



US EQUESTRIAN COLLEGIATE  
**HANDBOOK**

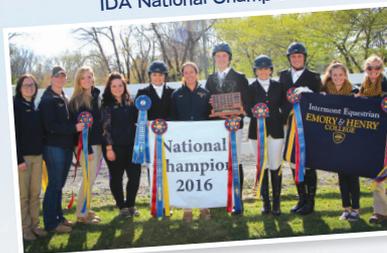


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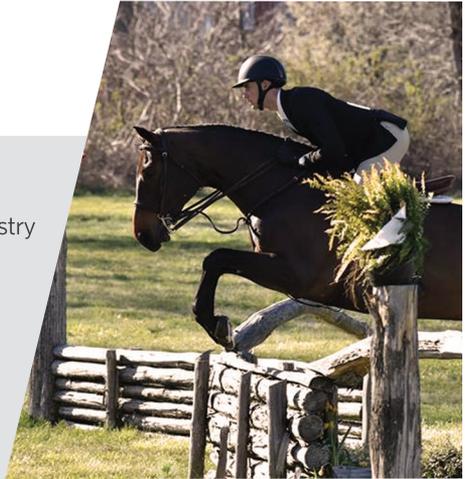
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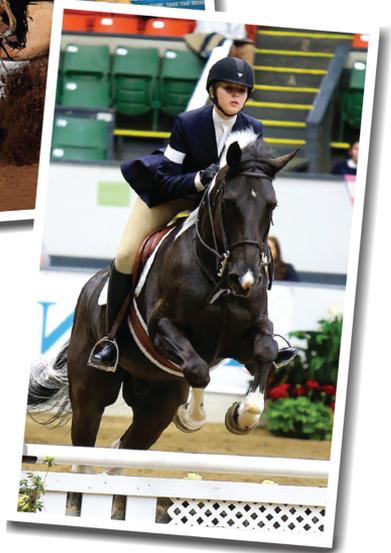
# STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12: TAKE THE REINS AND JOIN THE IEA



*No Need for any Rider to Own a Horse!*

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-Coach, Chatham, VA

**"TEAM SPIRIT AND CONFIDENCE! THIS HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL OF US. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!"**  
-Parent, Westborough, MA



Riders in grades 6-12 can compete with teams in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA). School-age equestrians, with various levels of experience, compete in Hunt Seat and Western disciplines throughout the school year. Riders not only compete for individual points, but for their team as well.

It's fun and challenging – and there is no need for any rider to own a horse! The IEA is available to public or private schools and barn teams.

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Many of our riders receive scholarships based on their performance throughout their IEA years.

Founded in 2002, the IEA has more than 13,000 riders on over 1,300 teams competing in hundreds of shows across the United States each year.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Eaton, IEA Membership Coordinator, at 877-RIDE-IEA (877-743-3432) or Jenn@rideiea.org.

[WWW.RIDEIEA.ORG](http://WWW.RIDEIEA.ORG)

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# AN EDUCATION WITH HORSEPOWER

**BY SARAH E.  
COLEMAN**

For most horse crazy high school students, riding in college isn't an option—it's a given. But finding the sweet spot of a school where you can get a great education in your chosen field AND continue riding can seem like an elusive goal.

So, you've spent the last two years (or more!) trying to determine what type of college would be the best fit for you. While the options can truly seem endless (thank, Google!), if you begin to pinpoint where you feel most comfortable, your choices will begin to narrow themselves down.

There are some basic questions you can ask to help decide what type of school might suit you best. These include:

- Do I want to stay close to home or go far away?
- Am I comfortable at a large institution or would I prefer to know all the teachers and most of the student body at a small school?
- Do I need a four-year degree to pursue a career or can I go to a trade or technical school?
- How much financial aid will I need to complete my course of study?

Typically, out of state and private schools have higher tuitions, while state schools, especially if you stay in-state, have larger student bodies and lower price tags.

**ON THE HUNT  
FOR HIGHER ED**

Once you have a general idea of where you would be most comfortable, you can begin the hunt for the perfect-for-you school.

After looking in equine publications, browsing the Web and chatting with horsey friends, draw up a list of schools you think might be a good fit and those you are very interested in learning more about, and make arrangements to visit the institutions in person.

Once on campus, you'll have a tour guide to show you around and an admissions counselor assigned just to you to answer your questions. Be prepared for your visit and go equipped with a list of questions so you don't forget to ask something that is important to you.

While you'll be able to ask more-targeted questions after you

learn more about the school, a general guideline of questions you should ask includes:

- How many students attend this university?
- What are the most popular majors?
- For what programs is the school most recognized?
- What types of tutoring services do you offer?
- What is the average class size?
- What is the average financial aid package?
- What work-study opportunities are there?
- What does it take to graduate in four years?
- What type of career placement services do you offer?
- How many students get internships?
- How many students live on campus?

While the ability to continue riding is key to a lot of equine enthusiasts, it should not be the deciding factor on what school you attend. It's important to remember that you're at school for a reason: to get the education and experience that will make you a stellar employee. The horses should always be secondary to your studies.

**SADDLE  
TIME**

Just like you learned when beginning the search for the perfect-for-you college, the options for riding in college can seem limitless. Getting your horsey fix while in school can mean anything from weekly classes for course credit to gym time with a personal trainer if you ride on a varsity team. Also an option is bringing your horse to school with you or taking lessons at a nearby stable.

It's really important that you evaluate each of these options before getting your heart set on a specific riding program. Each option has perks and drawbacks, but you need to know what questions to ask to make an educated decision on just how you'll spend time in the saddle.

If you would like to ride on a team in college, some of the questions you need to ask the school's admissions counselor or equine representative include:

- Do you have equestrian team?
- Do I have to try out?
- How often does the team practice?
- When are practices held?
- Is your barn close to campus?

- Will I get to show?
- What is the direct cost to students who ride on the team? (this number could include things like lesson fees, transportation to and from the barn and shows, cost of showing and others)
- Does the college offer support to the team (as in a varsity or NCAA team) or is it a club sport?
- What GPA must I maintain to remain an active member of the team?
- Are there any additional requirements for me to ride?

If possible, try to visit the farm where the team rides; getting a good feel for others on the team, the coach and the facilities will also help narrow your school search. You'll also need to ask the barn manager or owner specific questions, as well. These could include:

- Can I board my personal horse at the farm where the team rides?
- Do you attend horseshows that are not sanctioned by a college equestrian organization?
- What is the coach's background?
- How long has s/he been running the equine program?
- What accolades has the team won in the past?
- Are they an employee paid by the college or is the team hosted at their farm?
- How many lessons am I required to take to be able to show with the school?

With so many options available to keep riding in college, one is sure to be the perfect fit for you.

**APPLICATION ANXIETY** Now that you've visited some schools and gotten a better feel for them, you can decide where you would like to apply. While it's not recommended that you apply to only one college, you need not apply to 25 of them, either.

All colleges ask for the same basic information. This includes:

- High school transcripts
- GPA and standardized test scores (ACT or SAT)
- Financial aid statements from your parents or legal guardians
- Completed application (which could include an essay)
- Letters of recommendation

It can be a bit overwhelming to think of gathering all this information for each every application you intend to submit, but the key to getting everything completed on time is organization.

This type of organization includes:

- Knowing when various deadlines are, from scholarships to FAFSAs (financial aid) to applications
- Following directions to a T. Improperly filled out applications or essays don't leave a great first impression, so if you have questions, ask!
- Sending in applications and all accompanying information to the correct address, be it postal or e-mail

## **FINDING YOUR NICHE**

A lot of students feel pressured to know exactly what they want to study before they ever set foot on a campus. Don't fall into the trap! College is designed to be a time for career exploration and determining what you really want to do with your life.

If you, like the vast majority of students, aren't sure what you want to do when you graduate, don't panic! You can help begin to narrow down your major choices by asking yourself a few questions, such as:

- What subjects am I good at that I really enjoy?
- What subjects do I have to work really hard at and don't really enjoy?
- What do I enjoy doing in my spare time?
- What do friends turn to me for help with?
- What is the first thing people would say when asked about me?

All of these questions can help clue you in to what your strong suits are. Do friends ask you to read over and edit their papers? Journalism may be the field for you. Do people say you analyze things and weigh the pros and cons of a situation well before making a decision? Law may be right up your alley. Do friends at the barn come to you for advice on lame horses or questions on a horse's health? Vet school may be the way to go.

And don't forget: There are a plethora of ways to combine your equine passion with your education—many of which you may not have even thought of! For instance, if you're interested in obtaining your real estate license, why not focus on selling farms and properties with an equine focus? As someone with horse experience, you would be invaluable to someone looking for a farm!

If art is your thing, consider specializing in equine art; if engineering and architecture is more your style, why not

become an equine architect who specializes in barn and arena design? Love chemistry and nutrition? All major equine feed companies have equine nutritionists on staff and researchers to help them determine the best ingredients for their feed and supplements! The career options are truly endless.

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP** While college may not be right for everyone, some format of continued education is a must for nearly every profession. Even if you think you want to ride or train horses for a living, you'll still need to learn the best way to balance your books, account for profit and loss, and determine how you'll retire; you can never go wrong with a general business degree.

In addition to book learning, college will provide you so much more: the opportunity to meet people different than you; to learn new cultures; maybe even to try a new style of riding!

Most of all, college is designed to help you determine what you want to do with your life and career. Once you think you've found a job that may interest you, go to your school's office of careers and advancement. See if someone there has a connection to a professional in that industry; if they don't, ask for advice on how best to reach out to these people.

Contacting someone in a profession you think you may enjoy can offer valuable insight into what that career really entails. And you shouldn't stop at just one person or profession! If three, four or even 15 jobs sound interesting, reach out with an email or a phone call and ask each person if they might spare a half-hour to talk with you, a college student who is interested in their field.

If the professional is amenable and local, offer to take them out for coffee; if they can only chat on the phone, determine what day and time is most convenient, and make the call. No matter if you do the meeting in person or on the phone, be prepared with a notebook and pen, and a set of prepared questions. Remember, you're the one who asked for the meeting, now you have to run it!

Some questions you should consider asking a professional include:

- What is your equestrian background?
- What got you interested in the profession you are in?
- Where did you go to school and what did you study? Do you use that degree in your job now?
- Describe a "typical" day.

- Do you travel for your job?
- What is your favorite part of your job?
- What is your least favorite part of your job?
- What are the pros and cons of your job?
- Is there any advice you could offer me if I pursue a career in this field?
- Do you allow students to job shadow you to get a real feel for what goes on in your profession?

Remember: It's just as important to know what you DON'T want to do as it is to know what interests you. Don't be discouraged if the person you're speaking with has some hard truths about their job—it's better to know the potential drawbacks now than before you have your heart set on a specific job (and before you spend more money on an additional degree, as well!)

Just like with everything else about going to college, it's important to keep an open mind when you start to explore your riding opportunities. This might also be the perfect time to try your hand at a completely different style of riding; if you are a die-hard hunter, why not give western a try if your school offers it? Or, if you're an eventer at heart, giving saddle seat a test drive might give you some additional tools for your riding tool box. You never know what untapped passions you might find!



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# COLLEGIATE RIDING PROGRAMS

## American National Riding Commission

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ANRC is an affiliate of the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) and alliance partner of the United States Equestrian Federation (US Equestrian). The primary goal of ANRC is to promote the American System of Forward Riding and to promote the highest quality of educated riding and related services within schools, colleges, universities, and public or private riding establishments. ANRC offers two competitive programs that focus on developing excellence in riding skill, knowledge of riding theory, and the horse's performance.

### ANRC National Intercollegiate Equitation Championship

The ANRC Intercollegiate Equitation Championship, traditionally held in April, is a National championship where colleges showcase their most talented riders in a team competition judged and scored on equitation skills in four phases:

- A Program Ride (includes USEF Hunter Equitation Tests)
- A Hunter Seat Equitation Medal Course at 3'
- A Derby Course (natural jumps in a field) at 3'
- A Written test based on riding theory and stable management

Students may compete on a college-owned horse or a privately owned horse. The highest score in each phase will be awarded to the rider who demonstrates excellence in equitation and produces a smooth, cooperative performance exemplifying quality hunter movement both on the flat and over fences. In addition to the National Division level of competition, a Novice Division at 2'6" provides an introductory level of competition for riders with similar goals.

## ANRC Junior Horsemanship Challenge and National Championship

The ANRC Junior Horsemanship Challenge is a team competition for schools and organizations with students in grades 6 through 12. The competition is modeled after the ANRC National Intercollegiate Equitation Championship and conducted in the three or phases as described above.

Each academic year, member schools and organizations that participate in ANRC Junior Horsemanship Challenge local team competitions can qualify for the annual ANRC Junior Horsemanship Challenge National Championship held annually in May. Throughout the year, coaches are encouraged to incorporate forward riding theory and sound stable management practices to improve the rider's mounted and unmounted horsemanship skills. Students are encouraged to set personal goals as well as team goals, study ANRC materials, practice fundamentals, and apply knowledge.

*For more information please visit the ANRC website [anrc.org](http://anrc.org).*

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## Intercollegiate Dressage Association - IDA

The Intercollegiate Dressage Association (IDA) is a national organization founded in 2001 that provides a format for students to make dressage part of their college experience. Each academic year riders representing colleges throughout the US and Canada earn individual or team points that count towards regional standings and qualification for national finals.

IDA riders compete in Introductory, Lower Training, Upper Training, and First Level as individuals and as team members. IDA teams consist of 4 riders (one for each level) who earn points that count towards the team total to determine placing. Points earned at each show accumulate throughout the season.

IDA competitions are judged by USEF or USDF rated judges in accordance with USEF rules. Unlike any other form of competitive dressage, IDA offers the added challenge of competing on unfamiliar horses provided by the host college and assigned by random draw. Each rider is allowed a 10 minute warm up before entering the ring to be judged.

At the end of each academic year, the IDA hosts a national championship for those teams and individual riders who win their respective regions. Twelve teams and twelve individual

riders in each of the four levels compete for a wide array of trophies and prizes including dressage saddles.

IDA's approach brings added fun and challenge to the sport of dressage while providing college riders an affordable means of competing as part of a team. Riders do not have to own a horse or tack to participate and previous dressage experience is not required.

At least 55 colleges are members which field teams for IDA, providing over 700 riders in total to the program. Among those colleges many also offer riding scholarships

*For more information please visit the IDA website [teamdressage.com](http://teamdressage.com).*

## USEA Intercollegiate Eventing

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In 2014, the United States Eventing Association (USEA) Board of Governors approved the creation of the Intercollegiate Eventing Program as an official program of the USEA. Originally proposed with input from the Intercollegiate Eventing League, the program was established to provide a framework on which eventing teams and individual competition could flourish at universities and colleges across the country. Collegiate athletic programs have been the training grounds for Olympians, amateur athletes and professional athletes for generations. Enabling students to train in the Olympic sport of eventing is a natural addition

Intercollegiate Team Challenges are quickly becoming popular additions to recognized horse trials in the United States. Teams competing in events identified as Intercollegiate Team Challenges are able to self-identify to the competition organizer, and will compete in the regular horse trial competition as individuals. Combining their individual scores, their team scores will be tabulated and matched against other teams. An inaugural Intercollegiate Championship took place in 2016. The event offers Beginner Novice – Advanced/Intermediate levels as well as CCI1\* and CIC2\* divisions. There are no qualifications necessary for this championship.

*For more information about the USEA Intercollegiate Eventing Program please visit [www.useventing.com/membership/intercollegiate](http://www.useventing.com/membership/intercollegiate).*

## Intercollegiate Horse Show Association – IHSA

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The Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) promotes competition for riders of all skill levels, who compete individually and as teams, at Regional, Zone, and National levels.

The IHSA was founded in 1967, based on a competitive prototype created by then-Fairleigh Dickinson College sophomore, Robert E. Cacchione, on the principle that any college student should be able to participate in horse shows regardless of his or her financial status or riding level.

The IHSA emphasis is on learning, sportsmanship, and teamwork. The objective of IHSA is to offer students the chance to compete, as individuals and as members of a team, whether they are in their first years of riding or are seasoned competitors. Eliminating the expense of shipping or even owning horses puts IHSA competition within reach of many who might otherwise miss the equestrian experience.

Since its beginning, with just two intercollegiate competing colleges, today's IHSA is an organization that encompasses 39 Regions in 8 Zones with more than 400 member colleges in 47 states and parts of Canada - representing more than 9000 riders in Hunter Seat Equitation, Western Horsemanship, and Reining.

Teams that advance to Nationals represent their Zone for National Champion Team honors: winning the Collegiate Cup for the Hunter Seat division and the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Trophy in the Western division. Individual riders advancing to Nationals compete for top honors in their division, and Regional high point riders are eligible for National Individual Championships in Hunter Seat and Western.

*For more information, visit the official IHSA website [ihsainc.com](http://ihsainc.com) as well as on Facebook and Twitter.*

### **IHSA Membership Requirements**

*IHSA requires their riders to be members of the United States Hunter Jumper Association. To join USHJA, visit [ushja.org/membership/member.aspx](http://ushja.org/membership/member.aspx). Membership with USEF is not required.*

## Intercollegiate Saddle Seat Riding Association – ISSRA

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The Intercollegiate Saddle Seat Riding Association, Inc. (ISSRA) was founded in January 2008 by Sally Haydon, Ph.D. in Lexington, Kentucky. Development of the organization was prompted by ten college students from Eastern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, Georgetown College, Morehead State University and Art Institute Online, who expressed interest in the formation of an organization promoting saddle seat riding and showing for college students.

The mission of ISSRA is to establish saddle seat riding teams at colleges and universities across the United States providing beginners through experienced and/or advanced riders with an opportunity to learn to ride or continue their riding and showing throughout college without the necessity of owning a horse while in college.

Each ISSRA team is paired with a local riding school or academy that serves as the team's home base and provides riding instruction and team practices, horses and coaching at ISSRA horse shows. Beginners (with little or no horse experience) through advanced riders (who have won World or National Championships) are eligible to join ISSRA. ISSRA is the first intercollegiate equestrian program to offer saddle seat riding.

## National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCAA Emerging Sport)

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The NCEA National Championship is held in April each year. Qualification for this seeded bracket championship requires participation in a minimum of five NCEA head-to-head meets during the regular season. The NCEA National Champion is determined by competition between the two teams that advanced from the semifinal meets.

The NCEA promotes the advancement of NCAA Equestrian within college athletics. With the uniting of many in the horse industry to support NCAA Equestrian, reaching the required 40 sponsoring schools to advance Equestrian from NCAA Emerging to NCAA Championship sport status is in our future.

*For more information, please visit our website [collegiateequestrian.com](http://collegiateequestrian.com).*



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## **US EQUESTRIAN** HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FOR GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

PRESENTED BY ELISABETH GOTH

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The US Equestrian Higher Education Scholarship for Graduating High School Seniors – presented by Elisabeth Goth will provide a \$1,000 grant to one graduating high school senior who will be pursuing equestrian either through an equestrian related degree or on an intercollegiate equestrian team. Applicants must be active members of US Equestrian and submit an essay to the US Equestrian office by July 1.

## **US EQUESTRIAN** COLLEGE SEARCH

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The search for the right college is considered one of the most exciting and potentially overwhelming times for young adults. With all of the information available and factors to consider, it can be especially difficult for young equestrians to narrow the search to schools that fit them best. Between academic courses and equestrian opportunities, the idea that you may not have come across your “perfect” school is a constant concern.

The US Equestrian College Search was created to make the process of finding a school easier for equestrian athletes. This online tool is designed to guide students in making an informed decision by matching them with colleges that meet their academic and equestrian goals. The Search provides a list of institutions that meet the criteria provided by the students. Students are then able to view the profile of each institution that meets their goals.

## US EQUESTRIAN ATHLETE LETTERING PROGRAM

AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 5-12

You don't have to be a record setting quarterback, point guard or track star to letter in sports anymore. The United States Equestrian Federation (US Equestrian) is writing a new chapter in the recognition of student athletes – one that honors Equestrians.

US Equestrian recognizes the dedication of equestrians preparing for competition through practice and training sessions as similar to other students in an athletic program. The US Equestrian Athlete Lettering Program was developed to honor equestrian student athletes for their individual achievements with a varsity letter in their chosen sport, regardless of the availability of an equestrian team or club through their school.

The US Equestrian Athlete Lettering Program is open to equestrian athletes in all breeds or disciplines who are currently members of US Equestrian or become US Equestrian members. Students participating in the program need to record 100 hours of riding or training and three competitions of any level or type to complete the requirements for that year. The program runs from June 1-May 31 of each year and will honor those who document their training and competition involvement by awarding emblems and pins.



Students currently in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in the US Equestrian High School Athlete Program.



Students currently in grades 5-8 are eligible to participate in the US Equestrian Junior High Athlete Program.



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Our Coach, Lindsay Vulich, is a USHJA Certified Trainer and has been coaching the team for over 10 years. Lindsay can be contacted at 717-576-1150 or at [LinLin411@aol.com](mailto:LinLin411@aol.com).

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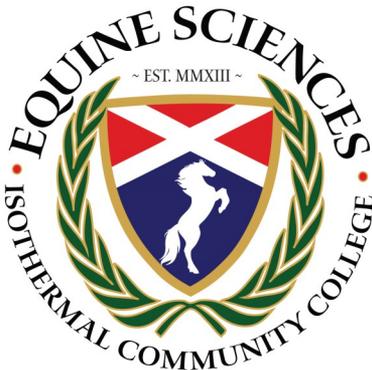
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