

D4K scholarship Report 2018 - Isabel Solano

The scholarship that Dressage4Kids provided me was used to attend a three-day boot camp at Riding Right. Hollie McNeil, my instructor, and owner of the barn ran the boot camp this year. During those three days, we rode, studied, and groomed the horses.

On the first day, we started out with balimo. We did different stretching exercises to balance and improve our ride on the horse. After balimo, I rode with a judge named Gayle. She worked with me on the geometry of my circles and the accuracy of my diagonals and bending lines. Nicole Wilbur also taught stable management where we learned about wraps, TRP, and signs of illness. In between and after, I studied Training Horses The Ingrid Klimke Way, the Prize List, and USEF Dressage Attire and Equipment.

The second day of boot camp started with yoga. Hollie booked an instructor who came in and did a 90-minute class with us. After that, I rode in an equitation class equated by Hollie. Here, Hollie further instructed and helped us with our own personal riding struggles. Hollie had also booked horse massagist, Eva Peterson. She massaged my horse and did marvelous work to relax and balance her. Then I clipped and groomed my horse. I cut the mane and bridle path, clipped her fetlock, and gave her a bath. We also made stall cards and filled out emergency cards. For the rest of the day, I studied the required reading.

On the last day, we started off with pilates. An instructor came in and took us through an intense 90 minutes. When pilates was over, I rode in a group. This again was practice and gave me some key points to remember while riding. These points included half halts, staying aligned on my horse, and managing her moments. After that, I cleaned and conditioned my bridle, saddle, and girth. As stated before, when we weren't riding or cleaning we were studying.

I would like to thank you for assisting me to go to boot camp. This gave me the opportunity to learn and grow. I believe not only boot camp but the hard work and effort I have been putting into dressage definitely paid off. At D4K I had a great weekend and was honored to have placed second in my division. I truly thank you from the bottom of my heart to have made this possible.

Thank you,
Isabel Solano