



To Whom It May Concern:

The United States Equestrian Federation is recognized by the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee as the National Governing Body for equestrian sport in the United States. US Equestrian is dedicated to pursuing excellence and promoting growth across all levels in equestrian sport, from the grass roots to the Olympic level.

US Equestrian trains and selects elite athletes who go on to represent the United States in international competitions, including the Olympic Games. We license over 2,000 competitions annually and recognize over 29 equine breeds/disciplines within the USEF Family. Competitions are offered at all levels, at both a local and national level, from youth championships targeted for high-performance athletes ages 21 and under, right through to international level competitions.

This letter is written in support of scholastic equestrian athletes who are balancing their sporting ambitions with achieving their educational goals.

US Equestrian's intent is to recognize and grow participation at the grassroots level all the way up to the highest level of competitions. Part of this process is bringing awareness to the fact that high-school equestrians are varsity athletes too. For equestrian athletes, there are many challenges and benefits that sometimes go unrecognized. Like all athletes, equestrians must follow a personal training regime that ensures they are "fit to train and compete." While the training needs of equestrians differ from those of a marathon runner or football athlete, they are most certainly athletes. Symmetry, balance, agility, flexibility, strength, endurance, motor ability, nutrition and injury prevention are all physiological aspects an equestrian athlete must address.

Equestrian athletes can spend all day, every day, training and competing in one form or another. On average, an equestrian athlete will minimally spend 25 hours per week training at the barn. The hours spent training are purely dedicated to time spent in the saddle in preparation for competitions. Similar to other Olympic-recognized sports, equestrian sport helps to develop our youth into productive members of society. Our athletes are building confidence and leadership skills and developing a drive for success, and to do so, they must have an unwavering dedication and commitment to the sport; all of which are key assets when entering the work force.

Our Interscholastic Athlete Program highlights our athlete's achievements by awarding them with a United States Equestrian Federation Varsity patch, pin, award letter, and a well-deserved reference for their resumes.

US Equestrian requests that you consider honoring and acknowledging your student equestrian athlete's hard work and dedication to their sport, as well, with a Varsity letter. The Federation appreciates the support educational organizations and institutions provide to athletes, and we hope that equestrian athletes will receive the same recognition as other athletes from more traditional sports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas F.X. O'Mara'.

Thomas F.X. O'Mara  
President