



USEF and USPEA Partner to Create International Para-Equestrian Dressage Centers of Excellence

Lexington, Ky. – The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) is pleased to announce its partnership with the United States Para-Equestrian Association (USPEA) to establish International Para-Equestrian Dressage Centers of Excellence (COE). COEs will serve as the foundation to attract new athletes to para-equestrian dressage and develop athletes and coaches for competition at the international level, including the Paralympic Games. There are many excellent centers around the U.S. that offer those with disabilities the opportunity: The aim of COEs is to give those that want the thrill of international competition a pathway and an opportunity to learn about the sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage. Owners of existing equestrian training facilities interested in growing the para-equestrian dressage sport are encouraged to submit their venue for consideration.

“Our goal with COEs is to increase the pool and ability of eligible para-equestrian athletes in the United States by enhancing the quality, consistency, and volume of education and training available to develop high-performance athletes for greater success in international competition. The USPEA will be a great asset to us as we go through the selection process and refine the plan for these COEs to succeed. If we want to win medals on the International stage we have to grow the sport in the U.S. and also grow the number of Owners and Sponsors supporting the sport. There are many enjoying the benefits of riding and we want to reach out to them and show them how, with hard work and dedication, they might be winning medals at future Paralympic and World Equestrian Games.” said Will Connell, USEF Director of Sport.

In order to identify more para-equestrian dressage athletes and coaches, the USEF and USPEA will work together to promote the COE concept to organizations who offer equestrian opportunities to athletes with disabilities. The USEF and USPEA will develop a para-equestrian coaching network and coach certification process across the U.S., as well as sport programs and services.

Through these efforts we will bring more athletes and more Training Centers in to the sport: Hopefully those that run Dressage Centers will realize that Para-Equestrian Dressage and Dressage require very similar facilities and coaching support. ” said Hope Hand, President of the USPEA.

A selection committee will review each submission and may conduct a site visit or interview with the leading facilities. Further information about COEs, the application, and selection process can be found at www.USEF.org or by emailing Austyn Erickson, US Equestrian COE Coordinator at aerickson@usef.org.