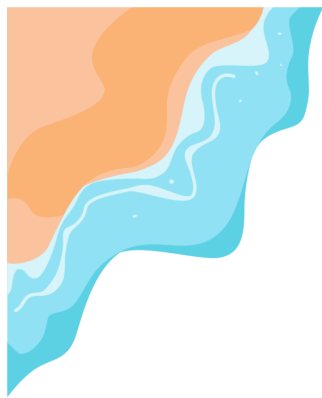


NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



HELL☀️ Summer



With the summer season and Heart of the West upon us – the year is flying by! As we reflect on the first half of the year, we imagine all the things still ahead in the months to come. We are so grateful for our team of incredibly hard working staff and as always, are proud of the work being done in our programs. We have been able to add some new children to the equestrian program this quarter and more Ready to Work! students are out in the community working. We remain grateful to each of you...our incredible Carousel Ranch community. With you by our sides – the possibilities are endless.



**OUR STUDENTS ARE WHY WE DO WHAT
WE DO, BUT YOU ARE THE HOW.**

EQUESTRIAN THERAPY

"THERE IS
NO SECRET
SO CLOSE
AS THAT
BETWEEN
A RIDER
AND HIS
HORSE."
- UNKNOWN



Whether you've been here for years or you're new to the Ranch... together we have created a place where children and families find hope. A place where we never stop believing in what these children can and will do.

To an individual with a disability, therapeutic riding takes them into a new, unexplored world, providing a sense of independence and freedom that challenges riders in ways they have seldom been challenged before. Carousel Ranch's program design is unique. The program utilizes the sport of vaulting (gymnastics on a moving horse), English, and Western riding disciplines.

Each child is served through individual lessons, with up to four people working with each student. The movement of the horse causes an inherent response, relaxing muscles that are tight, increasing tone in muscles that are weak, building balance, coordination and control, increasing motor skills, improving behavior and sensory processing while building confidence, self-esteem and social interaction.

While the goals and benefits are different for every child, we strive to help each achieve objectives, discover capabilities and reach new levels. Our instructors focus on the same concepts targeted in traditional forms of therapy, taking it out of a clinical setting and creating an atmosphere where therapy is disguised as fun. An individual program is created - combining all available methods - with exercises tailored for each child's specific needs.

This year, we are facing new challenges with costs rising at an alarming rate (staffing, horse related costs, insurance, utilities, etc.) along with staff retention issues. Despite these challenges, there is nothing more important to us than working to make a difference in the lives of the children that we serve. This heartfelt testimonial from Annabelle's parents says so much in expressing what the program means to their family.



"Annabelle, who has autism, has been at Carousel Ranch for six years. We have witnessed remarkable improvements in her balance, coordination, and ability to follow commands. Interacting with horses in a safe and supportive environment has been truly transformative. Carousel Ranch is

not just a place where Annabelle learns to ride horses; it is a sanctuary where she feels understood, accepted, and valued. The staff and volunteers go above and beyond to create a nurturing environment where children with special needs can thrive. Through their innovative programs and personalized approach, Carousel Ranch has become a beacon of hope for families like ours.

Scholarship assistance has played a pivotal role in making Annabelle's journey at Carousel Ranch possible. This generosity has provided her with opportunities for growth, development, and joy that would not have been possible, allowing us to focus on what truly matters - Annabelle's happiness and well-being. It is a gift that will have a lasting impact on her life and the lives of many others like her." - The Wan Family

READY TO WORK!

At age 22, students with disabilities “age out” of the educational system. This can be a disorienting event that alters their routine, isolates them and leaves them without a daily purpose. We strive to meet each student where they are, meeting their needs while challenging them to try new things, set goals and achieve them - building on their interests and skills helping each student discover their passions and potential.

RTW has served over 100 participants, working with them from the beginning in our 15 week Level 1 course, to continued 1:1 work within our Level 2 program and participation in our Ready to Work Academy courses in conjunction with College of the Canyons. From there, we assist in reaching their employment goals through Paid Internships, supported employment or volunteer opportunities.

We are so grateful for our community business partners which include Santa Clarita Concrete, Drink PAK, Disneyland, Results Fitness, Wolf Creek Restaurant, FunBurger, Holiday Inn Express, Embassy Suites, Starbucks, Pet Supplies Plus, Six Flags, Chevron, SCVTV, JT Resources, Neotech Products, Valencia Fit Body Boot Camp, Santa Clarita History Center, AMS Fulfillment, Bluemark, and many more!

“WE RISE TO GREAT HEIGHTS BY A WINDING STAIRCASE OF SMALL STEPS”. ~ FRANCIS BACON



***If you know of anyone you think would be a good fit for the RTW program, please feel free to contact us!
cgelfo@carouselranch.org | 661-268-8010***



In 2023, Natasha participated in our Warehouse Logistics and Fulfillment class through our RTW Academy program in partnership with College of the Canyons. Natasha had previous experience in a warehouse and was able to step up as a leader, demonstrating skills like using a pallet jack and checking barcodes on shipments.

After completing the course, she was offered a position with Santa Clarita Concrete through our Paid Internship Program. She did a great job of helping keep the warehouse organized and tidy while completing a variety of tasks to keep things running smoothly. Upon completion of the internship in December, Natasha was hired by Santa Clarita Concrete in a full time position! We are so proud and excited to see Natasha continue to grow in her skills and career!

In the words of Eric Stroh, VP at Santa Clarita Concrete, ***“Natasha has truly impressed us with her unwavering reliability and willingness to tackle any task assigned to her with enthusiasm. We were impressed that she already had great organizational skills and had a fair amount of warehouse experience. She has seamlessly fit in with the rest of the staff and in a very short time has truly become an invaluable asset to our team”***

“I am incredibly grateful for the dedication Carousel Ranch showed towards Natasha. They recognized her potential, took her under their wing, and helped her secure an amazing job with a prominent company. The classes they offered at College of the Canyons were a joy for her, making her feel like any other young adult attending college. This experience had a profound impact on her, and since completing the course, I've witnessed a remarkable positive change in her. Thank you, for empowering her and fostering her growth.”
~ Angela (Natasha's mom)

Carousel Wishes & Valentine's Kisses

Thank you for your ongoing support and loving our kids all month long!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Elements Massage – Santa Clarita
FunBurger
Jersey Mike's
Logix Federal Credit Union
Marston's Restaurant
Mercedes Benz of Valencia
Nothing Bundt Cakes
Results Fitness
Salt Creek Grille
Wicked Chicken
Wolf Creek Restaurant & Brewing Co.

This year's Carousel Wishes & Valentine's Kisses was a great success! We are so incredibly grateful for all of the generosity and participation throughout the month of February. From personal donations and peer to peer fundraising to supporting our restaurant nights and community partners – everything played a role in sharing our mission and raising much needed funds for our programs



A HUGE thank you to Wayne and Dianne Crawford for continuing the tradition of matching up to \$50,000 in donations! We simply could not do it with you! Together, we reached our goal of \$140,000!!

On behalf of the entire Carousel Ranch family, we thank you for keeping our students in your hearts. Your contributions have made it possible to offer scholarship for every family that needs it, care for our hard-working therapy horses and create an environment for our students to reach their full potential.



*Thank you
for doubling
our wishes!*

*"We felt from day one we were part of a community, a place of being part of an unconditional loving family. Within a few weeks we noticed improvements in Gianna's muscle tone and well-being. Not only is Gianna getting her orthopedic needs met, she is also getting her social and emotional needs met. Physical changes are wonderful, but being at the Ranch proves Gianna has her own "thing" that give her a sense of belonging. **The entire experiences is what makes Carousel Ranch so special to us.**"*

~Stacey Claros, Gianna's mom



How the West was Won Sporting Clay Tournament

We hosted our 15th annual “How the West was Won” charity shooting event at Moore N’ Moore Sporting Clays. For the first time ever, we expanded our event over a two day period with 30+ teams competed for trophies, titles, and prizes. This event not only benefited the Ranch, but supported Moore N’ Moore owners who are part of the Carousel Ranch family. Their son Elliot attends weekly lessons at the Ranch. The event was filled with fun, laughter, and team building. After all, what better way to spend a morning than at the range with good friends raising money for the kids at Carousel Ranch?



Heart of the West



Our 28th Annual Dinner, Auction & Children’s Demonstration is on August 24th! Come and share in all that we have planned – a fantastic live and silent auction, a delicious dinner catered by Salt Creek Grille, dancing and of course a live demonstration by our amazing riders. All that we need to make it a perfect evening is YOU!

Other Ways You Can Support Our Kids!

If you can’t attend, each and every donation will help make this event a success and ensure that our programs continue operating. Carousel Ranch is always grateful to those who are willing to make the time and effort to support! There are many ways to help.

Do you have an item to donate to our auction? Whatever you are able to do, is so appreciated and absolutely essential this year more than ever. Anything helps, from gift cards (have any sitting in your wallet) to credit card points or items from your own business or a store that you frequent? Contact the office at 661-268-8010 or heartofthewest@carouselranch.org.

We can use the support of our volunteers to create a successful event. If you are interested in helping in the weeks leading up to the event, or on the day of please contact Carousel Ranch at heartofthewest@carouselranch.org.

OUR PARTNER PROGRAMS

TARA'S CHANCE & VICTORY CENTER

Did you know Carousel Ranch has two "Sister Programs" that we have helped train, establish and continue to mentor and coach? We are proud to partner with Tara's Chance in Fullerton and Victory Center in Ukraine.

We are stronger together.



Tara's Chance - (Fullerton, California) www.taraschance.org - Tara's chance is dedicated to promoting the physical, cognitive, and social well-being of those with special needs through equine assisted activities and therapies. In 2011, Cindy Howell came to visit after one her boarders' cousins was riding at Carousel Ranch. Though Becky and Denise

cautioned her and her husband Tim about how hard it would be - they opened Tara's Chance in 2012. She explains, *"I was in awe of Becky, the type of program she was doing and the importance of the work. It confirmed that this was what I wanted to do. I would drive over an hour and 20 minutes each way through the years. Becky has always been my mentor, she is my hero - truly the only way that I could have done something like this. She is honestly why I am doing what I do."*



Cindy's son, Matt stepped into the Executive Director role 4 years ago and shares, "Tara's Chance would not exist and would not be what it is today without them. From the beginning, we have emulated and followed their example in both program and fundraising. Having Denise as my mentor has been essential. She understands 100% of what I am talking about and is always able to advise me on what I need to do. She has singlehandedly helped me increase our annual fundraiser from raising \$60,000 to \$300,000 enabling growth in our programs. For us, it's all about the kids, that's our mission and our "why" and we are striving to be like you."



Victory Center - (Kyiv, Ukraine) - www.victorycenter.com.ua - Victory Center works to create a united and resilient Ukraine where war veterans, and prisoners of war find healing, purpose and belonging while their children and spouses discover hope, strength and a brighter future through equine therapy, fostering a nation that thrives in the face of adversity.

Last August, Nastya Popandopulos reached out to Denise...and the rest is history. Grappling with her own daily stress, she shared how her own transformative experience after riding a horse for the first time brought her calm amid the chaos of war. Invited by the US Department of State's IVLP Social Entrepreneur program, Nastya's then came across the country for 2 weeks of training at Carousel Ranch. From there, she collaborated with Denise and Becky to establish Victory Center in Kyiv, responding to the invasion in Ukraine.

In her own words - "Victory Center would be entirely different if fate had not brought me together with Denise Redmond. I spent two weeks at Carousel Ranch, learning from Becky and the best American team. Denise's mentorship helps us apply for grants, build a fundraising strategy and learn how to secure sustainable funding. I am deeply grateful to Taylor, Becky, Katie and the entire team for their incredible work and the experience they share with us."



Helping Hands at Carousel Ranch

We are so fortunate to have amazing volunteers who give their time and their hearts. Today we feature two LONG TIME volunteers who have never wavered in their dedication to the Ranch.



When Alan retired in 2009, his daughter had been volunteering at the Ranch through a class that she was taking at College of the Canyons and recommended that Alan give it a try. Alan quickly became part of the team, helping in equestrian lessons twice a week for six years while also helping with our fundraising events from the beginning (Heart of the West, Trap Shoot, Santa Day, etc.). In 2015, Alan went back to school to study film and media, which meant that he couldn't continue helping in lessons, but his dedication never wavered. 15 years later – Alan is still actively volunteering at all of the events. Alan shared, *“Giving back is just part of my genes. My parents would always volunteer in different capacities and taught me that you need to give back. And of course, I get so much enjoyment out of it – it’s just been a great experience.”*

Alan explained that *“Carousel Ranch is in it for the long term – and week by week it was amazing to see the students change and improve in their abilities. And, along the way, I benefitted as well”*. Today, Alan continues his love of volunteering and helping others. If you're attending this year's Heart of the West – keep a lookout for Alan!

Patti had been working as an instructor at another program for many years. When that program closed in 2009, Patti visited Carousel Ranch and never looked back. It was kismet – as she fell in love with the Ranch and the feeling was mutual. Patti shares, *“Volunteering at Carousel Ranch over the last 15 years has brought me fulfillment, joy and a sense of belonging to something bigger than myself. They are my Ranch family that I am happy and proud to be a part of.”*

Though she was offered a job as an instructor, Patti decided that while she missed working with the kids – she now wanted to give back using her other “super-powers”, sharing that she had “some experience in wrapping auction baskets”. Believe us when we tell you – that was an understatement! From the first basket - it was a great match. Over 15 years, Patti has wrapped and staged countless auction baskets and with her handiwork, the auction is a great success. Patti dedicates her summer to doing this work – ensuring that each is perfectly displayed. She is a HUGE part of the Heart of the West team and like she said – she is part of the Ranch family.



VOLUNTEER AT CAROUSEL RANCH!



Carousel Ranch is always looking for volunteers to assist in the work that we do in the equestrian program, for events and even in the office. As a volunteer, you will become a very important part of the Carousel Ranch team. If you are interested in working with us, please call (661) 268-8010 to schedule a time to visit or check out our website at www.carouselranch.org/volunteers

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Yvonne Rockwell – *Immediate Past President*
Marianne Cederlind – *Secretary*
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Briana Kochen
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Stacy Nochenson
Bryan Steiner
Eric Stroh
Teresa Todd
Denny Twigg
Yvonne Waschak
Rosalind Wayman

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Laura Kirchhoff



Denny Twigg



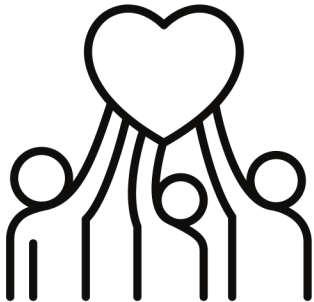
Rosalind Wayman

"It is my honor to be able to bring my passion for fundraising and service to Carousel Ranch and to contribute to the success of the organization so these children will benefit from the services they provide for years to come."

- Laura Kirchhoff

"As a parent who has witnessed firsthand, the magic of the programs Carousel Ranch has provided to my son and the positive impact it has made in improving his lifelong independent living skills, how could I not be involved." - **Denny Twigg**

When I was first invited to "Heart of the West", I could not believe the number of volunteers, Board members, and people from far and wide that attended the event! I knew that I wanted to be part of Carousel Ranch! And now I am. Thank you for the honor. - **Rosalind Wayman**



CAROUSEL CLUB

**CHERI BRADFORD | JARED & BRITTANY CASE | MIKI GRESLIE CHRIST
AL & RUTH FOGEL | JOSE & SANDRA GAMBOA | ROBERT & PATRICIA KENNEDY
CYNTHIA HARPER COMPANY | ROBERTA MCGAUGHEY | JUANITA MEDINA
MICHAEL OCHOA | FRANCES SAUD | SUE SCOTT**

HELP HOPE GO ROUND AND ROUND

We invite you to join our monthly donor program and become a part of our Carousel Club. Your monthly gift enables us to continue to be a place of horses, healing and hope...
today and every day.

The work that we do is only possible with the help of others - Carousel Ranch is proud of its partnerships with individuals, foundations, corporations and organizations who are committed to supporting our mission, enabling us to improve the lives of the children and adults with special needs. Through financial gifts, events and horse sponsorships, and volunteer opportunities, Carousel Ranch's Partners make a direct impact on the children and adults we serve, as well as their families.



Thank you to our partners!

MULTI-YEAR PARTNERSHIPS

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LOGIX FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
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WASCHAK FAMILY FOUNDATION**

SUMMER 2024



HAVE A HAPPY

4TH OF JULY!