NEDA SCHOLARSHIP ~ DETAILS & SELECTION PROCESS

SCHOLARSHIP MISSION

The mission of the NEDA Scholarship Program is to provide educational opportunities to members who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to and/or excellence in the sport as well as service and ambassadorship within this Association. In particular, the committee seeks to support qualified members to take advantage of specific opportunities for advancement with the understanding that the membership and the sport will benefit as a result of the knowledge and experience gained. This program exists to further two specific objectives - to provide the widest possible range of dressage education to the greatest number of members and to support the development of dressage in the field of international competition.

SELECTION PROCESS DETAILS

1) Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent US residents holding a Green Card and in good standing with NEDA. Scholarship money must be used to participate in educational programs that include, but are not limited to, seminars, workshops, clinics and training programs offered by recognized and/or certified instructors. Programs for which the money is requested must have a stated objective and must be for the specific purpose of advancing the rider's/official's skills or individual's standing in the dressage community (e.g., the purpose can be to attend an USDF seminar to move from one judging level to the next, but not to attend a clinic required to maintain one's card). There must be a clear beginning and ending dates.

2) There are five different categories in which members may apply for:
   ~ Professional Rider/Trainer
   ~ Junior/Young Rider
   ~ Breeder
   ~ Competing Amateur Adult
   ~ Non-Competing Amateur Adult

All NEDA members can fall into one of these five categories. If you are unsure which category makes sense for you, please check with the Scholarship Chair.

3) Scholarship applications are available any time of the year online at neda.org and may be submitted at any time. Scholarships are awarded in the Spring and Fall. Deadlines for receipt of applications are **June 1st & November 1st**. Completed applications must be received by these deadlines to be considered for awards in those time frames. To be fair to all applicants, if an application is not complete or arrives late, it cannot be considered for that allocation date and is returned to the applicant for future consideration. Completed applications must be accompanied by four references (two personal and two from those who can attest to your riding, teaching, and/or training abilities). Recipients of previous NEDA scholarships may apply again after 4 years with the criteria evaluated for the last 4 years.

4) The Scholarship Committee (consisting of 7 - 10 members), meets approximately two to three weeks following the two deadlines to review all applications and allocate scholarships depending upon availability of funds, qualifications of applicants, etc.

5) The Committee screens each application with a uniform set of criteria, eliminating the possibility of subjective selection or favoritism. While the criteria are naturally somewhat different for each category, they generally include such benchmarks as length of NEDA membership, volunteer history, other scholarships received, goal of program, competition level, previous awards and recognition, benefit to NEDA's membership, timeliness of goal, credibility and reputation, ambassadorship and effect on professional contribution/educational purpose. Within each of the criteria a candidate may accrue up to 5 points. For example: In the criteria...
for Length of NEDA membership, a candidate would earn 1 point for "under 2 years", 2 points for "2-4 years", 3 points for "5-9 years", 4 points for "10-15 years", and 5 points for "over 15 years".

6) To be considered for an award, an applicant must accrue a minimum of 60% of the total possible points. Professionals applying to train internationally must receive a minimum score of 68% to be considered for Scholarship amounts above $2000. If no candidate accrues the minimum score, no award is given in that category. The money is held to be awarded in the next application period. A qualifying score does not automatically mean monies will be awarded - it is just a baseline. The Committee attempts at all times to keep focused on how the overall membership can benefit from the educational opportunity the scholarships are providing.

7) Current maximum suggested allotments for scholarships per applicant are as follows:

~ Professional Rider/Trainer - $3000 (or for an applicant requesting assistance for an International level education opportunity, the committee may award up to $4,000)
~ Competing Amateur Adult - $2000
~ Non-Competing Amateur Adult - $2000
~ Junior/Young Rider - $1000
~ Breeder - $2000

It is hoped that in any given year, a mixture of applications from all categories would be received and awarded, although there are years when this may not be possible due to lack of qualified applicants or the desire to make an extraordinary award to assist a highly qualified candidate in an Olympic or Championship year.

8) The Scholarship Chair notifies all applicants of the outcome. Those who have been awarded scholarships are mailed a "Letter of Agreement" that is a simple contract between the member and NEDA that outlines where, when and how the money will be used as well as what the applicant is willing to do for NEDA in return. A formal letter of agreement will specifically outline the ways in which the Committee expects the recipient to contribute to NEDA. The individual's knowledge and experience will be taken into consideration. Some ways that members give back for their scholarship assistance are giving clinics, organizing a clinic or a fundraising event for Scholarships, judging, writing an article, and/or being available for publicity, photos, etc. The Letter of Agreement also instructs the recipient to provide receipts to the Scholarship Chair for all of his/her expenses associated with the scholarship. It also explains that if for some reason the recipient does not complete the program for which the award was made within 1 year, any unused portion of the funds must be returned barring exceptional circumstances.

A previous NEDA Scholarship recipient had this to say about her experience: "The scholarship I received allowed me to give my training top priority. It was fantastic to be in a total learning environment - a very positive experience! Plus my students are now receiving the benefits of my gained knowledge."