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Saddle Up in Style: The Unusual Dorm Room Venture Offering Horse Riding Lessons

CEDARVILLE, OHIO - If you saw most college students on their computers, you would likely assume they were studying. But Addi Melvin, a [Cedarville University](#) freshman majoring in [business management](#), is also likely to be found teaching virtual riding lessons from her residence hall room.

Melvin has loved horses since she began riding as a 5-year-old. However, the **Batavia, Ohio**, resident experienced struggles in learning how to ride a horse because she couldn't transport her horse for lessons — and online horse-riding lessons were too expensive.

She overcame this challenge and eventually trained several horses to compete in dressage, as well as apprenticed under two United States Dressage Federation (USDF) gold medalists, but knows well the struggle of students who don't have a horse trailer or a truck to tow one. This is why she decided to create her virtual riding academy, [Achiever's Equine Academy](#).

"It's a perfect environment for students to learn from their home, no matter where they are," said Melvin.

Her virtual riding lessons, whether on Zoom through a Bluetooth headset or by sending prerecorded videos, are set up to teach individuals with various riding skill levels and provide immediate feedback to the rider. She can also provide live feedback through videos so each student can maintain their regular schedule of activities with limited interruptions.

"I enjoy helping younger people learn and find a passion for horse riding as well as helping the higher levels refine their riding and get the scores and the goals that they want to achieve," Melvin explained.

Melvin had always wanted to teach riding lessons, but it was her creative problem-solving class and mentorship from Cedarville University professors that enabled her to launch her business during her first semester on campus. She noted how Dr. Kary Oberbrunner, the Berry chair of entrepreneurship, gave her specific tools to work through the problems of starting a business.

"He's really been helpful," said Melvin. "Creative problem-solving just really helped me overcome some obstacles that I may have had in the business. It's also Dr. Oberbrunner's mentorship that has helped me create, develop and launch this business."

Melvin plans to continue her online academy through college and beyond.

“I’d like to help as many people and horses as possible, both in-person and online,” said Melvin. “My goal is to help people from all different levels compete or achieve whatever personal goals they have. I just have so much fun watching students grow through the lessons.”

Located in southwest Ohio, [Cedarville University](#) is a Baptist university with [undergraduate](#) programs in arts, sciences, and professional programs, and [graduate programs](#). With an enrollment of 5,456 students in 175 areas of study, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio and is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, such as the [entrepreneurship minor](#) and [business management major](#), and high graduation and retention rates. For more information about the University, visit [cedarville.edu](#).

By Ella Smith

Photo Captions

1. Addi Melvin with her horse, Toby.
3. Addi Melvin on her horse.

Photos By Addi Melvin