



## PIKES PEAK OR BUST RODEO

# *Girl of the West*

## HANDBOOK



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# A WORD FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

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Hello! I'm Corliss Palmer, Director of the Girl of the West program and Chairperson of the Girl of the West Committee. I'd like to share some information about this exciting and unique program. The Girl of the West program was created to promote the western way of life and the sport of rodeo, where the Girl of the West (GOTW) serves as an ambassador for these traditions and has done so since 1922. In this role, the Girl of the West promotes the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo (PPOBR) through public appearances and speaking engagements at military installations, local

businesses, community events, and other rodeos and parades in the state of Colorado. The Girl of the West is always accompanied by a program escort.

As previous Girls of the West will attest, the opportunities afforded during their reign continue to be beneficial for years to come. From public speaking experience and learning how to handle media interviews, to serving the varied audiences at appearances, these young women learn skills and gain experience unique to this program.

Accepted applicants will be judged on their personality and appearance, horsemanship, and public speaking ability. Honesty, integrity, and an attitude of service are also necessary ingredients for success in this program.

Thank you for your interest in the Girl of the West program!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Corliss Palmer".

Corliss Palmer  
Director, Girl of the West Program

# WHO IS THE GIRL OF THE WEST?

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Since 1937, the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo has been a cornerstone in Colorado Springs history by drawing the best rodeo talent and featuring family friendly entertainment for all to enjoy. Founder Spencer Penrose had a vision of making the sport of rodeo a highlight for our community and that tradition lives on today.

Since 1946, the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo has been supporting local military and their families with the proceeds from this event, and that tradition continues today.

The first Girl of the West, Dawn Norris, was selected in 1922. At that time the Girl of the West was awarded to the young woman who had the popular vote, which was determined by who had the most pennies in her jar and who received the most audience applause.

The competition for the Girl of the West now includes horsemanship, an impromptu speech, an interview, as well as being judged on personality and overall appearance. Responsibilities of the Girl of the West include appearances at local and regional businesses, delivering speeches at various locations and events, participating in TV and radio interviews, and showing support to our local military and their families at military bases around the state of Colorado. The public appearance schedule during Rodeo season is very busy.

The Girl of the West is the ideal American western young woman who desires to represent our community and promote the sport of rodeo.



# WHO IS THE GIRL OF THE WEST?

## CONTINUED



The Girl of the West competition is not a beauty contest, but rather is focused on finding a representative who will act, speak, and dress in a manner consistent with the prestige this title deserves. The ideal candidate has the desire to act as an official representative of the Rodeo to the general public and has the following skills and attributes:

- Unsurpassed sportsmanship
- High moral and ethical character
- Careful and humane treatment of animals
- Understanding of the sport of rodeo
- Ability to speak intelligently, with dignity and sincerity, to explain and promote rodeo to anyone; even someone who knows nothing about the sport
- Willingness to be available for area travel to events, businesses, and other rodeos

Additionally, this young woman should profess and exhibit the following:

- Desire to be a leader in her community and promote the western heritage and western lifestyle of this legacy event
- Love of horses and everything they represent
- Interest in furthering her chosen career through higher education and special training
- Appreciation for the rewards she receives, while valuing those who support this Rodeo

# ELIGIBILITY



The Program Director has authority for decisions related to events, schedules, and appearances for the GOTW program.

## **Program Eligibility Requirements Are:**

- must be assigned female at birth
- must be single, never married, publicly engaged, or pregnant
- must be 18-23 years of age by July 1 the year you are awarded the title of Girl of the West
- must include a photo when applying that is 5" x 7" or larger of the applicant in western attire
- must be available for appearances from May through the end of July
- upon request, you must be able to provide a copy of a government issued form of identification (such as a birth certificate, driver's license, passport, etc.) verifying your age
- must show proof of legal residency of the State of Colorado for one year prior to the competition (auto insurance, Colorado tax return and/or driver's license or other proof as requested by the Committee)
- must not have been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, excluding minor traffic offenses, and must agree to a personal background check
- must be in good health and not have any health concerns which would prevent you from fully participating in the program or serving as Girl of the West, if selected
- must not have engaged in any act, which if made public, would be reasonably likely to cause harm or damage to your reputation or to the goodwill and reputation of the Girl of the West program or Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo
- must sign the entry application and liability waiver and must have her own health insurance
- must agree to comply with all GOTW program rules as established by the Girl of the West Committee or face the possibility of disqualification
- must have reliable access to the use of a horse and horse trailer for parades or rodeo appearances during her reign and the horse must be healthy, sound, well maintained, appropriately equipped, with equipment in good repair

# ELIGIBILITY CONTINUED



(Of note, during Rodeo rehearsals, pre-show and performances, the Arena Director has full authority for horse and rider safety and will make the decision on participation based upon what is the safest and best representation of the Rodeo.)

**ENTRY DEADLINE:** All applications and photo must be RECEIVED as indicated on the current application.

After applications are received, finalists for the competition will be selected by the committee. Applicants will be notified by mail or email.

## JUDGING IS BASED ON:

Application	3%
Personality & Appearance	16%
Horsemanship	33%
Interview	24%
Public Speaking	24%

# REQUIREMENTS

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## **Scheduling**

Must be prepared with a positive attitude for long, busy days, and multiple appearances or events.

Arriving early to events is always preferred.

If any circumstance arises where on-time attendance for an appearance is in jeopardy, contact the program chairperson(s) right away.

## **Attire/Appearance/Image**

Be presentable at all times, and keep in mind you may be recognized outside of official appearances, and or events.

You will be expected to maintain your image in terms of grooming, fashion choices, composure, cleanliness, and neatness (tidiness of your hair, hat, boots, and other traditional western apparel).

You are expected to represent yourself in the best way possible to convey your intelligence, sense of humor, communication skills, showmanship, and express sincere interest and consideration of others, all while maintaining a positive outlook and demeanor.

Be professional and courteous at all times.



# REQUIREMENTS

## CONTINUED

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Make sure to be dressed appropriately for all events and prepared for unexpected weather changes.

Be cognizant of your surroundings, always be careful and act safely.

“Partying” of any kind will not be tolerated.

### **Behavior**

No gossiping, speaking poorly of others, or any personnel, contestants, Board members, Foundation members, or any past GOTW alumni.

No vulgarity will be tolerated, and please be politically neutral at all times.

Remain polite and cordial in public.

Avoid talking negatively about events attended, regardless of how you feel.

Stay positive at all times, including facial expressions and body language.

The GOTW should exhibit high moral standards and professional behavior in every situation.

She must be willing to attend all meetings and appearances scheduled by the Committee.

The GOTW must wear the tiara, belt buckle, and western attire whenever serving in the capacity of GOTW. The belt buckle and tiara must be worn in all publicity pictures.

Regarding attitude, she should represent a pleasant personality and be willing to help in any way that will better promote and support the Rodeo. It is her responsibility to answer questions about rodeo, agriculture, western culture, current events, etc.

The GOTW is constantly in the public eye. It is always of utmost importance for her to look her best. Her appearance not only reflects how she feels about herself, but also about the title. Three areas that are stressed are posture, makeup, and grooming.

The GOTW should have a polished and professional look. Remember that makeup can enhance appearance, if properly applied. At the same time, it can detract if not used correctly. Hair should be clean and well-trimmed. Hands should be manicured.

# REQUIREMENTS

## CONTINUED

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### **Family and Friends**

Parents should assume the role of supporting and encouraging their daughter, yet remain in the background.

Boyfriends/partners will not be present when acting in an official capacity as the GOTW.

Public displays of affection will not be tolerated in person, or on social media.

Family and friends will not be eligible for complimentary meals or other benefits if they attend an event with you.

Family and friends should stay in the background at all events.

Family and friends will not be allowed in areas that require credentials.

It is okay to recognize family and friends at events, but important to maintain your focus on the event you are attending and the role you have at that event.

### **Alcohol and Drug Use/Tobacco Use**

Use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substances will not be tolerated, including the use of THC (despite state laws).

### **Cell Phone Use**

When making appearances, only use your phone in the event of an emergency.

Do not text, check email, or check socials while in public.

Do not text while driving.

Check messages in appropriate locations, and out of view of the public eye.

Make sure that your phone is on silent during a public event.

Subtle ringtones should be set.

Always be respectful to others when using your phone.

### **Social Media Policy**

In online social networks, the lines between public and private, and between personal and professional can get blurry. Please remember that you are a role model to your friends as well as all young people, and equally important, you have been entrusted with the job of being an Ambassador for the NFR Open at the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo.

# REQUIREMENTS

## CONTINUED

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How you conduct yourself will reflect upon public opinion of the Rodeo. We are a professional organization, and as such there will not be anything allowed on social media sites that would draw negative attention to this event or the principles by which we abide. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your position as an Ambassador.

1. What you publish will be public for a long time. Please do not post anything for public viewing associated with your name that you would not want your leaders, the board, or those you represent to see.
2. Be thoughtful about who you “follow” or are friends with, and what pages you “like.”
3. Respect your audience — you don’t always know who is looking at your posts.
4. Don’t use ethnic slurs, personal insults, sexual language or obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable as an Ambassador. This includes, but is not limited to, music with vulgar language and sensual clothing.
5. When disagreeing with others’ opinions, or correcting misinformation, keep it appropriate, professional and polite.
6. Always stop and think before posting.

**Ambassadors should not use social media to post any of the following:**

- Profane language or content
- Bullying of any kind
- Discourteous communications, including personal attacks on a person’s character or appearance
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status regarding public assistance, physical or mental disability, sexual identification or orientation, or national origin. Since you may at times be serving a diverse community, being an Ambassador is not the platform for projecting your political opinions.
- Sexual content or links to sexual content
- Any display or encouragement of illegal activity
- Displays of affection with young men will be closely monitored. This does not mean that you cannot have a boyfriend, just keep it appropriate and modest.

# REQUIREMENTS

## CONTINUED



This policy is to spell out what is not acceptable on social media if you hold a title, and are an Ambassador for the Rodeo. As a committee we don't seek to be policing your social media sites. However, it is your responsibility now that you have accepted your job of Ambassador, to comply with what has been deemed acceptable in this policy. Your title is an honor and we hope taking this policy seriously is as important to you as it is to us.

However, for posts not in compliance with this Handbook and depending on the severity of the post, one warning will be given and if inappropriate content is not removed, it will be taken to the Board which may result in a removal of your title.

Please list all social media usernames below and platform (i.e.: Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.):

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### Communication

Coordinate all outbound communication with your escort, or the Director of the Girl of The West program.

### Equine Safety and Care

It is a requirement that the GOTW have reliable access to the use of a horse and have use of a horse trailer during her reign. Additionally, the horse must be healthy, accustomed to loud public environments, and crowd noise. Horses should be up to date with vaccinations and veterinary care. No abuse or anger demonstrated toward your horse will be allowed, at any time.

### Sponsors and Hosts

Make sure to thank sponsors of the Rodeo during signing appearances and at events. Write "Thank You" notes when appropriate (after events, competitions, tours, or other special occasions).

# BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Being the Girl of The West makes you part of the Rodeo's history and legacy. You join with all those Girls who came before you, and all those who will follow. This experience will be a part of you for your lifetime. While you are benefiting and growing as part of this program, there will also be countless eyes watching as you inspire future Girls of the West and represent our Rodeo within the community.

Yes, there is a great deal expected of you during your reign, but as many previous Girls of the West will tell you, it is truly the opportunity of a lifetime.



# GIRL OF THE WEST EXPECTATION AGREEMENT

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As the official representative of the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, I will learn as much as I can about the Rodeo, and I will work willingly to promote the Rodeo and what it represents.

I understand and agree that in order to project the proper image as a Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo representative, I must act, speak, and dress in accordance with my role any time I am in the public eye. My outfit will be worn in the proper manner during all official appearances on behalf of the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo. I agree to wear my hair in a style mutually agreed upon by myself and the Girl of the West chairperson(s) to maintain a consistent image for the program.

I understand and agree that I will not allow any other rider with me on my horse while I am making any appearance representing the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo.

I understand and agree that while making appearances as the Girl of the West, I will stay at the event as long as the escort directs. I agree to attend all appearances scheduled by the program committee. An illness or serious family emergency are the only excuses for absence.

I understand and agree that after my introduction at the performances of the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, I will make any personal appearances that may be asked of me as official ambassador of the Rodeo, which may include, but are not be limited to, assisting with clearing cattle from the arena for the timed events, riding as a flag bearer during performances, and signing autographs after each performance.

I understand and agree that the only escort that I will have will be the escort designated by the program committee. This includes any trips that I may take out of town. Only immediate family members may be included with me at any of my appearances.

I understand and agree that the Girl of the West program committee chairperson(s) will make the final decision on type and color choice for the official outfit given to me by the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo.

I understand and agree that all expenses of meals and overnight lodging while representing the Rodeo will be paid for by the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo program committee.

I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to transport my horse to and from appearances that require a horse, and that any expenses associated with hauling my horse are my own and not that of the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo.

I understand and agree I will be responsible for returning any borrowed items from the Rodeo, and if damaged, will repair or replace said items.

I understand and agree the Girl of The West is obligated to return the tiara once her commitment has concluded.

# GIRL OF THE WEST EXPECTATION AGREEMENT CONTINUED

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I understand and agree that because of the demanding schedule (approximately 150 or more appearances) between early May and the end of July, I will not be able to have a job that requires regular hours. Part-time work is acceptable if it does not interfere with my obligation to promote the Rodeo during the months previously mentioned, but must be disclosed and discussed prior to the season schedule.

I understand and agree that, during my reign, I will not be allowed to compete for any other title that would interfere with my duties or appearances as Girl of the West.

I understand and agree that failure to follow these rules and regulations could result in any or all of the following: forfeiture of the title Girl of the West, loss of scholarship, and reimbursement to the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo for my outfit and any other expenses directly associated with my reign.

I understand and agree that failure to comply with these requirements during the full extent of my reign will put my role in jeopardy. The program committee chairperson(s) and the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo Board will make any final determinations about my association with and responsibilities to the GOTW program.

Signing this document confirms a commitment to uphold all the responsibilities listed within this document, and the responsibilities that come with being the Girl of the West.

The Applicant commits that she will abide by any rules and regulations put in place by the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo Board, or by the Director of the Girls of the West program. Additionally, the applicant acknowledges that if any rules or regulations are broken, it will immediately jeopardize her remaining time as the Girl of the West.

Committing to the role as the Girl of the West means the applicant is committing to the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, and will work diligently to make this a priority.

**I hereby agree, if I am chosen to be the Girl of the West, I will abide by all standards set and included in this Handbook.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_