



Winners of the East Coast Youth Dressage Champion Awards sponsored by Discover Dressage

With the generous support of Discover Dressage, Dressage4Kids, the Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Challenge, and the Atlanta Youth Festival are pleased to announce the recipients of the Discover Dressage East Coast Youth Dressage Champion Award and the East Coast Youth Dressage Champion Trainer Award. These awards recognize the dedication and achievement of young riders and the trainers who support their development in the sport.

Payton Muto Named East Coast Youth Dressage Champion

Payton Muto is a 12 year-old equestrian from eastern Pennsylvania. She has been training Dressage for four years and currently rides two ponies, Sunshine and Rivendale Angwyn (aka Froggy). Her favorite activities are spending time with her ponies, going on trail rides, spending time with her LVDA and ESDCTA family at events, and continuing her equine education. It is truly Payton's wish and intention to turn her passion for horses into a lifelong career. Her short-term goals include showing Second Level, qualifying for FEI Children's at NAYC, and earning her USDF Bronze Medal. In the medium-term, she wishes to compete in the FEI Pony Division at the Festival of Champions, compete in the FEI Junior Division at NAYC, and earn her USDF Silver Medal. Her long-term goals are to compete in the FEI Young Rider and U25 Divisions at NAYC, to have her own equestrian training business, to compete at the Senior level, and to represent the USA in the Olympics.

On her journey to winning the East Coast Youth Dressage Champion Award, Payton competed at both the Youth FUNdation's Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Challenge and the D4K Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival. Payton writes, "I love competing at the youth shows because they both have fun and educational atmospheres. I enjoy spending time with my teammates and getting to compete at two wonderful shows."

Payton is proud of how far Froggy and she have come and is grateful to everyone who helped her get to this moment. Payton credits her trainer, Samantha St Jacques, for teaching her everything from horsemanship to biomechanics and for helping boost her confidence and give her the tools to be successful. Payton also credits her pony, Froggy. "I'm really enjoying developing our partnership. He's always willing to try whatever we are working on which makes him fun to train," enthuses Payton. "He has a fun personality and is a bit of a class clown. He's such a joy to ride and I'm so thankful to have such an amazing pony."



Payton plans to use the \$1,000 grant, sponsored by Discover Dressage, to further her education in riding and horsemanship through additional lessons and clinics. Payton would like to thank Discover Dressage for their support of the sport of Dressage; Dressage4Kids and the Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Challenge for putting on wonderful youth shows; her parents, grandparents, and her whole family for all the support; her trainer Samantha St Jacques; and everyone who has helped grow her love of horses. And finally, and most importantly, Payton thanks her ponies. “Without their companionship, none of this would be possible,” writes Payton.

Samantha St Jacques Receives East Coast Youth Dressage Champion Trainer Award

Samantha St Jacques is a lifelong equestrian with a broad depth to her equestrian knowledge. She began riding in a hunter/jumper program from age five. When she was still very young, she became involved in youth programs such as pony club and gained exposure to other disciplines such as 3-day eventing and dressage. As a young rider, Samantha achieved her A level in Pony Club and competed at the North American Young Rider Championships. She had begun her professional career at this point and was teaching many junior riders. She took great joy in helping enthusiastic young equestrians share her passion for horses and used her teaching to help these people learn to ride and care for their horses and apply that to success in competition. Samantha has competed internationally for many years and has travelled globally to compete, including competing at the Beijing Olympics in 2008 in the sport of eventing with her self-started and trained horse. In the years after that, she began to focus more on pure dressage. Alongside her husband, Samantha owns and operates North Star Farm, a full service training center, where she teaches and trains students from beginning their dressage journey into the FEI levels. Samantha is a USDF bronze and silver medalist and has competed multiple horses to the Prix St Georges level. Her

current FEI horse is a home bred that Samantha bred, started and trained and is currently competing at Intermediare 1. Samantha really enjoys helping students of all levels pursue joy and happiness with their horse as they meet their personal goals. Samantha lives in Orefield, Pennsylvania with her husband, two children and many, many animals including horses, ponies, dogs, cats, chickens and more.

Samantha writes, “The most important thing that I hope to always instill in the riders I work with is to first and foremost, love your horse. Second is to always have fun. After that comes all the technical knowledge and learning how to be a good competitor. Supporting riders in their development is important to me as a trainer because I want to see riders have the best understanding possible on how to be the best person for their horse. The more we can understand about how horses think, how the biomechanics of horses and riding work, and how we can apply that into our daily life with them, as well as competition, the better we can be for our horses. I am a constant student of the sport and the horse myself and I feel very happy sharing that knowledge that I have gained over many decades.”

Reflecting on her experiences teaching Payton, Samantha writes, “Payton stands out as a student and a horse person by always being curious and deeply dedicated to improving. Payton takes pride in caring for her horses to the highest standard and holds herself accountable to working on being the best that she can be. She works very hard on her riding and spends a lot of time out of the saddle thinking about her horses and riding. To me, this makes her an excellent student as she will always continue to develop.”



Samantha plans to use the \$1,000 grant, sponsored by Discover Dressage, on continuing her professional development and continuing education. Samantha would like to thank Payton for being such a joy to teach and a wonderful student; Payton's family for their endless love and support of her; her own family for their support and contributions to the farm and business; the many, many coaches over the years for generously sharing their knowledge; all the horses; and Discover Dressage.

Looking Ahead to 2027

Young riders will have more opportunities to learn, compete, and connect at all three events in 2027. Save the dates and join us in 2027!

Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Challenge – June 19-20, 2027

Featuring Team competition for riders 25 & under, Dressage Seat Equitation Championships, Western Dressage, Exceptional Rider, Prix Caprilli, and a Musical Freestyle Face-Off, the Region 1

Youth Dressage Team Challenge brings youth riders together for a weekend of dressage competition and team camaraderie. Learn more at <https://www.youthdressagefoundation.org/home>.

D4K Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival – August 13-14, 2027

Presented by Dressage4Kids, Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival offers a unique competition experience that rewards well-rounded horsemanship through a three-phased Division Championships including dressage, equitation, and a written test, in addition to team competition and a variety of additional mounted and unmounted classes and activities. Learn more at <https://dressage4kids.org/d4k-festival/>.

Atlanta Youth Festival – September 12, 2027

The Atlanta Youth Festival offers young riders the opportunity to compete, learn, and connect with other youth dressage riders.

Together, these three youth-focused competitions offer much more than the opportunity to compete. Through team participation, educational opportunities, and activities, they encourage young riders to support one another, build lasting connections, and grow together in the sport of dressage, helping build a stronger dressage community for the future.

Many thanks to Discover Dressage for their support of the East Coast Dressage Champion Awards. To learn more about Discover Dressage, go to: <https://discoverdressage.com>.



Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Challenge 2026 photo credit: Lisa Gerdon-Dilworth



Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival 2026 photo credit: Faith Haven Stables Dressage Team



Atlanta Youth Festival 2026 photo credit: Marc Mesa

About Dressage4Kids

Dressage4Kids, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization incorporated for the express purpose of providing educational and competitive opportunities for youth riders and the adults who support them.

<https://dressage4kids.org>

Check out our videos on YouTube

Dressage4Kids | d4k.org@gmail.com | dressage4kids.org

See what's happening on our social sites:



Dressage4Kids Inc | 21 Lake Avenue | Bedford, NY 10506 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!