

D4K Scholarship: Hannah Corjulo

Rider background:

My name is Hannah Corjulo. I am a young dressage professional based in NY. I spend my days teaching and developing horses for my clients. I am very fortunate to have two Grand Prix mounts that I am working hard to get in the show ring. One of my major passions is developing young horses and my future goal is to be a successful FEI competitor.

I am grateful to have been approved for a Lendon Gray scholarship, which I used to attend the 2022 Summer Intensive Training held in Gardiner, NY. The SIT program is designed to give each participant an overall equestrian education.

I have participated in a few past D4K programs including WIT and other TEAM clinics. While I have always come out of those programs with great riding tips and tricks, the SIT provided me with a completely different experience. I left really feeling confident as a professional equestrian.

I was accepted into the program aboard my 2006 KWPN mare, Blues Singer, affectionately known as Pippa. Pippa is a very special horse, and I owe her my entire equestrian career to date. I have been responsible for her development over the last 6 years and we are currently knocking at the doors to the Grand Prix.

Lendon was beyond helpful in my lessons. She respected me as a rider/trainer and allowed me the time to think through my rides, guiding my plan and talking through any questions that I had. She forced me to “not help” my horses every step and pushed for that last bit of self carriage needed to make the work look effortless. I can still hear her yelling “ARE YOU HOLDING HER?!!”.

Pippa is the hardest working horse I have ever ridden, but I have had trouble with her cadence and self carriage in the higher collection. Our lessons focused a lot on getting what I’m looking for quicker and more efficiently, so I can get out before creating tension. An exercise I really enjoyed was medium walk- collected walk - piaffe IMMEDIATELY- walk.

I mentioned above that I left the program feeling confident as a professional. Being a professional is so much more than just riding. It is also coaching.

I had a few opportunities to help some of the other riders while also developing my skills as a coach. The major tip I took away from this was that I need to “be quiet and let them figure it out”. Just as you don’t want to overwhelm your horses with too many aids, you can’t over-coach your students by giving them step-by-step instructions. They must have the time to feel and think for themselves.

I spent a great deal of time watching some of the other lessons. I find it helpful to watch other professionals, to pick up new phrases and exercises. The main thing I noticed with Lendon is that she has no patience with things that are simple (lifting up your chin or posting on the wrong diagonal) but, she has a lot of patience for things that should take time (developing a young horse or increasing collection). I also noticed the slight change in style going from one rider to the next. Some students can take a great deal of pressure, while some need a little more time. Lendon was able to change her style to get the most out of each student without being too passive and allowing riders to get away with bad habits.

For me, this program was extremely beneficial and unlike any of the other programs I have been a part of. I developed my skills as a professional and I am very excited to pass along my knowledge to other horses and students.

Some additional quotes and riding tips:

Transitions are very helpful for developing a responsive and balanced horse

Good riding is all about the basics. Grand Prix is easy if you have a solid foundation -never be afraid to go back to the beginning.

Half- seat works well for riders with a “chair seat” or a tight leg

Stepping into your inside stirrup may help with a greener horse that swings haunches to the inside.

Really get to know what works best for your horse. It’s your job to know what they need to warm up, how many days off they need, etc.

Don’t be afraid to change your warm up