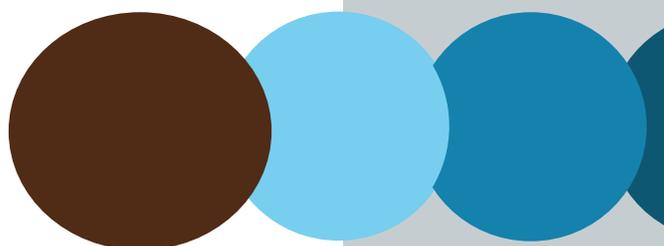


A yearly newsletter
dedicated to bringing
you the most inspiring
Dreams on Horseback
stories of the year made
possible by your
generous giving.



Living the Dream₂₀₁₇



Darlene Bell: From Volunteer to Advocate

*Searching for purpose after loss,
one volunteer grows her
involvement with Dreams and finds
meaning through service.*

PG2

Growing the Dream

*2017 has brought changes and
recognition that exemplify the
growth we are making in services
and quality.*

PG3

Ava Clous Progresses in Equestrian Sportsmanship

*One student learns lessons through
Dreams Special Olympics
equestrian team that surpass those
learned atop the horse.*

PG4

15 Years of Dedication to a Dream

Founder/Director Jennifer Hansen Looks Back and Dreams Forward

*Jennifer Hansen sat down with Ellen Lee,
Development Director, to candidly discuss her
very personal role in founding and presiding over
Dreams on Horseback, now in its fifteenth year.*

Who served as your inspiration toward a spirit of altruism?

It was my great aunt, Anna Claire Mauerhan. She was such an inspiring individual. Not only did she live her life with a deep dedication to philanthropy, but she was a devoted school teacher, and avid traveler, visiting more than one hundred countries during her lifetime. Anna Claire served as a very active Board Member for a university and seminary, understanding our responsibility to support our greater community.

What has Dreams on Horseback meant to you personally?

Dreams on Horseback has been an unexpected journey to say the least. I had completed my law

degree, was working for the Secretary of State's office, then for a campaign finance software development company, jet-setting all over the country. I could not possibly have predicted the turn of events that led me to buy a farm and take the first step down this path. I can only say how grateful I am for that turn and for the privilege of working with others who share my passion for making an impact.

What has surprised you the most?

I believe it has been the manner in which people have been placed in my pathway at just the right time. Whether it has been employees whose skills were perfectly matched to complete the goals we had set, or donors who arose just as their gifts were needed for Dreams to grow, there has always seemed to be a force that has propelled Dreams on Horseback forward.

Continued on page 2

“The volunteers at Dreams on Horseback are so dedicated to my son. They are such a bright spot in his life each week.”

Becky Brown, mother of Brady,
a 20 year old therapeutic rider living
with cerebral palsy



OVER **4300** Volunteer Hours Donated to
our Therapeutic Lesson Program in 2017

Darlene Bell - From Volunteer of the Year to Dedicated Military Connections Advocate

Jennifer Hansen, Continued from page 1

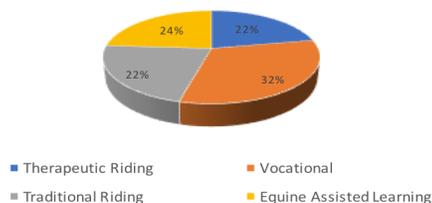
How do you stay motivated?

When I need to recharge my battery, watching the joy of students and volunteers in our therapeutic lessons motivates me to try harder to continue to improve our programs. I also get very excited about research based projects we have done and continue to do with educational institutions like Ohio State University.

Where do you see Dreams on Horseback in five years?

What I know for sure is that there will be growth - because what we are offering is too powerful to remain stagnant. We imagine spreading our methods either through satellite centers or through sharing information and supporting fledgling centers across the state to grow and develop. Our accreditation as a Premier PATH Center legitimizes our belief that we have a lot to share.

2017 YTD Participant Hours



As you can see, our four areas of focus, Therapeutic Riding, Traditional Riding, Vocational Training, and Equine Assisted Learning are all broadly utilized. This year to date over **11,000** participant hours have been logged by students enrolled in our programs.

Finding her way back from grief through volunteering

In 2012, Darlene Bell was reeling with grief from the loss of her husband of 23 years, George, and the untimely passing of her grandson Nathan. Despite a supportive family, Darlene was struggling to envision the next chapter of her life.

Aware that her granddaughters' increasingly busy schedules as they approached college limited their volunteer hours at Dreams on Horseback, Darlene decided to step up and help cover their shifts when needed. There was one problem, however. Darlene was afraid of horses! Looking back, she admits that during her first three visits to the barn with her granddaughter Morgan, she sat in the car, unsure that she could face her fear. Darlene convinced herself to take Dreams' volunteer training in 2015.

Little did she know that covering a few shifts would lead to so many benefits. Darlene's spirits began to lighten. She began making barn friends, learning new skills, and discovering the same love of horses that had been such an important part of her granddaughters' lives. Darlene was also pleased with the health benefits she experienced from walking alongside our riders - a 28 pound weight loss, lower cholesterol, and elimination of two asthma medications. Darlene loved her role of supporting our riders' safety and success by walking at their side, but started to dream of a

way that this same place, now so special to her, could help men and women like her grandson Nathan, who tragically succumbed to effects of undiagnosed PTSD following his service in Iraq.

Inspired to meet the needs of veterans and military

Darlene, through her volunteering, learned of therapeutic riding centers addressing PTSD symptoms like anxiety, anger, and depression in returning service men and women. Darlene approached Jennifer Hansen, Dreams' Executive Director, about Dreams taking on this important mission and learned that Jennifer, too, had been dreaming of just such a program.

Two years later, that dream is taking root. Veterans are walking through our doors. Our goal is that when they walk out they are healthier and happier than when they came.

Darlene is not just the inspiration for the program, but also its coordinator. With the help of ORIX Foundation, Anheuser-Busch, Peace Lutheran Church, and generous individuals, Darlene is turning her grief to action. She is networking with service providers to inspire them to refer vets to us, shepherding veterans as they enter the program, and overseeing implementation.

Darlene states, "I recently observed a soldier lovingly interacting with his little boy and I couldn't help thinking about how deployment could change this dad. If it does, Dreams will be there to help restore their relationship."

PLEASE DONATE TODAY



UNDERSTANDING HOW YOUR GIVING HELPS

Every participant at Dream on Horseback receives at least a 50% scholarship toward their services, with some participants receiving additional funding as a result of the generous donations provided by our corporate and individual sponsors. Please join them and help us help others through our horse-partnered learning.

Vocational training expands as returning students reach adulthood

Four years ago Dreams on Horseback responded to the request of parents of teens enrolled in our riding programs to provide vocational training to students interested in pre-employment skills. Unsure of where this program might lead, a pilot program was designed to introduce skills like being timely, understanding the importance of quantity and quality of work, and communication with others.

The pilot was well-received and has become a staple of our summer programming. In fact, eight new students enrolled this year in what has come to be known as our Welcome to Work program.

In addition to our new students, many of our original students continue to participate. It was apparent, however, that their needs were changing. Now in their late teens and early twenties, these students were ready for a more mature curriculum. And so Dreams added topics like disability rights in the workplace, handling unwanted attention, appropriate workplace conversation topics, and social media etiquette to their workplace training.



WHY HORSE PARTNERS?

You will notice that when we speak of our horses, we refer to them as our partners. Why? Because we believe that their contribution to our mission is equal to that of our instructors and staff. They are trustworthy, intuitive participants in our mission and their role is critical to our therapeutic and educational goals. That is why you will hear our instructors say we work *with horses*, rather than *use horses*. We also believe that this language keeps us ever mindful of our unique approach to improving the lives of those with challenges and serves as a reminder to us to create an atmosphere of care and concern for *all* congruent with the respect we show our four-footed partners.

PATH INTERNATIONAL FINDS DREAMS ON HORSEBACK FLAWLESS IN ITS EXECUTION OF EQUINE BASED PROGRAMMING

PATH International, the therapeutic equine industry's governing board, awarded Dreams on Horseback a score of 100% at a spring inspection that followed months of preparation by our staff. These preparations were led by Program Director Josie Drushal and Therapeutic Instructor Marsha Krantz to guarantee perfection in the areas of horse care, training, documentation, safety practices and facility maintenance. As such, Dreams on Horseback was named a Premier Accredited Center which guarantees the public that we operate at the pinnacle of industry standards.

4 Horse Partnered Programs Changing Lives

Dreams on Horseback has developed four areas of expertise (explained below) that we use to carry out our mission.

1 THERAPEUTIC RIDING

Children and adults with special needs tackle their individual challenges from atop one of our horses. Trained and certified instructors use engaging activities and games to encourage their students to solve problems, face fears, and complete physical tasks. Students are assisted by supportive side-walkers and a horse handler as they grow in competence.

2 VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Dreams on Horseback offers young adults with special needs the opportunity to learn valuable work and social skills needed for the workplace. Students learn and provide the authentic service of caring for our barn and horses. Staff helps students realize and implement skills which will guarantee their success in their first work experience.

3 HORSE PARTNERED LEARNING

Horses are unique in their ability to read our non-verbal cues and give clear non-verbal feedback to us. These natural responses by our horse partners lay the groundwork for gifted instructors to lead participants on a journey of introspection. Participants may be asked to observe their horse partner's response to them. What does this tell the participant about himself? It is up to the participant to decide.

4 MILITARY CONNECTIONS

We are honored to host military and veterans. These men and women learn horsemanship while participating in equine-assisted learning workshops which are designed with the unique experiences of military personnel and veterans in mind.

“Premier Accreditation allows Dreams to enter into an era of therapeutic equine industry leadership and assures the public that we operate with the utmost attention to professionalism in all areas of operation.”

– Josie Drushal, Program Director



Ava Clous, now 11, is a 5th grader at Blacklick Elementary. Ava rides weekly, provides farm care with her mom Heidi's support, plays cello and participates in Special Olympics bowling. In addition to her 2nd place in equitation, Ava did receive a gold medal on the second day of the competition in trail which completed her set of medals.



Special Olympian Ava Clous Grows in Sportsmanship

Riding with Dreams since the age of four, Ava Clous' growth is a source of pride not only to her parents Matt and Heidi, but also to the Dreams on Horseback family. This is due in part to the fact that Ava, diagnosed at two with autism, spoke her first word atop one of our therapy horses at four.

Now a member of our Dreams on Horseback Special Olympics Team, Ava continues to impress us as she reaches milestone after milestone. Yet despite all the hurdles Ava has cleared, one remained a challenge – that of expressing humility in the face of

defeat. Nowhere had it been more difficult than at the Special Olympics State Equestrian competition because Ava was intent on completing her set of medals by earning a gold medal.

Instructors knew from past competitions that Ava needed help in expressing disappointment, and so repeated lessons on shaking hands and telling her opponent “Good Job” ensued.

Despite a stellar performance in equitation at this year's competition, Ava received a silver. Family and instructors held their breath. How would Ava handle the disappointment? Rather than tears, Ava looked up at her competitor, grabbed his hand, shook it and said, “Good Job!” Ava had cleared one more hurdle with the help of the Dreams on Horseback instructors whose own tears flowed – overjoyed by Ava's success!