Attending the Winter Intensive Training program has been one of the most exciting experiences of my dressage career. Each day was filled with opportunities to learn, refine my skills, and deepen my understanding of the sport, and the variety of sessions pushed me to grow as both a rider and a horsewoman. This winter, I gained hands-on skills that extended far beyond the arena—from learning how to safely change a trailer tire with Andy McWhorter, to exploring the importance of community involvement through Ben McWhorter's ACT program. I developed a stronger understanding of equine wellness through bodywork sessions with Claudine Camerini Fasse, and I learned how proper saddle and bridle fit could influence performance thanks to Charles Tota's lecture. Visits with WIT alumna Hannah Irons and young-horse specialist Richard Malmgren gave me a deeper appreciation for thoughtful, long-term development, while Laura King's session on mental performance helped me strengthen the mindset I brought to both training and competition.

I also gained invaluable veterinary knowledge through hands-on instruction from the team at Atlantic Equine Services, learning practical skills I could use daily to support my horse's health. Dr. Hilary Clayton's lecture on the biomechanics of the back and dynamic mobilization exercises expanded my understanding of how conformation and conditioning influence soundness. Sessions with Dr. Austin Stahl helped me better prepare my horse for new climates and improved my awareness of disease prevention and biosecurity. Off the horse, rider-fitness sessions showed me how even small, consistent routines could improve balance and effectiveness in the saddle. And attending the Helgstrand Dressage Open House gave me the chance to observe top horses and riders, learning how elite trainers developed horses from the FEI Young Horse levels through Grand Prix.

What made WIT especially meaningful was how directly it supported my long-term goals. I have always loved the process of training horses, the day-to-day learning, the small breakthroughs, and the partnership that develops over time. WIT strengthened that passion. Every lecture, ride, and hands-on session helped me build the foundation I need to develop horses correctly and thoughtfully, whether I am working with my Gypsy Vanners or my FEI warmblood. The program also gave me the tools to continue building a career in dressage, from understanding horse care at a deeper level to learning how to present myself professionally, manage challenges, and set bigger goals for the future.

None of these experiences would have been possible without the support of The Lendon Gray and Dressage 4 Kids Scholarship. Your generosity allowed me to immerse myself fully in this program, learn from world-class professionals, and continue building the skills I need to grow as a rider, trainer, and a future professional in the sport. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity and will leave WIT excited to carry everything I learned into the season ahead.