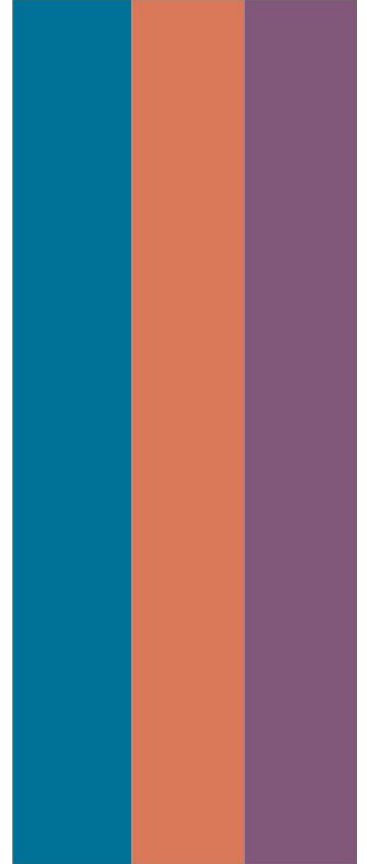


Collegiate Riding

Factors to Consider in Selecting a College and
Preparing to Ride on a College Team



INTERSCHOLASTIC
EQUESTRIANTM
ASSOCIATION



Dr. Cory Kieschnick

Delaware Valley University

Dr. Cory Kieschnick is Chair of Equine Science and Management at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA. She also serves as the Director of Equestrian Sports, overseeing IHSA Hunt Seat and Western Teams and the IDA Team for DelVal. She has been the Head Coach of the DelVal Hunt Seat Team since 2002, earning numerous Regional Championships and regularly qualifying for the National Championships. Her 2019 Hunt Seat Team was IHSA Zone 3 Champion and earned fourth at IHSA Nationals. Her 2023 Cacchione rider placed fifth at Nationals and earned the top score in the fences section. Cory has her doctorate in education and has served as full-time faculty at DelVal since 2001.



CJ Law

Mount Holyoke College

CJ Law is the Director of Intercollegiate Coaching and the Varsity Hunt Seat Coach at Mount Holyoke College. She has coached at MHC for more than 35 years and is regarded as one of the top collegiate coaches in the nation. She is credited with three IHSA national collegiate team championships, four Tournament of Champions titles and countless regional and zone championships. She has coached at least 22 IHSA national individual champions and three of her riders have taken top honors in the IHSA Cacchione Cup. CJ currently serves on the IHSA Board of Directors, is the Zone 1 President and was awarded the IHSA Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998. Mount Holyoke College Hunt Seat team finished in fifth place at The 2023 IHSA National Championship.



Carla Wennberg

St Andrews University

Carla Wennberg coaches at St Andrews University in Laurinburg, NC. She previously coached for the University of Georgia and Colorado State University. Carla earned the IHSA Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019, and the AQHA Professional Horsewoman Award in 2008. In 2023, Carla received the Alumni Excellence Award from the University of Georgia. Carla has over 35 years of judging experience for AQHA, NSBA and NRHA.



Ashton Phillips

Princeton University & New York University

Ashton Phillips is the coach of both the Princeton and New York University IHSA teams. Over his twenty year tenure, he's led both teams to region championships. A graduate of Virginia Intermont College, Ashton is the most decorated IHSA Alumni rider in history, having competed at more IHSA National Championships than any other rider.

Ashton co-coaches the Woodland IEA team (previously Essex) in NJ, and is a member of the IEA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion task force.



Randi Heathman

The Equestrian College Advisor

Randi Heathman is The Equestrian College Advisor. After a decade in college admissions, she joined the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) in 2011 in order to give students and families a “leg up” in the college search and application process. Currently, she is the only IECA member who can include experience in both college admissions and behind-the-scenes of a varsity college equestrian program on her resume.

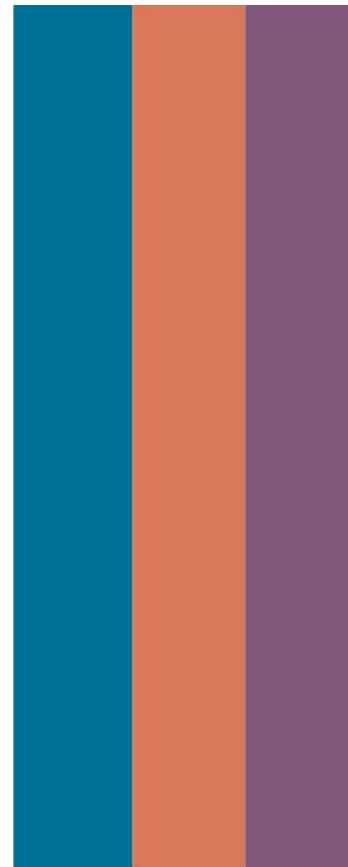
A lifelong horse owner and a competitor in dressage who has earned her USDF bronze and silver medals, Randi is a popular speaker on college-related topics and the author of *Horses for Courses: The Definitive Guidebook for the Prospective College Equestrian*, now in its second edition.



Overview of our Webinar

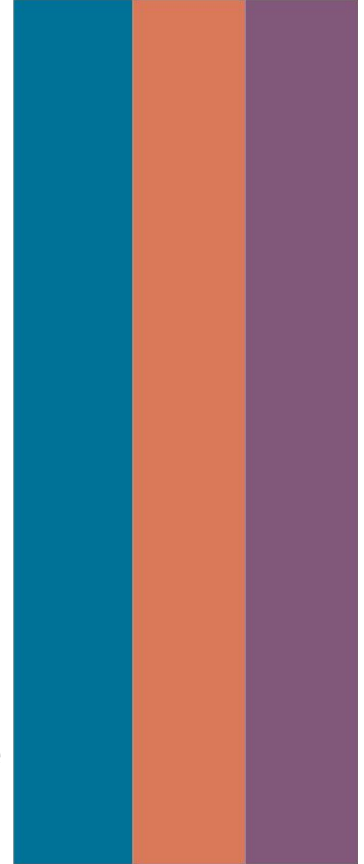
We will talk about:

- The college decision is foremost an academic decision
- Types of competitive college riding
- Additional college riding opportunities
- Things to think about in selecting a college
- How to be a good prospective student
- How to make a college application video
- Financial aid/scholarships
- What to expect for tryouts
- Balancing academics and riding
- Additional resources



What factors in choosing a college?

- Though we all love horses, this decision goes beyond horses.
- Think about what interests you/potential majors
- Focus on the suitability of a college, a major, and environment FIRST, and then the riding options.
- Are there parts of the country that are more appealing than others?
- Do you tend to learn best in a small environment, or do you want a large school?
- Are you interested in a state school or private college?
- What scholarships/financial aid are available?
- What other extra-curricular activities are of interest to you?
- What resources does your high school have to help you narrow the field?



Riding in College: Discipline Options

Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association

Hunt Seat and Western

National Collegiate Equestrian Association

Hunt Seat and Western

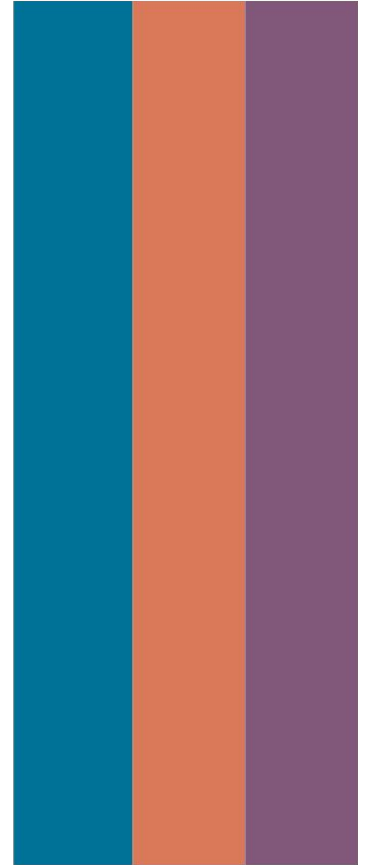
Intercollegiate Dressage Association

Other:

American National Riding Commission

USEA Intercollegiate Eventing Program

College show teams



Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association

- Founded in 1967 by Robert Cacchione
- Over 360 colleges, over 8,000 members
- All levels (beginner through open)
 - Hunter Seat Equitation (flat and over fences)
 - Western Horsemanship
 - Reining/Ranch Riding
- Individual and team competition
- Horses provided by host college
- Costs can vary considerably depending on if the team is club, varsity, NCAA
- Wide variety of scholarships available

For more information, visit www.IHSAinc.com



National Collegiate Equestrian Association

Adopted in 1998 as an “Emerging Sport” under NCAA.

22 participating colleges

- 16 Division I
- 1 Division II
- 5 Division III - Single Discipline
- Horses provided by host college
- Women’s sport, open-level only
- Most of these teams are fully-funded
- Scholarships are available, varying amounts

For more information, visit <https://collegiateequestrian.com>



Intercollegiate Dressage Association

- Established in 2003 (as college only association)
- About 80 teams
- Riders compete in:
 - Introductory
 - Lower Training Level
 - Upper Training Level
 - First Level
 - Dressage Seat Equitation classes
- Horses provided by host college
- Costs can vary considerably depending on team

For more information, visit www.teamdressage.com



Other Opportunities

Vaulting club

Equine clubs

Academic riding skills classes

PE riding classes

Polo

Driving club

ANRC



Levels of commitment - things to consider

Varsity or Club?

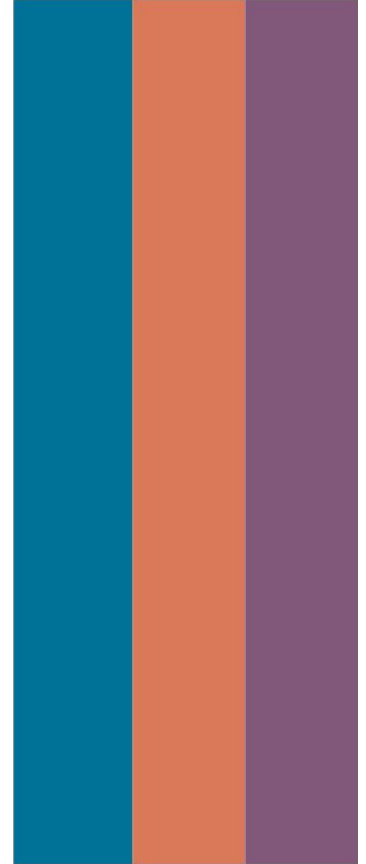
Financial obligations? What does the team pay for and what do riders cover?

How competitive? What is the team commitment?

How often are horse shows in that region? Does the team travel frequently?

On campus or off campus barn? (College owned facility or private?)

Are there opportunities to try other disciplines?



How to be a great prospective student

Q: What is the best way and time to present myself to a college coach?

A: YOU contact the coach, not your parent. If you are visiting, contact BEFORE the visit.

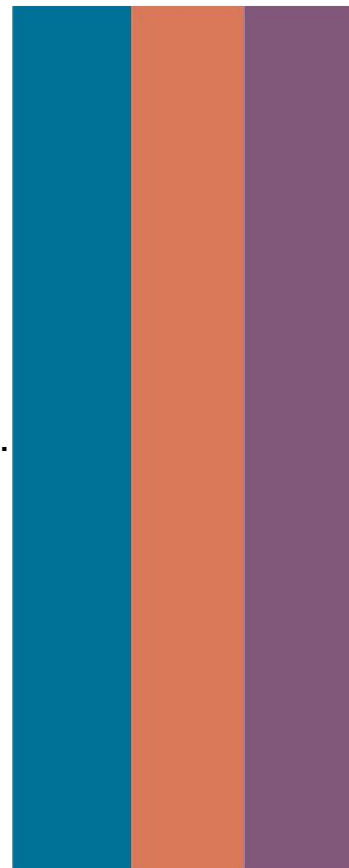
A: Use spell check, think about your grammar, remember your audience.

A: Show interest in a particular school. Do some research! Ask questions!

A: Show enthusiasm for learning new things.

A: Show persistence and follow through.

A: Only ask questions you can't find the answer to on your own.



How to make a competitive application video

Q: Do I need one?

Q: What should I include in my application video?

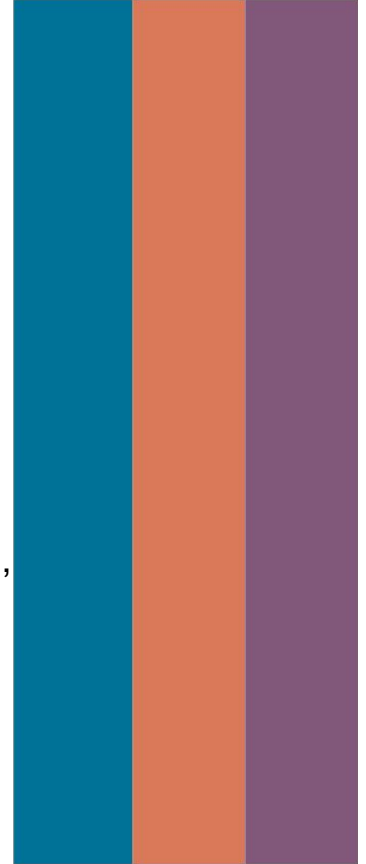
A: Rider identifying information (beginning and end).

A: Ideally horse show videos (USEF, IEA, Pony Club...). Include the horse show class and date before the video. A lesson video can be appropriate as well.

A: For Hunt Seat, your very best two (maybe three?) rounds, plus excellent flatwork (brief walk, 20 seconds posting trot, sitting trot, and canter). For Western, include horsemanship and/or reining video. For Dressage, show a portion of a test.

A: High-quality videos, without background chatter, with the camera horizontal.

A: Consider creating a simple website for recruitment videos and competitive goals and accomplishments.



What to do at tryouts

Q: What is the coach looking for at tryouts?

A: A willing attitude and great work ethic. Be adaptable.

A: Volunteer to help (find the captain).

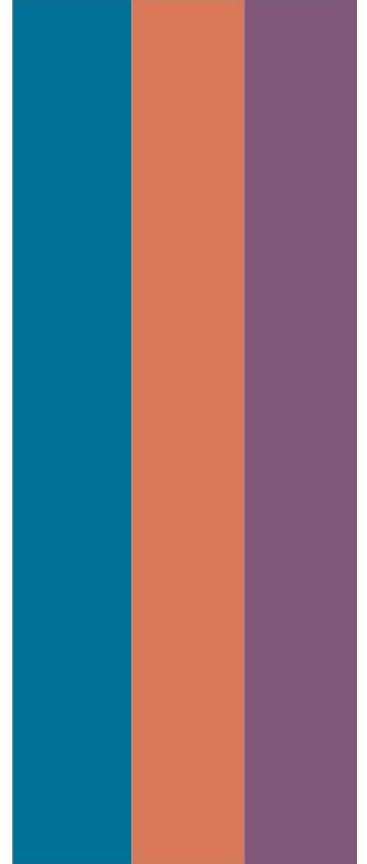
A: Wear clinic or horse show attire that is appropriate for your discipline.

A: Be tactful with your aids! Show compassion for the horse.

A: Have an open mind. You aren't expected to know everything.

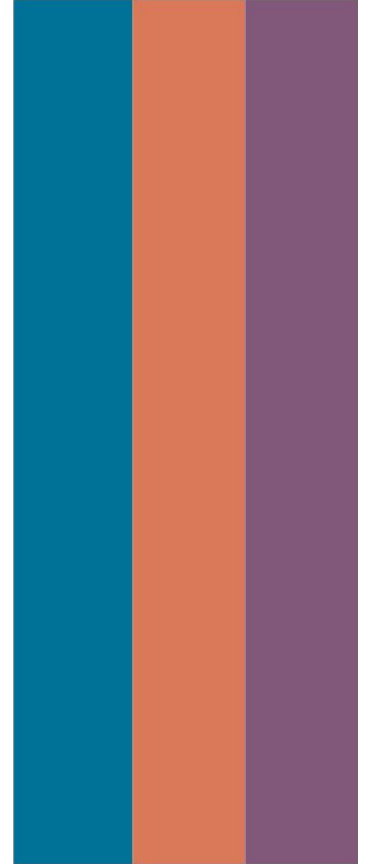
A: Demonstrate you are a good student. Be coachable.

A: Be prepared: be strong and fit, know your course, try to stay calm.



Balancing Riding and Academics

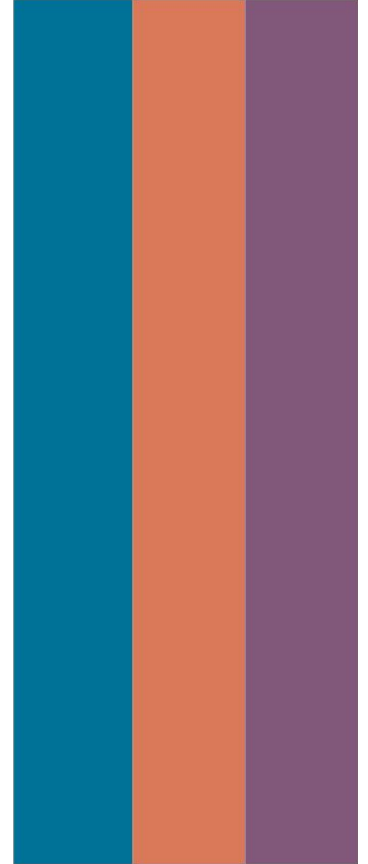
- Most importantly, know the team requirements before accepting a spot!
- Your academics come first, but know when the busy times are for the team (before a tournament, during post-season) so you can plan your studying and meet team obligations.
- Be mindful of your other commitments and make sure you can fulfill them.
- Schedule your highest priorities first.
- YOU are expected to plan ahead, stick to your schedule, and communicate with coaches and professors if you need help.



Financial Aid

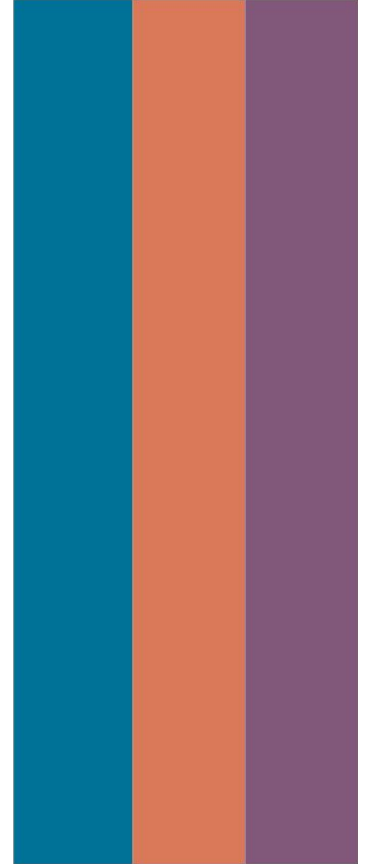
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- The FAFSA will open on December 1 of this year. Applications for the 2024-2025 academic year are an exception: those will be available in December 2023. File your FAFSA as close to the opening date as possible to improve your chances of qualifying for the most grant, scholarship, and work-study aid.
- Parents/guardians create one login and application, students create a separate account and application.
- Include all school codes you may apply for.

FAFSA <https://studentaid.gov/>



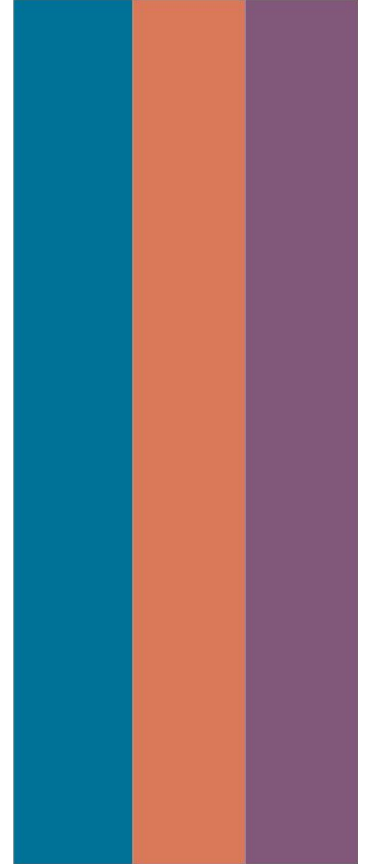
Scholarships

- Apply to EVERYTHING you are qualified for - many 'smaller' awards really add up!
- Schools often have a common application for local/town-wide scholarships, check with your guidance counselor.
- Look into local organizations (Rotary Club, Lions, American Legion etc), and organizations that you are a member of
- Google your 'niche' (ethnicity, hobbies, sports, medical conditions) and APPLY to any scholarships you find.
- If you are a first generation college student, inquire with your prospective schools for additional award information.



Now what?

- When you research colleges, be thinking about what we discussed about different teams.
- Remember, you are picking a college for academic reasons first, and aiming for a fulfilling all-around experience.
- Once you've narrowed your choices, try to visit campus to meet the coach/captain, watch a lesson if possible. If it's not possible to visit, try to chat with the captain and ask your questions.
- Do your homework! Strengthen your core, engage in some kind of cardio, read books, watch top equitation rider videos. Locate the rulebook for the organization you want to ride in, review the placement rules.



Questions?

Thank you to our panelists!

www.delval.edu

www.mtholyoke.edu

www.sa.edu

www.nyu.edu

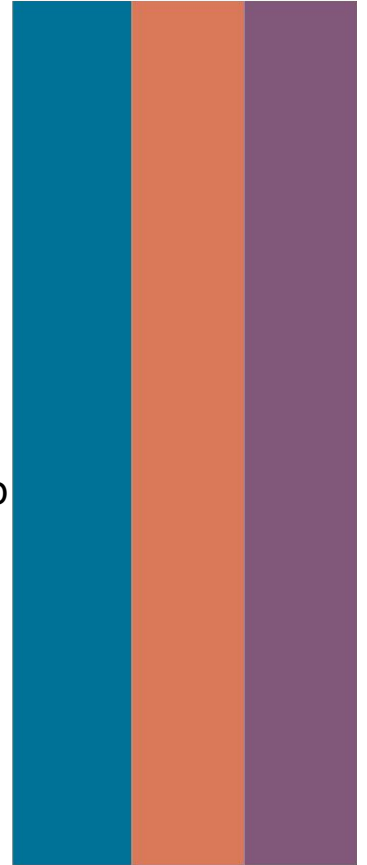
www.princeton.edu

www.equestriancollegeadvisor.com



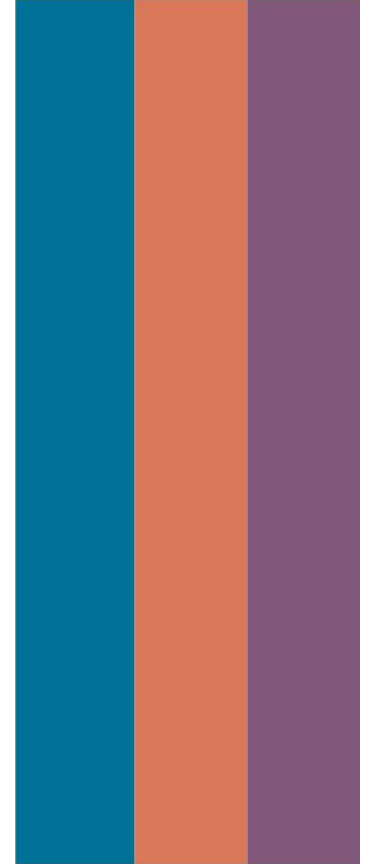
More information available on these sites:

- <https://www.ihsainc.com/membership/rules>
- <https://teamdressage.com/documents/>
- <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/fafsa-deadlines>
- <https://www.theplaidhorse.com/category/blog/collegiate-corner/>
- <https://www.theplaidhorse.com/2021/12/05/thinking-of-going-to-college-for-horses-read-this>
- <https://collegiateequestrian.com/sports/2020/7/10/recruiting%20101.aspx>
- <https://www.ihsainc.com/membership/scholarships>
- <https://www.theplaidhorse.com/2020/02/12/equestrian-grants-scholarships-every-rider-should-know-about/>
- <https://www.theplaidhorse.com/2023/01/04/good-college/>
- <https://www.athleticequestrian.com/ridingincollegepodcast>



Thank you for joining us!

We welcome your feedback about today's webinar, and ideas for future webinars.



References, Logos, and Photos

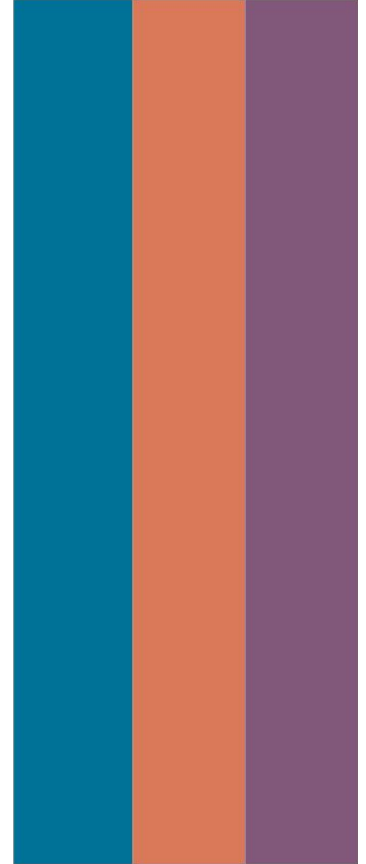
www.collegiateequestrian.com

www.ihsainc.com

www.teamdressage.com

Chelsea Koerper photos

<https://useventing.com/events-competitions/competitions/intercollegiate-venting-program>





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