

The Art of Farriery recently came into my life, and since, I've held a sense of inspiration and purpose that I have never felt before.

I grew up mucking stalls and feeding horses in exchange for riding time, but as I got older my studies took me away from the barn. I'm now 28 and I have finally found my way back into the horse world—or better stated, the “*under the horse*” world.

Since graduating high school I've traveled the country a few times around, trained as an arborist for many years, attained a degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of Maryland, worked as a hiking guide in Maui then hiked the Appalachian Trail, and fit all sorts of odd-jobs in between.

Six months ago I began riding along with a few farriers in my hometown. While with them I pulled shoes and lightly trimmed feet, I clinched and finished feet, I kept the workspace clean, and I set-up and broke-down their equipment. Within the first few days of training with them I was hooked, and it was only a matter of weeks before I was enrolled at Heartland Horseshoeing School in Missouri.

Class started on February 4, 2019—I will be here for a total of 18 weeks. I preceded the 16 week program that I am currently involved in with a two week blacksmithing course. Each day here has challenged and strengthened me in ways I could never have expected. We spend our days out trimming and shoeing horses and our evenings are spent in the forge building shoes and tools. I am continuously learning and at the same time realizing how much I have yet to know. As I write this my hands are swollen and blistered, my body aches, I hear anvils ringing in the shop, and my mind is drifting to the feet of the Paint and Blue Roan that I worked on earlier today. This experience has been full of challenges, insecurities, and pain, and yet, I am so proud of what I am accomplishing. There is truly no place else in the world I'd wish to be.

Upon my graduation in June 2019, I plan to return to Maryland and begin an apprenticeship. I expect to get paid about \$50 a day as a new apprentice—a meager but necessary wage to gain experience and build my clientele. During that time I am required to pay off the \$15,500 loan I received for tuition while also keeping up with living expenses and the cost of additional tools/supplies (thus far, I have spent approximately \$2,500 on tools). That being said, I am certainly foreseeing financial stress during my first few years following school. The Jamison Albright Foundation Scholarship would be a great catalyst to my career, it would lessen my financial load and give me more opportunity to *forge* my way into the world of horseshoeing.

My life's journey up to this point has been driven by my yearning to find an occupation that offers a lifestyle suitable to my attributes and intentions, and I have finally found that in horseshoeing! I look forward to a life where I'm working with my hands, interacting with horses and horse-people daily, running my own business, and observing, figuring, creating, and healing. I plan to continue my education post graduation through clinics, conventions, and associations; and my hope is to become a Certified Journeyman Farrier with a therapeutic endorsement.

I am inspired by the enthusiasm that my mentors have for this trade, and like them, I truly enjoy this work and find great purpose in it's challenges. I am thankful to be involved in a community of supportive farriers, and I am passionate about continuing to better myself in order to better the lives of horses and horse-owners. This craft is precise, profound, and an all around *good fit* for me! I am deeply grateful and committed to becoming the best farrier I can be, forever learning and helping.

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