IMPROVING LIVES WITH THE POWER OF THE HORSE

“We are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for those with and without disabilities by creating challenge, promoting independence, and celebrating success.”

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

UpReach Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Inc.  
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THERAPEUTIC RIDING AND DRIVING

Therapeutic riding focuses on the specific needs of the participant by using the motion of the horse to stimulate nervous, circulatory, and respiratory systems, as well as muscle strength and mobilization of the pelvis, lumbar spine, and hip joints.

Therapeutic driving provides an alternative to riding for those who may be unable to participate due to weight, balance, or fatigue, enabling them to improve bilateral movement, posture, stability, and self-confidence from a seat or wheelchair in a modified cart or carriage.

96% riding and driving participants demonstrated skills beyond their baseline performance.

RESILIENCE REINS

Resilience Reins, a psycho-educational, Equine-Facilitated, Trauma Intervention Program, launched in September 2017 with unmounted activities that develop resiliency for youth from 8-17 and their families.

Working with horses from the ground helps youth break down barriers and move forward with their lives. The result mitigates the risks and poor outcomes of exposure to trauma and violence.

77 weeks of programming to date, with 58 youth participants

49 parents/guardians in Parents Café

VETERANS PROGRAMS

Research has shown that veterans who partner with horses can decrease PTSD, as well as anxiety, substance abuse, and other psychological issues. Horses are a mirror, sensing human emotions and reacting to them, enabling veterans to become self-aware and decrease their emotional avoidance. Additional benefits include building trust, confidence and acceptance, hope, assertiveness, concentration, calmness, and resiliency.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

This hands-on, training program prepares students for employment or higher education related to animal and non-animal care in a therapeutic setting. Students learn hard and soft skills from certified instructors. This 20-week program focuses on transition services related to Work-Based Learning, Workplace Readiness, and Self-Advocacy. Upon completion of the course a competency summary is provided.

93% vocational training participants mastered hiring requirements for integrity, teamwork, professionalism, and reliability.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back at the past year, we focused on expanding programming to address critical community needs and the many opportunities that we know can be addressed by horses and their power to improve lives. Resilience has been an overarching theme in our work—in our herd, our staff, our programs, and most importantly in those we serve.

Resilience is defined as “an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.” More than ever, our children are exposed to trauma through abuse and neglect, household dysfunction, drug use, and violence. Through our partnership with the Manchester Police Department ACERT (Adverse Childhood Experience Response) Team, as well as the Granite United Way Youth Enrichment Partnership, the UpReach Trauma Informed Equine Intervention program, Resilience Reins, has provided services to youth and families from the Greater Manchester Area—re-building families and providing tools to assist them in overcoming the effects of trauma.

Youth work with an UpReach Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning, a Licensed Mental Health Professional, and the horses to develop coping skills and build positive connections. Parents come together with a facilitator to discuss challenges and learn new tools and techniques that enrich their families. At the end of each session, the families come together to share a meal. We have enriched their emotional well-being and met a critical need for a family on the border of food insecurity.

After many years at the helm of UpReach, I remain in awe of the uncanny ability of a horse to recognize what we need most and assist us in the journey of hope and healing. Thank you to the staff, volunteers, and many community partners who provide the additional resources that impact the lives of youth and families in our community every day.

"Thank you to the UpReach staff for the wonderful experience we had at Resilience Reins. Your dedication to helping others during difficult times is amazing. Both girls learned so much while they were there. We will always be grateful to each of you!" – Resilience Reins Grandmother

Karen Kersting
Executive Director

PROGRAM INITIATIVES

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