



# Sharing Ideas

## Catching up with recent grant recipients

Generous donors, who have a passion for U.S. dressage, allow TDF to award many educational grants to individuals each year. Grants are available for those involved in every aspect of our sport – riding, instructing, judging, breeding – and to people of all ages and riding levels.

Not only are the grants helpful to those who receive them, but there is a positive ripple effect when the grant recipients share what they learned with those around them. In that spirit, we hope that you can learn something from a few of our grant recipients, to help you in your own dressage journey.

### **Meghan Hamilton (MA), Instructor 2014 Major Anders Lindgren Scholarship Recipient**

During my training, a few notable things stood out to me:

- Putting a rider “under the microscope” every day is just awesome. Having my trainer’s eyes on my riding each day allowed her to catch things



Meghan Hamilton

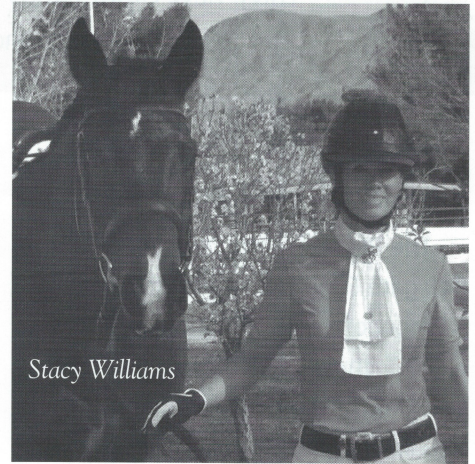
I miss daily and make changes that will stick.

- “Stare at what you want to become” is a tip from one of my favorite books. Sitting ringside watching Heather Blitz ride was a huge benefit. I watched closely, building my own blueprint or idea in my head of what something looks like, with the goal to go home and try it on my own.
- Getting 100% out of your horse is a finely tuned blend of being bold and riding bigger than the horse, living between half halts and not allowing the horse to get bigger than the rider. Ask for more. Get more. Become more.

### **Stacy Williams (UT), Instructor 2014 Continuing Education for Instructors Grant Recipient**

If I could put into one brief paragraph the primary emphasis of the USDF Instructor Certification Program as I encountered it, it would be this: The basics will improve the work, but the work should also serve to improve the basics. And it’s all basic!! Break every issue down to the single most basic, important thing and use the classical movements, exercises, and figures to improve it.

As teachers and riders, we must be correct, efficient, and effective. Anyone who handles or sits on a horse is training that horse, so I highly recommend that amateur riders attend the workshops as auditors or demo riders.



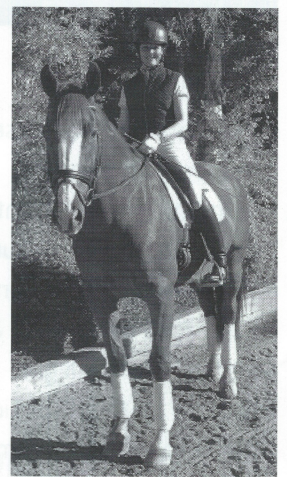
Stacy Williams

Photo credit: Dow Williams

Attending the workshops will help amateurs recognize an effective trainer from an ineffective one, as well as help them learn how to systematically develop their own horses without having to rely so heavily on a trainer.

### **Julie Laity (CA), Instructor 2015 Continuing Education for Instructors Grant Recipient**

In order to help improve teaching, the Instructor Certification Program emphasizes the necessity of structure in a lesson. For a typical exercise, there are approximately four steps: explain what the exercise is (for example,



Julie Laity