



THE ROAD TO LA28 IS PAVED IN 2021

The USET Foundation (USET) is dedicated to providing funding to the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) to support the preparation for and delivery of the U.S. Equestrian Teams at championships and Nations Cups. This support also includes backing and development of a robust pathway for Developing and Emerging athletes as they begin their journey to representing the United States in international competition and on the podium.

While there are challenges leading into the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, now rescheduled for 2021, what is not uncertain is the commitment and specific plans being made for the next “home” Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will be held in Los Angeles in 2028 (LA28).

Will Connell, Director of Sport for USEF, has laid out a detailed plan to medals in all four disciplines at LA28, which will put a framework and roadmap in place to deliver sustained success. This Plan will work in tandem with the Federation’s Strategic Plan, which will be reviewed in early 2021.

But how does that success happen? It will require specific targets in the major Games leading up to LA28 and building systems to bring along younger athletes and young horses in order to find, develop, and set up the best talent for the future. The robust plan is designed to be fluid in order to accommodate changes in the upcoming year, with a goal to get all of the important stakeholders engaged and planning for 2028 now.

The plan has five core pillars, as outlined by Connell originally for the 2016 Games, but have now been projected out to 2028: Talent, Vision, Commitment, Environment, and Resource.

“While 2021 is a year of double vision, as it is the first year of the Paris quadrennial year planning, but also now the final year for Tokyo quadrennial year planning, the focus in 2021 should have been preparing for 2022 World Championships, which is

the first opportunity for U.S. teams to qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games,” said Connell. “Additionally, there should be a focus on Developing athletes and horses ahead of 2024. Now we must find a way to focus on both Tokyo and 2022; this is a very real challenge.

“The reality is that there is very rarely a legal or ethical ‘magic wand’ that can deliver a Pathway and Program that guarantees sustained success, unless it is having the resource to continually purchase the very best horses,” Connell continued. “Therefore, most leading equestrian nations are doing very similar things. We must seek to do the basics better than other nations but also grab every opportunity to find the 0.5% performance increase; those opportunities are out there to identify and implement if the resource exists.”

Connell and USEF recognized that various criteria, or “Key Performance Indicators (KPIs),” for the pathway athletes were met leading up to the anticipated 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, including a Para Pathway and Centers of Excellence, giving Developing athletes team experience, setting performance standards for European tours, and enhanced Talent ID systems.

“The Pathway needs to expand to better accommodate all the necessary areas of Talent ID, Talent Confirmation, and Talent Development,” said Connell. “While ultimately, it is the partnership of athlete and horse that will deliver medals, the program must identify talented athletes regardless, within reason, of their





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Dear Friends,

In the six months since our spring newsletter, we have navigated a complicated landscape—both in our day-to-day lives and in equestrian sport.

While the future remains uncertain, I am proud of our athletes' and our community's resilience and look forward to U.S. equestrian team achievements in the year ahead. The 2021 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo remain top of mind, we have 16 discipline championships from now through 2021, and we are preparing for the 2022 World Championships, the first opportunity for the U.S. to qualify for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris. As US Equestrian (USEF) Director of Sport, Will Connell, points out in his Road to LA28 plan, these near-term events are critical factors in the plan for the long-term success of our U.S. equestrian teams. At the same time, it requires a certain level of commitment and specific strategies that foster development and matriculation for emerging athletes.

The USET Foundation's "Raising the Bar" Campaign was designed to support a robust pathway that Will Connell has outlined in his plan. With a goal of raising \$40 million, the Campaign has raised \$34.7 million as of October. With \$5.3 million more to raise, we need to continue reaching out across our community. The money generated by the Raising the Bar Campaign will help fund programs not only this year, but also into the next quadrennial. Similarly, the Stephen Blauner Challenge was established in Stephen's honor with a goal of raising \$1.2 million by year's end. Funds from the Challenge will not only help our U.S. Eventing Team at the Tokyo Olympic Games, they will also help support the USEF Developing Programs to establish an endowment fund that will provide an annual grant for this country's up-and-coming athletes.

This quarter alone, we've made great strides in continuing to build this pathway for emerging athletes in what is a difficult year. Winners were crowned at the Platinum Performance/USEF Talent Search Finals West and East, respectively, and Liz Halliday-Sharp was a recipient of the Jacqueline B. Mars National Competition and Training Grant, which enabled her to compete at Galway Downs International in October. In this issue, we also check in with rising stars in eventing, combined driving, and para dressage.

This year, we honored Jane Forbes Clark for her 40th year as a Gold Medal Giving recipient. Her contributions to high-performance equestrian sport are virtually unmatched.

Finally, we pay tribute to Colonel John Russell and Agneta Currey, whose tremendous influences on our beloved sport will always be remembered.

As we head into the holiday season, I want to thank all of the supporters of the USET Foundation and equestrian sport. The collective compassion and generosity of everyone is what will propel us to success next year and for many years to come.

Have a happy and healthy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Bonnie Jenkins
Executive Director



Check out the 2020 October issue of *YOUR TEAM* at USET.org

- ◆ Eventing's Leading Couple Share Everything... Even Their Name!
- ◆ The Art of Horsemanship – Melanie Smith
- ◆ McLain Ward: Class Act, In and Out of the Ring
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And more!

The United States Equestrian Team Foundation (USET) is a philanthropic partner of US Equestrian (USEF). The USET Foundation funds U.S. teams and programs through charitable gifts and donations and makes grants to USEF annually.

THE ROAD TO LA28

horsepower – especially at the Emerging and lower end of development.”

Another important area of focus will be for USEF to more effectively promote talented youth athletes to owners.

“Owners will be in the sport for many reasons, but I hope we can focus on communication, recognition, and involvement,” said Connell. “I hope we will see more owners involved with younger riders in the Pathway to secure horses and give experience and support to riders that will aim for LA28. Of course, we also hope to see owners continuing to support our elite athletes who have such an excellent record of delivering medals.”

For those just entering the Performance Pathway at the Emerging level, USEF anticipates working with affiliates (United States Hunter Jumper Association, United States Dressage Federation, United States Eventing Association, United States Para Equestrian Association) to support athletes of all talent levels and ages and aiming to develop a mindset of “Regionally Delivered, Centrally Driven.” From there, the Pathway is better placed to help organize how Emerging athletes advance to the Development level.

Development of Young Horse programs and pathways will be an important focus, and the U.S. must look to expand our abilities to identify horses with Games potential and provide economically viable competition opportunities in all disciplines.

The strategy with Sports Science and Medicine (SSM), equine and human, is to develop the concept of interoperability. An overall enhancement of the delivery of Equine and Human SSM, looking at the horse/athlete as one entity will be important, bringing together and engaging the entire horse and human care provider team—the veterinarians, farriers, grooms, physiotherapists, nutritionists, gait analysis, doctor and of course the coach. When looking at performance enhancement through SSM, it is through the concept of interoperability that we can aim to help athletes and coaches seek a competitive enhancement.

Equestrian sport can use LA28 as a springboard for growth and visibility at all levels and across many sectors in the United States, and an integrated plan of communication, creativity, and resource will be key.

“Over the last five years, it has been clearly demonstrated that Equestrian can convert resource into success,” Connell con-



Will Connell, Director of Sport for USEF

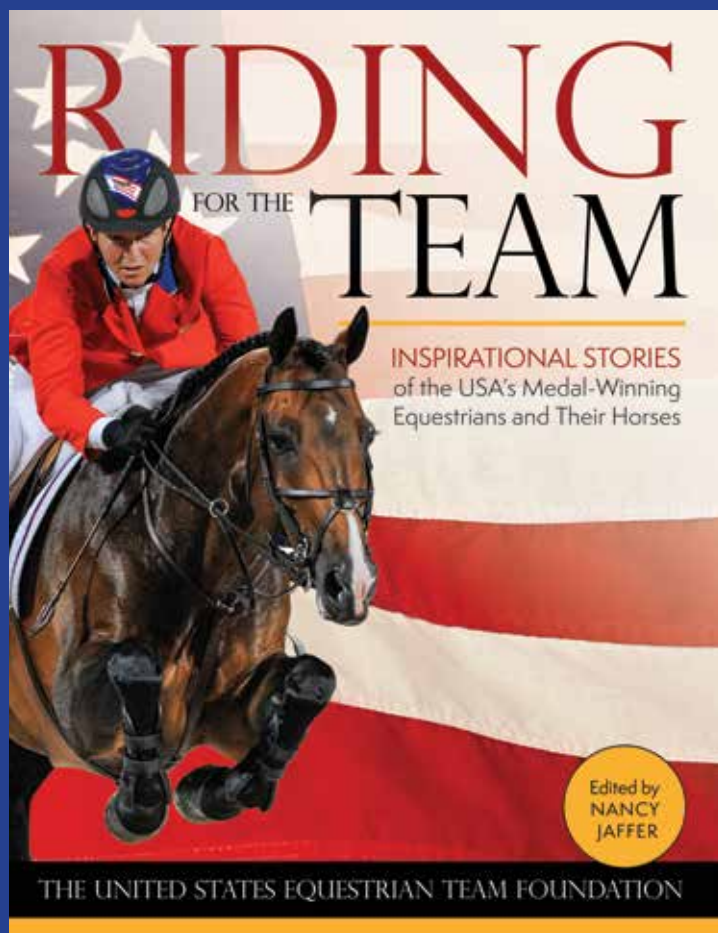
cluded. “Projecting forward to LA28 gives us a long-term vision that brings meaning to all aspects and levels of the Program. It will articulate the commitment required, the opportunities that exist, and the barriers that must be negotiated in order for the Teams to deliver medals at a home Games at LA28 and truly deliver stabilized, sustained eminence.” – Jennifer Wood





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Climbing to New Heights: *Measuring the Raising the Bar Campaign*

Serving as the campaign for the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation, Raising the Bar helps fund the United States equestrian teams in all international disciplines and serves as the engine that enables those athletes to represent us around the world.

Raising the Bar was designed to sustain greatness in our high performance programs and to invest in future talent. While philanthropy has traditionally been cyclical, the needs of our athletes in their growth and leading into championship years is not. The long-term, sustained effort is why the Raising the Bar campaign

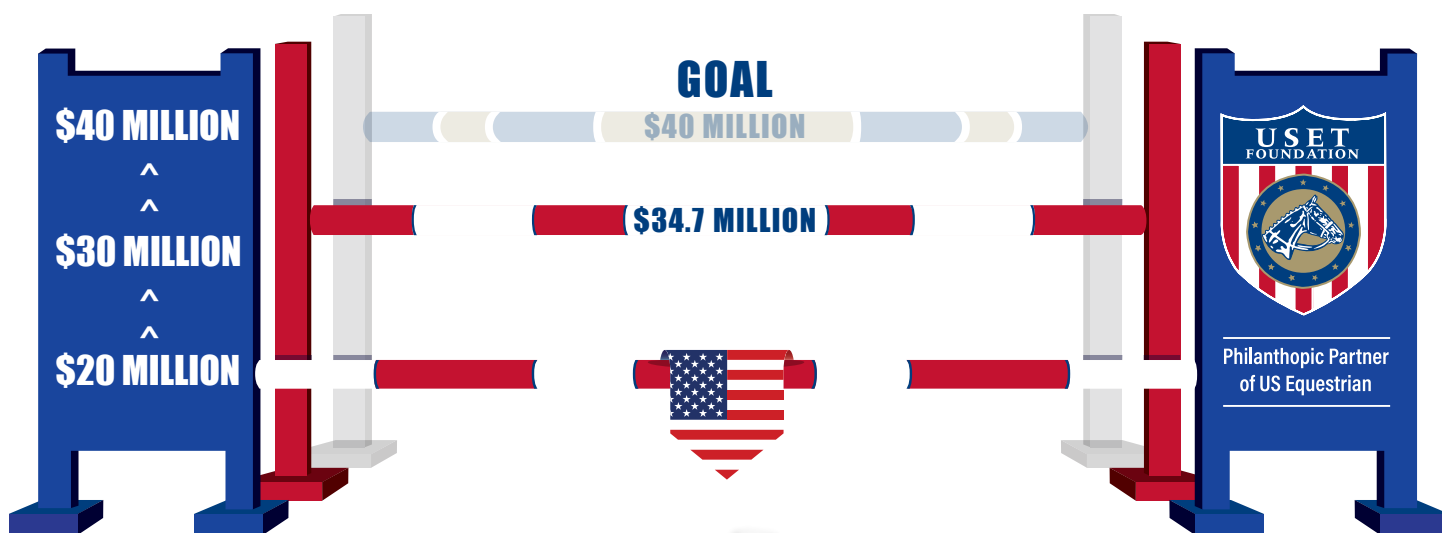
was created.

Funds from Raising the Bar provide support for our senior and developing teams in competition and training, helping to fund everything from travel, logistics, coaches, and veterinarians. As the philanthropic partner to US Equestrian (USEF), the USET Foundation is equally committed to this entry point for athletes progressing along the pathway to the highest levels of competition as it is to maintaining a world-class US Equestrian High Performance program.



The Campaign for the United States Equestrian Team Foundation

Philanthropic Partner of US Equestrian



Raising the Bar was designed to sustain greatness in our high performance programs and to invest in future talent.

Earlier this year, the USET Foundation launched the public phase of the Campaign with a goal of raising \$40 million. As of October 2020, the Campaign has raised \$34.7 million from nearly 10,000 individual donors. 2021 will be the costliest competition year in the USET Foundation's history in part because the expenses related to the rescheduled Olympic Games and championships will need to be replicated. With more than \$5 million more to raise by the summer of 2021, every dollar helps.

Our equestrian teams have a very big year ahead with the rescheduled Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo, Japan, as well as 16 discipline championships from now through 2021. The money generated by the Raising the Bar Campaign will help fund

programs not only this year, but also into the next quadrennial.

An agenda this ambitious requires hard work and significant funding. It takes a committed community to keep our athletes at the top of the sport and ensure we have a pipeline of talent to stay there. With donor support, it guarantees that a highly-respected, world-class equestrian program will continue to be a hallmark of American athletics, fostering sportsmanship, goodwill between nations, and achieving excellence.

Join us in supporting the Raising the Bar Campaign by visiting [USET.org](https://uset.org) or contacting the USET Foundation at 908-234-1251 or bjenkins@uset.org. – Kara Pinato Scro



VISIONS REFOCUSED

How U.S. Athletes Have Adjusted Their Olympic and Paralympic Goals

As the entire world adjusted to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, one group of U.S. athletes felt the looming consequences differently than most. For those with their sights set firmly on the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, the unraveling of the year's show schedule and the ultimate postponement of the Olympic Games left them reeling and with no other option than to pivot and change their approach.

True to their identities as standout horsemen and women, dressage athlete Adrienne Lyle, para dressage rider Rebecca Hart, eventer Phillip Dutton, and show jumper McLain Ward were able to keep their goals in perspective, recognizing that much was out of their hands and that the health and well-being of their country and the world took precedence over all else. In the end, staying positive was their saving grace.

THANKFUL FOR HORSE SENSE

Lyle, who hails from Ketchum, Idaho, attributed her ability to pivot after learning that the 2020 Olympic Games were postponed to her horse sense.

"Horse people are very flexible," she said. "Rarely do things go exactly as planned with horses. That is something that high-performance riders are used to. Once the announcement came, which was super disappointing, but the right choice, we all had more important things to worry about, like keeping people healthy and safe."

Lyle, who was in Florida for the winter circuit, remained there for the summer and kept up with her training thanks to digitally-streamed lessons with her trainer and U.S. dressage Chef d'Equipe Debbie McDonald.

"You have to focus on the next goal," continued Lyle. "As an athlete, you can't get upset about things that you have no control over."



Adrienne Lyle and Salvino, owned by Betsy Juliano

Photo by Aman Hayer / Phelps Media Group



Rebecca Hart and El Corona Texel, owned by Rowan O'Riley

Photo by Andrea Evans / US Equestrian

A MOMENT FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Based in Wellington, Florida, Hart is back on the path to Tokyo after a difficult journey. She won the 2020 Adequan®/USEF Para Dressage National Championship in October riding El Corona Texel, owned by Rowan O'Riley.

"Everything came to a screeching halt, and it makes you pause because for four years that date has been cemented in your brain with everything you do being a building block to that goal," she said. "I took two weeks to let it absorb, and then I went back to my spreadsheets and hit the delete button."

Hart turned to meditation and the advice of her trusted sports psychologist while working to perfect transitions, harmony, and connection in the tack.

"I am very date and goal driven, so [this] was a mental challenge for me," she said. "I used it as a teaching moment for my own self-improvement. There's a lot going on in the world, and maybe this was its way of telling us all that we needed to take a moment."

FOCUSED ON FITNESS

As events across the nation and the world began to cancel in the early months of 2020, the focus for Dutton of West Grove, Pennsylvania, became fitness. "We slowly but surely realized this year would be different, so we dialed down our training a bit, but focused on keeping the horses fit," Dutton said.

With goals shifting to Tokyo 2021, Dutton was able to add some polish to his horses, saying, "There was no pressure to get ready for anything, so we were able to focus on improvement of each horse's weaker phase, which was to their benefit.

"It was a blow, but in sport you get used to disappointment and things not going to plan. Like most people, you have to learn to go with the flow," he admitted. "[The postponement] was the right thing to do, and we are hopeful for next year."

PLANNING FOR HORSEPOWER

After Ward returned to his home base in Brewster, New York, in the spring and came to terms with the postponement of the Olympics, he chose to refocus on 2021 and chase the goal of positivity. "I had to digest the announcement a little. Our preparation is years in the making, and it was nearing the final hours. My typical mindset is that I am going to plan and work for the best scenario and adjust if it doesn't."

More time for training also gave Ward the opportunity reevaluate his Olympic horsepower.

"[2016 Olympic team silver medalist] HH Azur is getting older, and you have to make plans for older horses' careers to have them fresh for one more season," said Ward. "I made the decision to not show her for the rest of 2020, not because of physical reasons, but because I want her to have a fresh set of legs for 2021 and take another swing at the Olympic Games. We let her rest more than we ever have [because of the postponement], and now we will start to bring her back."

As a lifelong competitor, preparing for the Olympics is as much mental as it is physical. "My motivation to work on my riding has always come from working toward championships and Games all the way back to equitation



Photo by Alex Banks / US Equestrian

Phillip Dutton and Z, owned by Tom Tierney, Simon Roosevelt, Suzanne Lacy, Annie Jones, and Caroline Moran

championships. Because of the postponement, I have to be honest that I have lacked a little motivation. As 2021 picks up and sport returns, I think it will be more motivation for all of us."



Photo by Andrea Evans / US Equestrian

McLain Ward and HH Azur, owned by Double H Farm and McLain Ward

Moving Forward Despite Double Vision

The resilience demonstrated by Lyle, Hart, Dutton, and Ward is a reflection of the strength and spirit that our team athletes embody. As US Equestrian Director of Sport Will Connell shared in his plan for the road to LA28, 2021 is a year of "double vision." In addition to Tokyo being the most expensive Olympic Games in the U.S. equestrian team's history, it's also a year where elite athletes are preparing for the 2022 World Championships—the first opportunity for the U.S. to qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Our teams will face very real challenges—both physical and monetary—as we prepare for 2021 and beyond. As we head into another unprecedented year in sport, the long-term vision for success of our U.S. equestrian teams will only come into focus if athletes, support staff, organizations, and fans remain tenaciously committed and united on this path forward. — Lindsay Brock



RISING ★ STARS of Equestrian Sport

JACOB ARNOLD *Combined Driving*

At the relatively young age of 29, Jacob Arnold is no stranger to the highest levels of his sport. He has spent 10 years competing at the FEI level in combined driving, but his career with horses had humble beginnings. Arnold was exposed to horses early in his life while living in his hometown of Snow Camp, North Carolina, after a friend of his father's introduced them to the sport of pleasure driving. Shortly thereafter, Arnold's father purchased Spring Hollow Dark Shadow, a 16-year-old Morgan mare that was green to carriage driving, but would eventually help him claim the win in the CAI-B Single Horse division at Little Everglades International CDE, in Dade City, Florida, in 2010. At that time, he was the youngest person to win a CAI competition in the U.S. having just turned 19. In the same year, Arnold was invited to compete at CAIO Ászár Kisbér in Hungary, and driving a borrowed horse, he received a world championship qualifying score. For his accomplishments, he was named the 2011 USEF Junior Equestrian of the Year.

Since then, Arnold has garnered a number of top placings in FEI competitions, including another win in the FEI Single Horse division at the CAI-B Little Everglades International CDE in 2012, a win in the marathon phase and placing seventh overall at the FEI World Driving Championships for Singles in Izsak, Hungary, in 2014, and winning the CAI3*-H2 division in Nebanice, Czech Republic, in 2015.



Jacob Arnold and Mr Lindsey G, owned by Steve Wilson

Arnold continued to compete various horses in the Pairs and Single Horse World Championships with exceptional results. Arnold was the 2018 USEF Advanced Single Horse Combined Driving Reserve National Champion, two-time FEI World Driving Championships for Singles competitor (2014 and 2018), 2015 FEI World Driving Championships for Pairs competitor, and won the FEI World Equestrian Games Tryon 2018 Test Event CAI2*-H1. In 2019, Arnold was fifth overall at Driving Valkenswaard International and placed sixth in dressage at the 2019 World Championships for Pair Horses, in Drebkau, Germany.

Arnold now has his sights set on competing at the FEI Driving World Championship for Pairs in the Netherlands in 2021 and hopes to represent the United States well, if selected. He is also aiming to compete in Four-in-Hand within the next two years.

Currently, Arnold is teaching his own students while working full time for Steve Wilson of Hermitage Farm in Goshen, Kentucky. He credits Wilson as a longtime mentor along with Misdee Wrigley Miller and James Miller, Boyd Exell, Taryn Lester, and his fiancé, Mary Sheerin.

Passionate about making an impact on the sport and helping it to evolve and thrive, Arnold has recently stepped into governance roles including joining the USEF Driving Sport Committee.





WOODS BAUGHMAN

Eventing

Given his tremendous success at a young age and hometown of Lexington, Kentucky, you'd think Woods Baughman, now 24 years old, would have come from a family of equestrians, but that's not the case. After an initial ride at the age of six, he never looked back and it paved the way for what would become a standout career.

In 2014, Baughman was part of the junior bronze-medal winning team at the Adequan®/FEI North American Youth Championships presented by Gotham North at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky, and in 2017, Baughman completed his first CCI4*-L at Jersey Fresh, in Allentown, New Jersey, with Montesquieu.

By 2018, Baughman was competing in Europe with his British Warmblood, Maverick McNamara, completing the CCI3*-S at Sopot, Poland, and Langerhagen, Germany, and the CCI4*-SCIC3* at Marbach and Luhmühlen, both in Germany.

In 2019, Baughman had his greatest successes yet. He won the CCI3*-L and The Dutta Corp./USEF CCI3*-L Eventing National

Championship at The Dutta Corp. Fair Hill International, in Fair Hill, Maryland, with C'est La Vie 135, and won the Virginia Horse Trials CCI3*-L, in Lexington, Virginia, with Masterel just two weeks later.

For the past six years, Baughman has been training with Sharon White at Last Frontier Farm in Summit Point, West Virginia, where he now works as an assistant trainer. He credits White as being his greatest mentor. Always one to help him solve problems, it was White who suggested he spend a year in Germany under the tutelage of Olympic team gold medalist Dirk Schrade. He says competing in Europe was a transformational point in his career—he was able to watch, learn from, and compete against the top athletes in the sport.

Baughman continues to campaign his veteran partner, C'est La Vie 135, and is focused on bringing up a new seven-year-old, Hopak De Greenbay Z. While Baughman hopes to compete in Europe in the spring, travel permitting, he has never lost sight of his longer-term vision of representing the United States at the Olympic Games and World Championships in years to come.



Woods Baughman and his own C'est La Vie 135

DAVID BOTANA

Para Dressage

David Botana's introduction to horses was through an acquaintance he and his mother met while volunteering at a local food pantry in his original hometown in La Porte, Indiana. It was then, at 11 years old, that Botana partnered with a 12.3-hand Pony of the Americas named Rocky. For the next few years, Rocky was a constant in Botana's life—the pair competed in Western and English pleasure and Botana jokes that Rocky was the first member of his family to get housing when they relocated to Maine.

While riding at Spring Creek Farm in Montville, Maine, Botana began para dressage with trainer, Susanne Hamilton. Hamilton sensed that Botana had big dreams and would need a partner that could take him to international levels, so she suggested he ride the 16.2-hand Trakehner stallion, Lord Locksley, owned by Meg Stevens. Botana recounts when Hamilton posed the idea of riding Locksley, that he'd seen the horse in the barn, and maybe greeted him, but never imagined he'd have the opportunity to partner with him.

In 2018, Botana showed in his first CPEDI competition. He had earned huge scores on the national stage, and within a year, Botana and Lord Locksley were able to match those in the CPEDI. The pair went from an initial score of 65.119% in the FEI Para Team Test Grade I CPEDI 3* in Wellington, Florida, back in 2018, to continued scores in the high 70s as their partnership blossomed, earning Botana the honor of 2018 United States Dressage Federation Grade I Rider of the Year. In 2019, Botana received the reserve champion honors in the Adequan®/USEF Para Dressage CPEDI3* National Championship at the Tryon International Equestrian Center in Mill Spring, North Carolina.

Now 18 years old and pursuing an undergraduate degree in Biomedical Engineering at Northwestern University, Botana plans



Photo by Taylor Pence / US Equestrian


to throw his hat in the ring at the CPEDI at Wellington, Florida, in January 2021, with the hopes of earning a spot representing the United States on the para dressage team at the 2021 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, Japan. — Kara Pinato Scro 



Photo by Andrea Evans / US Equestrian

David Botana and Lord Locksley, owned by Susanne Hamilton

A Speedy Path to Elite Athlete

LIZ HALLIDAY-SHARP

Jacqueline B. Mars Competition & Training Grant Recipient

One could say that Liz Halliday-Sharp has a need for speed. Devoting a life to two separate international sporting careers is a path not many choose, but it's something U.S. eventer Halliday-Sharp took on for 13 years of her career.

Sharing a passion for car racing with her father, she spent time in England as a competitive racecar driver in sportscar and GT endurance disciplines. At the same time, she was nurturing a blossoming career in eventing while working for William Fox-Pitt.

Halliday-Sharp's competitive racing career ended in 2010, but her desire for speed never waned. She now focuses squarely on eventing and that has undoubtedly contributed to her successes as an athlete on US Equestrian's (USEF) Eventing High Performance Pre-Elite Training List. In October, the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation awarded the Jacqueline B. Mars National Competition & Training Grant to Halliday-Sharp, and her mount, Cooley Quicksilver, a nine-year-old Irish Sport Horse gelding owned by The Monster Partnership.

Each year, the Jacqueline B. Mars Grant is awarded to Eventing riders who have been identified and recommended by the USEF Eventing Selectors, with an impressive record and the potential

to represent the United States in future international competition. Halliday-Sharp, who has not yet represented the U.S. at an Olympic Games or international championship, received \$10,000 to support the trip from Lexington, Kentucky, to Temecula, California, to compete in the CCI4*-L at the Galway Downs International Three-Day Event on October 28-31, 2020.

"It's very, very exciting, and it makes a big difference to the owners as well—we've got to support the good owners in the sport as much as we can," said Halliday-Sharp of receiving the grant. "We're very grateful to the [USET] Foundation. It's an expensive sport, and you don't get a lot of prize money. [This] really makes it all possible. I think next year, we'll start to think about five-star competition for [Cooley Quicksilver]," Halliday-Sharp continued. "I very much hope he'll be considered for the Olympic Games, and that was part of our reasoning for going to Galway."

There's no slowing down in sight for Liz Halliday-Sharp, and earning the Jacqueline B. Mars Grant afforded her an opportunity to demonstrate her talent in a team environment as she vies for a spot to represent the nation on the Olympic stage.

— Kara Pinato Scro and Tori Bilas



Photo by Libby Law / US Equestrian

Liz Halliday-Sharp and Cooley Quicksilver, owned by The Monster Partnership



Skylar Wireman is Top in the Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – West

Bonsall, California-based rider Skylar Wireman proved to be the ultimate competitor as she topped the Platinum Performance/USEF Show Jumping Talent Search Finals – West on September 20, 2020. At only 15 years of age, Wireman conquered the three-phase competition at Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park in San Juan Capistrano, California, to best a field of 18 aboard Hot Pants, a 22-year-old KWPN gelding owned by Haven Farms.

“For me, it is pretty unreal,” Wireman said of winning the title. “Last year I was fourth, so I made it to the final four, which was really exciting. Then, this year it was kind of surprising that I made it [into the final four] because I started in 18th after the first phase and I moved my way up to third after the gymnastics phase, and then I moved up to second after the jumping phase. It was really unreal for me.”

The Platinum Performance/USEF Talent Search is designed to identify the future of the sport of show jumping, drawing on all the essential components that test riders’ abilities in the discipline. Phase I tests the riders’ flatwork skills, Phase



Skylar Wireman and Hot Pants, owned by Haven Farms

II allows the riders to demonstrate their technical skills over a gymnastics course, and Phase III consists of a 1.15-meter jumper-style course testing the riders’ capabilities over a larger and more advanced track. The final phase is a work-off with the top four riders, requiring them to ride each other’s mounts and show off their versatility on different horses.

Age proved not to be a deterring factor for Wireman. She landed in third after Phases I and II, with scores of 75 and 85, respectively. A high score of 90 in the final jumping phase moved them up to second place, behind Parker Cliff of Folsom, California. Wireman and Cliff were selected, along with Kaitlyn Lovingfoss of Santa Clarita, California, and Amber Ayyad of Rancho Santa Fe, California, to move onto Phase IV.

Phase IV required the top four riders to complete a shortened course on their own horses, then aboard each of the other three horses to show how they adapt their riding skills to new mounts. After the last round, Wireman had the highest cumulative score of 354. Lovingfoss took second, with Cliff finishing third, and Ayyad in fourth.

Despite the challenges presented by the course, Wireman felt confident going into the ride-off. “I had ridden Parker

Cliff’s horse last year in the final four, and I have done so much catch-riding for Nick [Haness] and several other trainers, so I am pretty used to getting on a strange horse, jumping a few jumps and going in. Also, I had watched a lot of those horses go for the past couple weeks, so I was pretty confident going into the last phase.”

Wireman is no stranger to the winner’s circle. The young rider has claimed top honors at numerous championships and year-end finals across many divisions including in the Pony Hunters, Hunter Derbies, Junior Jumpers, and more, making her the ultimate equestrian competitor.

Wireman trains at home with her mother, Shayne Wireman, at their family’s Chestnut Hills Equestrian Center in Bonsall, California. Hard work has been instilled into the family operation and Skylar is no exception, putting in extra hours to help at the barn and even paying her own entry fees for special classes. Her talent has been noticed by trainers such as Traci and Carlton Brooks, Nick Haness, Christa Endicott, Leslie Nelson, and Paul and Nicky Haunert, all of whom have offered her catch rides at competitions. Wireman has Olympic aspirations, and it’s clear that she’s willing to put in the elbow grease to get there. – *Tori Bilas*



Elli Yeager Secures the Win in the Platinum Performance/USEF Talent Search Finals – East

The Platinum Performance/USEF Talent Search Finals – East took to a new venue for 2020, as the equitation superstars of the East Coast descended upon Tryon, North Carolina, to compete for the top prize at the Tryon International Equestrian Center.

After four phases and three days of tough competition, Elli Yeager emerged victorious among an impressive group of 63 young riders, taking the top call with a score of 363.0.

The 18-year-old from Wellington, Florida, is no stranger to success in the equitation ring, having won the R.W. “Ronnie” Mutch Equitation Championship High Point Award at the 2018 ASPCA Maclay Finals and the 2018 Lindsay Maxwell Charitable Fund Equitation Finals at the Washington International Horse Show as a 15-year-old.

Crucial to securing her win in the prestigious class was her mount, the 14-year-old Holsteiner gelding Copperfield 39, a horse she’s been paired with for eight years. They have grown up together and risen in the equitation ranks over the years and have now achieved the ultimate feat.



Elli Yeager and her own Copperfield 39

Prior to the championships, Yeager worked diligently on flatwork with trainers Missy Clark and John Brennan of North Run in Warren, Vermont. Their flatwork practice paid off, putting them in 11th after the flat phase, in a promising position to move up the ranks as the phases continued.

“My goal this week was to come out on top, but really, I came in just wanting to have nice consistent rounds and have some fun,” said Yeager. “Copper and I have known each other for so many years, so it just clicks when we get on and go in the ring.”

“We all know how to ride and [Missy’s] advice was to just go out there and be calm,” said Yeager. “We know how to jump the horses and all of them were amazing. This was always the hardest class for Copper and me. We would always win the Medal or the Maclay classes and then would be fifth in the Talent Search, so this one will definitely stick with me forever and is really, really special.”

Judging this year’s class were Lauren Hough and Archie Cox, who also served as the course designers alongside Technical Delegate Anthony D’Ambrosio. “We were looking for strong, confident, forward-thinking riders that could think for themselves and we asked different questions of a forward ride, a conservative ride. The top four riders did it beautifully,” explained Cox.

Reserve honors went to Ava Stearns of Chilmark, Massachusetts, with Zayna Rizvi of Wellington, Florida, in third, and Taylor Griffiths-Madden of Wellington, Florida, rounding out the top four.

Yeager earned the French Leave Memorial Perpetual Trophy, donated by the Gerald A. Nielsen family, for her win, and Copperfield 39 was given the Grappa Trophy as best horse. Her trainers also took the Leading Trainer Award, donated by the late Mr. Hugh J.B. Cassidy, III. – *Tori Bilas*



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF STEADFAST SUPPORT

JANE FORBES CLARK

An influential force in the international equestrian community and beyond, Jane Forbes Clark is known as an advocate and supporter who knows no bounds. Her steadfast commitment to horse sport has included serving as president and CEO of the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation from 2003 to 2013 as well as serving as the Chairman of Group IV of the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) for eight years.

Clark's leadership and knowledge of the sport has contributed to the long-term success and growth of the United States Equestrian Team and the Foundation in many ways. This year, the USET Foundation is proud to honor her commitment as she reaches a milestone—40 years of participation in the Gold Medal Club, an honor reserved for those who contribute more than \$1,000 annually to the USET Foundation.

Through her passion for equestrian sport spanning multiple disciplines, Clark has become well-known as an owner of show jumpers, dressage horses, Thoroughbred racehorses, and driving teams. Her ability to cross into various disciplines is one that came naturally to her. "I grew up in a family that was involved in multiple areas of horse sports," Clark recalled. "It wasn't different for me—it was normal. When I started at Benet College [Millbrook, N.Y.], I became enamored with the international disciplines. The more I was around [different disciplines], the more I realized they were really special.

"The horsemen and women [of the USET] in the early years had such a significant impact and were the architects of our [sport's] success," continued Clark. "I think there are very few international equestrian organizations today that have the depth of history that the USET has had, which has created a profound effect on the sport and inspires us all."



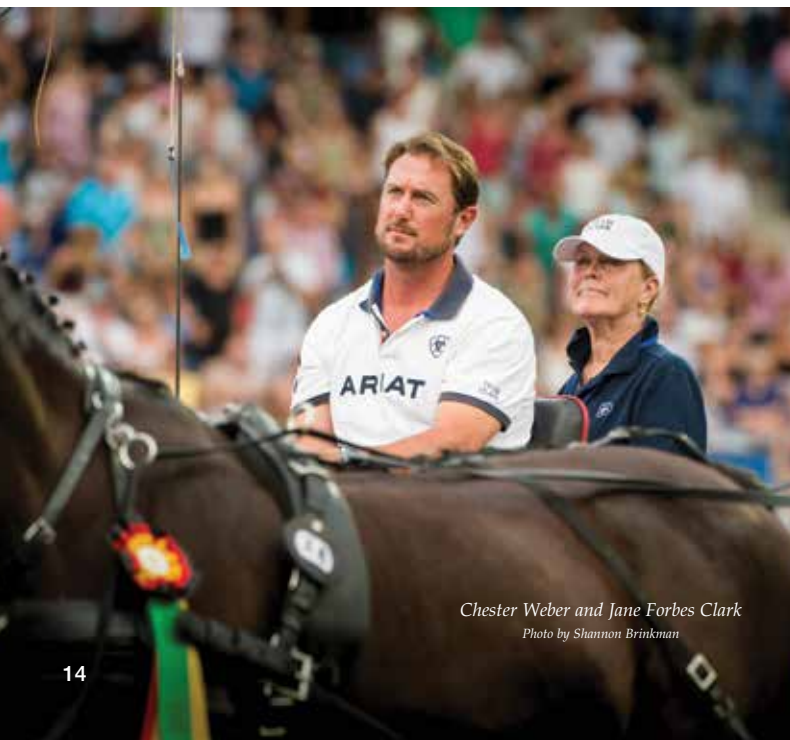
Jane Forbes Clark and her own Urlico, a horse that brought success for the U.S. Show Jumping team with Mario Deslauriers as well as individually with Ben Maher (GBR)

Photo by Shannon Brinkman



Leslie Burr-Howard and Extreme, owned by Jane Forbes Clark

Photo by Split Seconds / Alamy Stock Photo



Chester Weber and Jane Forbes Clark

Photo by Shannon Brinkman

Looking back on the influence she has had through the USET Foundation over the years, Clark cherishes the totality of the organization and everything it has been able to accomplish. Additionally, through her role as an owner, Clark has distinct memories she will not soon forget.

"You're always your proudest when you are part of a team that has won a medal at a Games, so those medal-winning moments are obviously very important to me," said Clark, who has owned four Olympic medal-contending horses including Extreme, who carried Leslie Burr-Howard to team silver at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. "And, watching Chester Weber become number one in the world with my team of horses was equally fantastic."

The USET Foundation is grateful for Clark's decades of support and all that she has contributed to the organization, and to horse sport as a whole. Her more than 40 years of service, support, and devotion have helped to shape the Foundation and foster success for our U.S. equestrian teams. — Lindsay Brock



STEPHEN BLAUNER CHALLENGE


A Lasting Legacy in Honor of Steve

\$959,000 Raised Towards \$1,200,000 Goal

Steve Blauner was a dear friend to many of us in the equestrian community and he touched the sport in numerous ways, from horse ownership to serving as a Trustee of the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation, and as a member of the USET Foundation's Raising the Bar Campaign Steering Committee. He was also incredibly tenacious in ensuring the continuation and success of the Millbrook Horse Trials and supporting horse syndication as a way to expand ownership opportunities for riders and bring new people into our sport.

Now, the USET Foundation is proud to help carry on Steve's determination and commitment to furthering the careers and opportunities of hard-working and talented young U.S. eventing riders and equestrian athletes across disciplines. In Steve's honor, the Stephen Blauner Challenge was established by the USET Foundation with a goal of \$1,200,000. Recently, Steve's friend and

fellow USET Foundation Trustee, Jacqueline B. Mars, made a generous gift of \$300,000 to lead the way. To date, \$959,000 has been raised toward the \$1,200,000 goal that the Foundation aims to reach by year's end.

The funds received from this Challenge will not only help our U.S. Eventing Team at the Tokyo Olympic Games, they will also help support the USEF Developing Programs and establish The Stephen Blauner Endowment Fund that will create permanence and provide an annual grant for this country's rising stars who may not otherwise have the opportunity to follow their dreams to represent their country as a member of the United States Equestrian Team. With just \$241,000 to go by December 31, 2020, the USET Foundation invites participation in helping to ensure continued support for the important programs Steve loved and giving young talents the opportunities to achieve their dreams. – *Tori Bilas* 

To make a gift, please contact Bonnie B. Jenkins, USET Foundation, at 908-234-1251 or bjenkins@uset.org.

Honor Roll of Donors

Jacqueline B. Mars	Tim and Cheryl Holekamp
Caroline Moran	Donald and Barbara Tober
Chris Pucillo	Bonnie Stedt
Gloria and Craig Callen	Fernanda Kellogg
Mark Hart	Annie Jones

Photo by Amber Heintzberger



Colonel John Russell and Rattler

Photo courtesy of US Equestrian archives

USET Foundation Remembers

COLONEL JOHN RUSSELL

The equestrian community was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of equestrian legend, Colonel John Russell. Col. Russell made an incredible impact during his 100 years of life through his endless devotion to the equestrian industry and to the U.S. Equestrian Team. An Olympic show jumper and trainer, as well as former member of the United States Army, Col. Russell, a native of Dauphin, Pennsylvania, was a prominent member of the U.S. Show Jumping Hall of Fame and held many other lifetime accolades to his name. Russell passed away on September 30, 2020, in San Antonio, Texas.

Col. Russell began his military career as a member of the 104th Cavalry, a mounted National Guard unit. Picked as a member of General George Patton's staff because of his equestrian skills, he honorably served in World War II. After being wounded at the Battle of Monte Cassino, Italy, he was awarded the Purple Heart. By the end of his time in the Army, Russell had attained the rank of lieutenant colonel and received numerous honors, including the Soldier's Medal, American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, World War

II Victory Medal, Army of the Occupation Medal with German Clasp, National Defense Service Medal, Honorable Service Lapel Pin WW II, and was the first American to win the Prize of the United Nations in 1947.

After the war, Col. Russell took over command of the 88th Reconnaissance Company, otherwise known as the Blue Devil Cavalry Division, in northern Italy where he began to train and show a string of approximately 20 horses. It was at this time that Col. Russell officially became a member of the U.S. Equestrian Team.


Col. Russell competed for the U.S. Equestrian Team in the 1948 Olympic

Games in London, England, with his horse Air Mail, and in the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland, aboard Democrat, with whom he brought home a team bronze medal. That same year, he led the U.S. Team to a Nations Cup win in Mexico and became the first non-German to win the Hamburg Derby, riding an American-bred Quarter Horse named Rattler. Though he trained in Europe to compete in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia, injuries to both himself and his horse kept him from competing. In 1956, he returned stateside to head the United States Modern Pentathlon Training Center at Fort Sam Houston, coaching athletes to six Olympic Medals and 22 World Championships, and helping organize the 1977 World Modern Pentathlon Championships.

Col. Russell has received the Pegasus Medal of Honor from US Equestrian (USEF) and the Gold Medal of Honor from the

UIPM, modern pentathlon's international federation. He was inducted into the U.S. Show Jumping Hall of Fame in 2001 and the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame in 2012, and he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) in 2010 and from the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) in 2011.

Col. Russell has left a lasting impression on today's modern athletes, and his legacy lives on through the ongoing operation of the Russell Equestrian Center in San Antonio, Texas.

In addition to his wife, Shane, Col. Russell is survived by sons, John W. Russell, Jr. (Ruth) and Douglas E. Russell (Laurie); grandsons, William Russell, McLean Russell, and Sam Russell, and great-grandchildren, William Russell, Wyatt Russell, Riley Russell, and Scarlett Russell. – *Tori Bilas* 

Colonel John Russell and Democrat

Photo courtesy of US Equestrian archives



USET Foundation Remembers

AGNETA AKERLUND CURREY


The United States Equestrian Team (USET) Foundation was saddened to learn of the passing of Agneta Akerlund Currey. Mrs. Currey, wife of pre-deceased former USET Foundation Chairman, Brownlee O. Currey, Jr., of Franklin, Tennessee, Wellington, Florida, and Southampton, New York, passed away peacefully on October 20, 2020, surrounded by her family. A native of Borås, Sweden, Mrs. Currey was the daughter of the late Sonja Viola Andren Akerlund and Joel Frans Akerlund. She attended schools in Sweden, France, and England. She started her career at her family's business, Abecita, Sweden's largest manufacturer of undergarments at the time. While working in New York City in 1960, she met Brownlee O. Currey Jr., an investment banker at Equitable Securities. They married in Borås in May 1961. Mrs. Currey's passions were her family, horses, and gardening, and she was well known for her elegant entertaining.

She was an active volunteer at the Hampton Classic Horse Show since 1977, a premier equestrian event in the United States that benefited Southampton Hospital. She chaired the board of directors and cofounded an advisory committee of professional riders and exhibitors to continuously improve the show. As head of the flower committee, she brought color and beauty to the show grounds.

A rider since her childhood, Mrs. Currey and her three children trained at Topping Riding Club, one of the oldest riding clubs on Long Island, and she became a talented amateur hunter rider. Mrs. Currey was instrumental and the leader in creating the partnership of 1984 Los Angeles Olympic double gold medalist Joe Fargis and his Thoroughbred mare Touch Of Class. From 1989 to 1998, she and her late husband hosted the Music City Grand Prix at their River Circle Farm in Franklin, Tennessee, to benefit Easter Seals and Saddle Up! therapeutic horseback riding program.

Her survivors include her children, Christian (Kathryn) Currey, Frances Briggs, and Stephanie (John) Ingram; her grandchildren, Brownlee Owen Currey II, Charlotte Kane Currey, Samuel Hamilton Currey, Margaret Hampton Currey, Roger Brownlee Briggs Jr., Christopher Currey Briggs, Peter Hampton Briggs, Oliver Christian Briggs, Alexa Davol Chapman, Christina Currey Chapman, Martha Hampton Ingram, and Lucas Rivers Ingram; and her great-niece, Anna McDonogh. She is preceded in death by her husband, Brownlee O. Currey, Jr.

The family will have a private memorial. Those wishing to honor her memory can make contributions to Currey Ingram Academy; 6544 Murray Lane; Brentwood, TN 37027 or the Hampton Classic Horse Show, Inc.; P.O. Box 3013; Bridgehampton, NY 11932.

— Jennifer Wood 



Brownlee and Agneta Currey



Mrs. Currey was instrumental and the leader in creating the partnership of 1984 Los Angeles Olympic double gold medalist, Joe Fargis, and his Thoroughbred mare, Touch Of Class.

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