

FIONNA CHRISTENSEN

Fionna Christensen is a certified Equine Canada coach, as well as a certified CanTRA Instructor. She has been involved in coaching therapeutic horseback riding since 1994, at the Maple Ridge branch of Pacific Riding for the Disabled. Fionna has also served on the board of many non-profit organizations, including the B.C. Therapeutic Riding Association, where she has been president for the past few years.

Fionna's passion for coaching shows in her dedication to therapeutic riding. She coaches riders from the very beginning levels up to the international level of competition for riders with a disability. She is involved in implementing and teaching volunteer training programs at PRDA Maple Ridge, and has helped to train many new instructor candidates and introduce them to the joy and benefits of therapeutic riding for all involved. She is part of a strong team at the center that positively contributes to the riding program. She sums it up herself when she says "as I became more involved and more aware of the multitude of benefits that therapeutic riding has to offer, it became almost as intoxicating as riding itself". She is a true team player, a role model and motivator for all those who know and work with her. Fionna is always willing to go above and beyond to help her students attain their goals, both personal and competitive.

She is also a competitive dressage rider and purchased a competition horse with one of her students that they share and train on. Fionna continually participated in clinics, workshops, and shows to further her education and knowledge, and pass it on to others. She travels to many local horse shows with her riders, and always helps to make the experience fun and enjoyable for all. She also traveled to Belgium this past September as a volunteer groom for the Canadian Paralympic Dressage Team competing at the World Championships.

Fionna's dedication to coaching equestrian sport and therapeutic riding has gone largely unrecognized, and we are pleased to award her the HCBC Coach of the Year Award.