

4-Hers Reign Over Miss Rodeo Canada Title

This is the third consecutive year that 4-H Alberta can proudly say that the current Miss Rodeo Canada is also a 4-H alumna. At the Canada Final Rodeo in November, past 4-H member and current 4-H leader Nicole Briggs was crowned Miss Rodeo Canada 2014.

Nicole is an ambitious 21-year old from Gibbons, Alberta who grew up barrel racing, roping and in 4-H and horse shows. She is currently pursuing a BSc in Animal Health at the University of Alberta, with hopes of obtaining a degree in Veterinary Medicine. She also is involved with the University of Alberta's Collegiate 4-H Club, is a Project Leader for the Gibbons Light Horse 4-H Club and works as a riding instructor in her spare time.

Nicole is the past and vice president of the Canadian Intercollegiate Rodeo Association and received the prestigious Cowgirl of the Year Award in 2013. In 2012, she was crowned Miss Rodeo Airdrie, which led her to compete in the Miss Rodeo Canada 2014 Pageant.

Here's some of the conversation that we had following her crowning at the CRF in Edmonton.

4-H Alberta Magazine: What made you want to compete in the Miss Rodeo Canada Pageant?

Nicole: I'm a person who likes to try new things and constantly challenge myself. As the 2008 National High School Rodeo Queen, I discovered how much I loved to compete and so I set my sights on the Miss Rodeo Canada title and began working towards it. I've looked up to the ladies who have worn the crown before me for as long as I can remember.

4-H Alberta Magazine: What does being Miss Rodeo Canada mean to you?

Nicole: After being involved with the program for a while, I realized that the role was about so much more than I originally had thought. There's a huge focus on promoting and educating people on the sport of rodeo, as well as the associated organizations such as 4-H and National High School Rodeo and the connection between rodeo and agriculture. Being Miss Rodeo Canada means that I get to play an active role in keeping our western heritage alive, while instilling a passion for the sport in the hearts of others.

4-H Alberta Magazine: How has 4-H helped you to reach your goal of becoming Miss Rodeo Canada?

Nicole: 4-H has played a big role in getting to the title of Miss Rodeo Canada, everything I learned in 4-H helped me to get where I am. For the Miss Rodeo Canada Pageant we were scored on a variety of things including our public speaking, interview and horsemanship skills, as well as our horsemanship knowledge. I started out as a nervous public speaker, but as the years went on I became more confident and keen, and even went on to the Provincial Presentations Competition in 2010.

And let's just say that in my time in 4-H, I pretty much did everything that you could as a Horse Project member and that really helped to develop my horsemanship skills. To this day, my key study piece for horsemanship knowledge is the Horse Reference Manual.

4-H Alberta Magazine: So what made you want to become a Horse Project leader?

Nicole: I wanted to help give members what 4-H gave to me. I really wanted to go back to my club and be an ambassador for all of the great things that 4-H has to offer them, so I made the transition from member to leader right away. And if there's one thing that I want my member to know about, it's the importance of the personal connections that you make through 4-H. I've discovered through recent travels as Miss Rodeo Canada that anywhere I go there is a 4-H connection, even though I may be far away from my 4-H club.

4-H Alberta Magazine: Well thank-you for taking the time to chat with us today. Again, congratulations on being crowned Miss Rodeo Canada.

Nicole: Thank you! I'm looking forward to the experience! ❁

