Hannah Stetson
2024 Recipient of the Ava Boyce-Bender Memorial Grant



I was graciously awarded the Ava Boyce-Bender Memorial Scholarship, and with the funds I attended the 8-week Professional Horseshoeing Course at Oklahoma Horseshoeing School. Within my first week, I learned the basics of a barefoot trim, as well as shoe shaping, nailing on, and clinching/finishing. Each week Monday-Saturday students (including myself) were assigned a horse for the day, and we would be required to shoe that horse with whatever appropriate shoe they were dictated to have. These ranged from regular keg shoes, clips, polo shoes, rim shoes, or even shoes with borium. I learned the differences between all these types of shoes as well as many others and why they are used in certain scenarios. In the duration of my time at OHS, I got to get under many different horses from different backgrounds and disciplines, even a few mules and a draft. A big portion of the course at OHS included forging proficiencies, where every week we would be required to hand in specific shoes or modifications that we had made. Some examples of forging proficiencies include; rolled toes, rocker toes, toe bends, plain stamps, clips, and many more. Students also had classroom lectures every morning from 7am to 8am before being in the barn starting at 9am.

Over the 8-week period I learned so much from being in the classroom, being under horses, forging. working with the instructors and being paired with other students. I even got the opportunity to compete in a forging competition through the Oklahoma Farriers Association.

For my final week at OHS, or my “grad week”, I was required to complete a 90 question exam, submit a shoe board, and shoe two feet with toe clips in two hours. I completed my shoeing test on a little palomino gelding, who stood like an angel for me to pass my final shoeing test. For my shoe board, I was required to submit 10 shoes, most with modifications. I completed my grad week successfully, graduating from the 8-week Professional Horseshoeing Course at Oklahoma Horseshoeing School. It wasn’t the easiest experience, but with the work and effort I put in, determination, and help from the wonderful instructors I was able to complete the program…

successfully and was overjoyed with my results and how much I had learned and accomplished. I cannot wait to put what I have learned to good use, and I am thankful for the Ava Boyce-Bender Memorial Scholarship for supporting my endeavors to become a farrier.

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