

Equestrian Legend Lendon Gray Sweet Briar College Alumna '71 Honored with USEF Lifetime Achievement Award

Lendon Gray '71 Honored with USEF Lifetime Achievement Award for Her Impact on Equestrian Sport

AMHERST, VA, UNITED STATES, March 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following decades of riding and service to the equestrian community, [Lendon Gray '71 was recognized with the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award](#) by the U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF) in December.

Lendon has loved horses since she was a small child. During an interview by US Equestrian, Lendon remarked she was on a horse before she could walk. She officially began her riding career when her mother, Corrine Gray '36, started a Pony Club in Old Town, Maine 1956. Earning her A-rating at age 16, she was an eventer through high school and earned money-breaking ponies. When she arrived at Sweet Briar College in 1967, she transitioned to the American Forward Riding System under the tutelage of the late Paul D. Cronin, director of riding at the time. After graduating in 1971, she taught at the College for three years before getting a job in Alabama starting young horses for eventing.

Much of Lendon's early career became defined by her transition to dressage, in which she began competing at 27. She made a name for herself riding Seldom Seen, the first horse she trained for the Grand Prix and who helped redefine the type of horse that could compete in dressage.

Lendon's highly decorated career was accented by numerous awards and milestones, including multiple Olympic qualifications, winning five gold medals at U.S. Olympic Festivals, receiving a



Lendon Gray '71 receives Lifetime Achievement Award following extraordinary equestrian career.

Congressional Gold Medal following the 1980 Olympic boycott, and competing in dressage at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. She also represented the country in the 1991 International Federation for Equestrian Sports World Cup Final in Paris and the 1978 World Championships.

“The thing that I think I got most out of [my time at the Olympics] in many ways was watching the training of other sports because we don’t see other sports,” she said. “For me, it was the Olympic experience...Just being part of the whole thing, that was amazing.”

The accolades and honors Lendon has received are plentiful, including, but not limited to, the Governor’s Award from the Maine Sports Hall of Fame, the Exceptional Equine Educator Award, the American Riding Instructors Association Master Instructor Award, as a U.S. Pony Club National Instruction Legend, and Most Influential Trainer Award from Young/Youngish Equine Professionals Group. Lendon was inducted into the [Sweet Briar College Athletics & Riding Hall of Fame in 2006](#) and the Roemer Foundation/U.S. Dressage Foundation Hall of Fame in 2011.

“

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*Lendon Gray Sweet Briar
College Alumna '71*

the international riding community.

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In addition to teaching and holding countless clinics, Lendon has contributed her years of expertise to written publications such as the Chronicle of the Horse, Dressage Today, Horse



Lendon Gray '71 competes in dressage.

People, and Equine Journal. She also authored Lessons with Lendon: 25 Progressive Dressage Lessons Take You from Basic “Whoa and Go” to Your First Competition 2003.

She has served on nearly 50 committees for various riding organizations, is the Dressage Foundation's board chair, and is a member of the [Sweet Briar College Board of Directors](#).

Lendon was presented with her USEF Lifetime Achievement Award during the Pegasus Awards Dinner at the 2025 US Equestrian Annual Meeting on Jan. 23, 2025. When receiving her award, Lendon recounted some of her experiences, including her time at Sweet Briar studying under Paul Cronin. She also thanked those who had helped her along the way.



Sweet Briar College: Where Bold Women Thrive, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is more than just a campus—it's a launchpad for fearless leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

“Thank you very much to everyone at USEF...and especially thank you to the wonderful horses that have given me an opportunity, and the amazing volunteers that are behind what I do make it possible for me to stand up here, but they all should be up here with me. Thank you.”

To learn more about Sweet Briar College’s prestigious equestrian program <https://www.sbc.edu/equestrian-program/> or contact Admissions at admissions@sbcc.edu or call 434-381-6142 and discover the opportunities awaiting you.

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