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Contact:

Sarah Watson
CHJA Board Member, MKR Grant Committee Chair
watson.equestrian.llc@gmail.com
203.470.4521

Colorado Hunter Jumper Association and Mountain King Ranch Announce Recipient of the 2022 MKR Equitation Grant

A Grant that provides the opportunity of experiencing the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL. while training with Stacia Madden of Beacon Hill Show Stables to another CHJA Member

DENVER (December 15, 2022) – After receiving almost 30 applicants for the annual Mountain King Ranch Equitation Grant, *presented by The Colorado Hunter Jumper Association*, a blind panel narrowed the applications to three frontrunners and Stacia Madden of Beacon Hill Show Stables, the grant recipient's WEF trainer, announced that Kayla Scherer, trained by Linnea Throckmorton at The Four Winds has been selected for this year's grant.

The MKR Equitation Grant was announced in 2022 after 18-year-old Dominic Gibbs, rider for Mountain King Ranch, experienced meteoric rise from local rider to winning multiple national championships as a junior. Dominic wanted to give back to the sport and support young riders from the CHJA community he grew up riding and support their dreams of riding with his nationally renowned trainer in Wellington, FL.

After winning a car at the 2021 World Equestrian Center Equitation Premier Cup, he sold it to repair his older vehicle, buy a motorbike, start an investment account, and the rest went into starting the MKR Equitation Grant. With additional donor support and facilitated by CHJA, Dominic and his family organized and hosted the inaugural grant recipient, Maggie Lawrence, for a week of riding, training and experiences at The Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, Florida. "There were so many highlights throughout the week. From watching the Hunter Spectacular, to lessons with the Beacon Hill team, to getting into the show ring myself, it was nonstop learning. And the Gibbs family was so welcoming and helpful in getting me to jump in!" said Maggie Lawrence, inaugural grant recipient.

"Being able to provide our members with such a unique opportunity to experience being an equestrian at the pinnacle of our sport is one of the many benefits to becoming a member of the Colorado Hunter Jumper Association," said Jill Pelzel, Board President of CHJA. "This year the grant was offered to both Junior and Amateur members; and includes a week of training with Stacia Klein Madden at Beacon Hill Show Stables during the Winter Equestrian Festival in Florida," Jill continued.

This year, Junior Member Kayla Scherer, was selected as the grant recipient. Kayla is a senior in high school and has been riding since she was nine years old. Kayla has competed with her horse through the 1.10m jumpers, 3'6" hunters, and 3'3" medals and eq together and has recently committed to SDSU's D1 equestrian team for college.

This once in a lifetime equestrian experience is made possible with additional donations from generous supporters who believe in equestrian education, accessible opportunity and changing lives. If you would like to learn more information about the Mountain King Ranch Equitation Grant *presented by The Colorado Hunter Jumper Association* or to view sponsorship opportunities, please visit bit.ly/MKRGrant

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The **Colorado Hunter Jumper Association**, as the official hunter/jumper Affiliate of United States Equestrian Federation and the United States Hunter Jumper Association, is a competition-based sport organization that serves our members through its Four Cornerstones: educational programs, awards and recognition, communication and rules. We provide a wide array of programs for all levels of the hunter/jumper sport, and are mindful of the well-being of our equine partners. We are committed to preserving the history of our sport and the association. Through our Colorado Hunter Jumper Foundation, CHJA supports charitable and benevolent services.

Mountain King Ranch LLC is a family equestrian enterprise specializing in equitation, hunters and show jumping. The original ranch was in rural Pueblo, Colorado -- where the kids learned to ride. Now, MKR is based in Colorado Springs, CO, at Beacon Hill Show Stables in New Jersey and in Wellington, Florida. With a track record of sourcing special horses and building strong relationships, MKR holds a reputation of trusted excellence, in-and-out of the saddle.