



Equestrian Connection

Best days happen here!®

2019

Annual Report

BY THE NUMBERS – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TOTAL REVENUE

\$2,589,959

74% through donations*

26% through fees

**includes donations for future expansion*

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$1,940,886

87% - program expenses

4% - administrative

9% - fundraising



THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS
FOR HELPING OUR CLIENTS
CREATE THEIR "BEST DAYS!"

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHEDULED CLIENT VISITS

17,696

VOLUNTEER HOURS

10,800 HRS

program services

3,200 HRS

social/fundraising events

OUR THERAPY HORSES PLAY
A VITAL ROLE IN THE SERVICES
WE PROVIDE TO OUR CLIENTS



MENTAL HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

651

psychotherapy sessions

129

sessions with Veterans

EC WORKS WITH
59 SPECIAL
NEEDS PARTNER
AGENCIES

SCHOLARSHIPS

\$221,372

thanks to our many generous donors, 90% of EC's clients were offered scholarships, enabling them to get the therapy they need, regardless of their ability to pay

Founded in 2001, Equestrian Connection is celebrating our 19th year of continuing to be the highest-quality, most accessible provider of equine therapy programs and services for children and adults with special needs. Our clinically-licensed therapists and skilled instructors, highly-trained horses and an exceptional group of volunteers all work tirelessly to provide a unique, safe, and outcomes-based environment for every client — regardless of the client's financial means.

ART THERAPY

OUR ART THERAPY PROGRAM STRIVES TO HELP CLIENTS EXPRESS THEMSELVES THROUGH THEIR ARTWORK. WE CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE OUR ARTISTS EVERY YEAR AT OUR ANNUAL CREATIVE CONNECTIONS ART SHOW.



TESTIMONIALS



“Ellie has been riding at EC for 2-1/2 years now. EC staff has become part of our extended family and seeing them continues to be our favorite part of the week! Ellie’s favorite accomplishment is being able to tell her horse to go by tapping her hand on the horse’s back. She also loves laughing with Alysa! One major difference that I’ve seen in Ellie due to hippotherapy is her head control. She now is able to keep her head up for longer periods of time which allows her to communicate and explore the world around her!”

“It’s the first time I feel whole again. I am on the horse and I am not limping. No one is waiting for me. I can go as fast as I want or as slow as I want. It’s the first time I have felt whole again.” –Ed Brown



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

WE WOULD LIKE TO HONOR BRAD MUENDER, OUR VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR. EQUESTRIAN CONNECTION IS GRATEFUL FOR BRAD’S SERVICE AND HIS CONTINUING DEDICATION TO EC!



MEET A FEW OF OUR PARTNERS

Parkinson's Program at Lake Forest Hospital

"The impact of horseback riding is so much more than the physical challenge of staying on the horse. For people with Parkinson's Disease, it is an opportunity that removes barriers, clearing a pathway, allowing them to take off toward something fulfilling and rewarding."

—Linda Egan, Parkinson's Program Coordinator



NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

"Working with the horses and this group brings me relief from my depression and anxiety. Getting to know and understand the horses warms my heart!"

Warren Township Youth and Family Services

"As therapists working within an office setting there is often a gap in services. It may be clients not feeling as comfortable talking one-to-one, or it may be an inability to fully utilize coping skills when presented with a stressful situation. Working with EC has given us an opportunity to provide real life stressors in a controlled atmosphere and help clients work through them with effective coping skills. By doing so, we are allowing for a natural progression in therapeutic progress of each client. We have found connections between clients and horses that have allowed clients to open up about past trauma or grief. EC has been a valuable asset to the clients of Warren Township Youth and Family Services."

—Katy Padula, LCSW



Over the past four years, Warren Township Youth and Family Services has partnered with Equestrian Connection, helping over 120 middle and high school aged clients who are struggling with depression, anxiety, ADHD, trauma, grief, attachment issues and more.

WHY OUR DONORS SUPPORT US

74% OF OUR ANNUAL REVENUE COMES FROM DONORS!

To respect confidentiality, we do not list donors.

Donors who do wish to be published are recognized on plaques at our barn.



“As a long time volunteer, I’ve had the privilege of witnessing the impact made by the passionate people and patient horses of Equestrian Connection. This experience has led my family and me to become dedicated donors to this remarkable organization. I’ve watched as the donations received by EC have grown and evolved programs, and I’ve listened to their enthusiastic plans for the future. Being a small part of that vision brightens my life and I can’t wait to see what’s next.” –Melissa Giordano

“I support EC because I see the positive effects equine therapy has on people dealing with various challenges. EC has everything—Diana’s inspiring vision, the compassionate guidance of therapists and instructors, a tirelessly dedicated staff, hard working horses, and caring volunteers. Put all of that together and you get an amazing place.” –Jane Collins



“I am a supporter of Equestrian Connection because I see first-hand how riding horses helps increase strength in those who need to be physically stronger, and helps those with emotional difficulties build much-needed self-confidence. Equine therapy also offers a one-on-one horse-to-human experience like no other. I support EC because I want those that need help to get the best help possible regardless of their ability to pay.” –Margot Peters

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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