



Signature of Reference: _____ Date: _____

**NARHA Instructor Workshop and/or On-Site Registered Certification
Professional Reference**

*(This reference cannot be the same as the Personal Reference.
This reference must be familiar with applicant's riding instruction experience.)*

Instructor Certification Candidate's Name: Dan Mitchell

Name of Reference: Valerie L. Richey, MD Age: adult

Address: 123 Emmons Place

City: Mount Orab State: OH Zip: 45154

Phone: Day: 937-444-4385 Evening: none

In what capacity does the reference know the candidate? my daughter (autism spectrum, ADD) participates in horse riding lessons and 4-H club with Dan Mitchell

How many hours of lesson instruction has the applicant completed? Two years x 1-3 lessons per week totalling to about 150 hours

Evaluate the candidate's knowledge of horses and horsemanship: Dan is extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of horses: care, breeds, riding, safety, conformation, shows, etc. He always knows answers to our questions. I am impressed regarding his wealth of information.

Evaluate the candidate's understanding of individuals with disabilities and riding:
(Please attach extra sheets if needed)

see attachment

Signature of Reference: Valerie L. Richey Date: 7/10/10

Dan Mitchell

As a medical doctor, I feel qualified in evaluating Dan's understanding of various disabilities. Dan is not only well-informed about horses and horsemanship, but he has also achieved a thorough understanding of assorted disabilities and how to work with individuals with disabilities. He has the knowledge and the heart for helping others through horse riding.

Dan has a knack for detecting primary problems in various areas of riding. He goes deeper than the disability label, and appreciates the fundamental difficulty. Then, he develops a training plan specific for the rider to overcome any troubles. In other words, he works with each rider individually to meet their physical and emotional needs through horses and horsemanship. He has an appreciation for kids with ADD/ADHD, autism spectrum, depression, anxiety, sensory integration dysfunction, central auditory processing disorder and more. I am confident that he would be able to work with most any rider with most any disability.

In addition, he innately knows how to encourage his riders so that they reach their maximal potential. Even when he corrects the riders, they only sense that he is helping them become a better person and a better rider. He always makes them feel special which inspires them to do their best. His good attitude is always positive and cheerful, and his upbeat outlook is highly contagious. The riders naturally work together and help each other through teamwork.

Dan also works well with the parents. He is willing to listen to the parents and to learn about his riders' disabilities in more detail. He is also willing to ask questions of the parents when needed in order to provide the best training and experiences for the riders. His communication skills are awesome.

My daughter (with autism spectrum and ADHD) has blossomed in her riding abilities during the last two years of riding with Dan. More importantly, her confidence and self-esteem have grown immeasurably which in turn help her riding skills even more. She just took first place in showmanship and third place in walk/trot in large classes at her second horse show which I attribute to Dan and his training. My daughter is also developing leadership skills by assisting younger riders, and is developing responsibilities by helping with barn duties. I have seen other riders have similar experiences, and their parents are equally impressed with the positive changes in their children.

I wholeheartedly recommend Dan Mitchell for his NARHA Instructor Certification.



Valerie L. Richey, MD