

Richard W. DuMond
JAFFFS 2015 Scholarship Recipient

As a child growing up in a rural town in Pennsylvania, one of my favorite past-times was visiting my neighbor's horses on a daily basis. I would often hang around and watch the farrier do his work on days when he would be there. Ever since that time early in life, I've had it in my mind that I would one day be a farrier.

Although I was always passionate about horses, my family neither had the facilities nor the finances to own horses of our own. Through my adolescent years I spent much of my time working in the family iron working business where I learned to manipulate steel, work with related tools and equipment, and form many basic skills necessary in a variety of areas related to metal work.

I went on to college where I earned my bachelor's degree in Business Administration from an accredited business school with the intent to remain in the family business after graduation. For a variety of reasons, upon graduation, I decided to go back to school for my master's degree in business education, after which I was hired full time in a local technical school where I taught a high school level advanced business course.

During this time in my life I was able to (finally) acquire my own horses; draft horses, to be exact. I taught myself to handle, train, drive, and work them in a variety of applications with the help of many good people along the way. I also worked my way up to maintaining their feet on my own after working with/around other farriers along the way.

Through a winding, unexpected path I ended up at Cornell University with one of my Belgians who needed surgery to remove canker in his foot. During this time, my interest in farriery was rekindled. Due to disenchantment with the direction of methodology of public education and a deep passion to independently work with horses in a variety of capacities, I decided it was a good time to jump in with both feet and pursue a new career in farriery.

With my experience from the Cornell University Farrier Course under my belt, I feel well prepared to start a new endeavor as a full time farrier where it will be my mission to improve the quality of life and performance of a wide variety of horses and horse owners in the Northeast Pennsylvania area, which is sorely lacking in the area of quality farriers.

I'm excited to use my experience with horses, metal work, and even my background in education to offer something unique to my clients; not only a higher quality of life and performance for their horses but also the opportunity to train and educate horse-people within my sphere of influence to have the ability to maintain a high standard of hoof health for their equine partners.

Thank you so much for making this pursuit more feasible for me and my family through this scholarship opportunity. It means more than you could know!