

USDF REGION 9 ANNUAL TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Rationale: The vast majority of prizes and awards are won at horse shows by top competitors. Occasionally a trainer/instructor can apply for and receive a scholarship or grant for continuing education purposes. It is time to recognize those who teach well.

Financial Goal: The goal is to develop initial, one-time financial donations, as well as annual donations from individuals. On-going annual contributions may continue until the fund is fully endowed (approximately \$100,000+). This award will total \$5000/year. The Dressage Foundation is enthusiastically supportive of this award and willing to manage the endowment, and help it grow.

Selection Criteria: Those individuals who are selected for the Teaching Excellence Award will have many, if not all, of the following attributes:

- A USDF Region 9 member in good standing-permanent residence in Region 9. *(Required)*
- A teacher of dressage, whether it is basics-Training through 1st-2nd level; or mid-range 2nd -4th levels; or FEI. *(Required)*
- Adherence to sound dressage principles, such as outlined by the USDF Training Pyramid.
- The ability to communicate these principles of training so that students develop themselves and horses in a logical, progressive and humane way up through the levels. *(Required)*
- A reputation for honesty, integrity and community/regional service.
- A USDF Certified Instructor, encouraged, though not required.

Selection Committee: A committee of 5 individuals will be chosen by the Regional Director to evaluate the applications. Selection Committee must include a Board member of The Dressage Foundation; an individual from outside Region 9 who is either a USDF Instructor Certification Program faculty member or examiner; and respected individuals from the region, which would include a committee Chairperson.

Selection Process:

- A dressage instructor may be nominated by students or peers, by letter emailed or mailed to The Dressage Foundation. Once received, the nominee will be notified, and may submit a completed application, by the deadline date of Sept 1st.
- Application must include at least 2 testimonials from students, and at least 2 letters of reference from peers. (For lower level instructors this may include testimonials from upper level instructors who have "inherited" their students when the instructors were ready to graduate to a more advanced program.)
- The **quantity** of testimonials and references will not be taken into account. The Prize is not a popularity contest. It is the **quality** of the nominee's work that will be weighted.
- Application will include a DVD of 3-4 lessons, demonstrating the different levels you normally teach. Each lesson approximately 20 minutes in length...with a maximum of 30 minutes in length.
- An applicant will be interviewed via telephone by the committee chair, should any clarification of information or techniques be needed. The results of this interview will be shared with the other committee members.
- No Prize will be awarded for a given year should the Selection Committee deem that there is no applicant that exhibits the high qualification standards for that year.