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September 2024

Dear Friend,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am reaching out to share the story of a transformative program that has been making a significant difference in the lives of our veterans since 2018. This program, even with its challenges of funding, has continued to thrive and provide much-needed support to those who have served our country.

Our veterans have given so much, and for many, the journey doesn't end when they return home. The invisible wounds of war—such as PTSD, anxiety, depression, and other mental health disabilities—often follow them. Since 2018, our therapeutic horsemanship program has been a beacon of hope for these veterans, offering them a unique and powerful form of healing.

Our program, **Horses and Heroes**, provides both mounted and unmounted lessons, utilizing the natural bond between humans and horses to promote physical, emotional, and psychological healing. The benefits of this interaction are profound:

- 🕒 *Physical Rehabilitation:* Working with horses improves balance, coordination, and strength. For veterans with physical disabilities, the gentle, rhythmic motion of riding can be incredibly therapeutic, helping to relax and release stressed muscles, improve mobility, and reduce pain. With repeat visits, flexibility and stamina also improve, which has lasting benefits to their overall physical health.
- 🕒 *Emotional Support:* Horses are highly intuitive animals that respond to the emotions of the people around them. Veterans often find solace in this connection, feeling understood and supported in a way that is non-judgmental and unconditional. This bond can reduce feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation.
- 🕒 *Mental Wellness:* The focus required in caring for and working with a horse helps veterans shift their attention away from negative thoughts and traumatic memories. It promotes mindfulness, stress reduction, and a sense of accomplishment, which are critical for mental health.

Since its inception in 2018, **Horses and Heroes** has served hundreds of veterans, offering them a safe space to heal and reconnect with themselves and others. Whether we have had the funds or not, we have persevered, relying on the generosity of our community, dedicated volunteers, and the resilience of the veterans we serve.

However, to continue providing these life-changing services, we need your support. Your donation will directly contribute to the care of the horses, the upkeep of the facilities, and the expansion of our services to reach even more veterans in need.

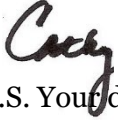
Why Do We Need Your Help? Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a difference. Your support ensures that we can continue offering these therapeutic services at no cost to the veterans who benefit from them. It allows us to maintain a safe and nurturing environment where healing can flourish.

By donating, you are not just supporting a program—you are giving back to those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. You are helping veterans regain a sense of purpose, dignity, and hope.

Please consider making a donation today to support our veterans. Together, we can continue to change lives, one horse and one veteran at a time.

Thank you for your generosity and for standing with us in this important mission.

With gratitude,



P.S. Your donation is more than just a gift; it's a lifeline for veterans who need it the most. Please help us continue this essential work by giving what you can.

Reflections from our veterans:



“It helped my mental health. It allowed me to allow people to get close to me.”

“It really brought me out of a depressive state. I had to care for an animal, it helped me to focus on the need of the horse.”

“I felt good and free.”

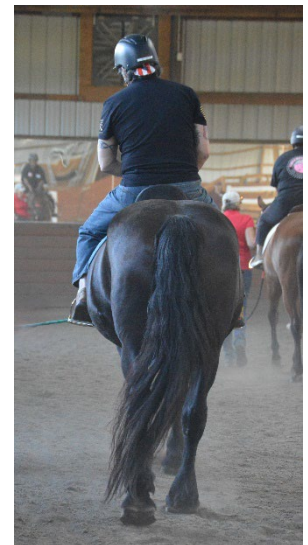
“It’s calming and amazing to feel the attachment one can have with an animal and how that makes me feel good.”

“I feel less stressed, able to feel that I can trust the horse and be trusted by it. I feel a sense of acceptance by something so big and beautiful. I feel connected.”

“I feel relaxed and at ease. This has helped me to overcome some fear. Working with horses helped relieve my stress, reduce anxiety, and gave me something to look forward to.”

“Being with the horses makes me feel happy and accomplished. It helped me with trusting others. It helped me relieve my stress.”

“Working with horses improved my mood and helped me feel more relaxed.”



Observations from the Staff at the VA:

“The veterans who participate in equine therapy at CTR tell me their mood is improved after working with the horses. Specifically, they tell me it’s a form of mindfulness being able to focus on something other than their own distressing thoughts and provides some relief. The veterans appear more relaxed and often tell me their anxiety level is reduced when working with the horses. The interactive education they receive provides the opportunity for improving attention span, problem solving, and executive functioning.”