLC
Trainer: Trond Smedshammer

Hen Party - 3-Year-Old Pacing Filly

Owner: Crawford Farms Racing
Trainer: Tony Alagna

Splash Brother – 3-Year-Old Pacing Colt

Owner: Ray Schnittker, Nolamaura Racing LLC, Steven Arnold, Tammy Ann Flannery
Trainer: Ray Schnittker

“On behalf of our board of directors, I’d like to congratulate this year’s winners,” said USTA District 8 Chairman Todd Haight. “These horses and horsemen are shining examples of the level of quality coming out of this area and each has represented this district well. We are proud to have this opportunity each year to honor their contributions to our sport, especially this year with all the challenges our sport has faced.”

Giveaways will also be presented to two lucky winners throughout the night during the [NY Sire Stakes Facebook live event](#). Tune in during the program to see how you can win. Awards will be mailed to all 2020 winners following the program. Questions about the banquet can be directed to Kelly Young at Kelly.Young@gaming.ny.gov.

About the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund:

The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund (the Fund) is a public benefit corporation established in 1965 by the Laverne Law (Laws of New York, Chapter 567 of the Laws of 1965). The mission of the fund is to promote agriculture through the breeding of Standardbred horses and the conduct of equine research within the state. To carry out its legislative mission, the Fund administers the New York Sire Stakes races, Excelsior/State Fair Series races, and County Fair Races.

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