



As we go headin' on down the trail...

Our mission is to provide a safe environment for individuals with disabilities, enabling them to enrich and enhance their lives through equine assisted activities and therapies. Our participants include children and adults with physical, cognitive, emotional, and social disabilities and challenges.

All ages....All Abilities

On Eagles' Wings accepted its first students in September of 2007 as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. All professionals involved in our programs have been trained and certified through PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) and the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA).

All types of disabilities can be helped by equine assisted activities and therapies, including:

- autism
- cerebral palsy
- Down syndrome
- muscular dystrophy
- multiple sclerosis
- spina bifida
- emotional disabilities
- learning disabilities
- visual impairments
- ADHD
- hearing impairments
- brain injuries
- intellectual challenges
- among many others



On Eagles' Wings
THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP

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On Eagles' Wings
THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP

"Appreciating the power of the horse to change lives"



Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International

A PATH member center

Providing equine assisted activities and therapies for those with disabilities



West Virginia University Mountaineers involved with Therapeutic Horsemanship

West Virginia University has partnered with On Eagles' Wings Therapeutic Horsemanship Center with coursework (and part of a minor in equine studies) in the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design. WVU Students learn first-hand how to work with horses and people with disabilities. Students from a variety of majors volunteer with On Eagles' Wings as part of service learning or community service projects.

A Bit of History

When Lis Hartel of Denmark won the silver medal for Grand Prix dressage in the 1952 Olympics, the profession of using horses to help people with disabilities was born. Having contracted polio in 1946 and being paralyzed below the knees, Hartel rode daily to help her recovery. Her success caused the European rehabilitation community to take notice, and center devoted to horse therapy were quickly developed.

Fast forward to the United States in 1969, and the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) was formed. What is now the membership body for all equine assisted activities and therapies, PATH oversees over 850 member centers and has developed a myriad of programs focused on safety that help people with all types of disabilities.

A day in the sunshine, laughing with friends while riding a horse down a tree-lined trail – what could be better?

Why the HORSE?



The three-dimensional movement of the horse mimics the human walk. The corrective stimulation and exercise from this movement profoundly affects the physical, cognitive, sensory and vestibular systems, which in turn creates abilities in a person with a disability to accomplish things previously not thought possible.

The horse is also a tremendous motivator. Horses and humans together often create a natural bonding relationship. Participants have been known to say their first words, or have taken their first steps because of the powerful influence of the horse. Plus, it is just plain fun!

Volunteering

We are an equal opportunity volunteer employer – you need no previous experience! Volunteers are the backbone of our program. Learn to groom and tack horses and help with lessons while helping those with disabilities improve their physical and social capabilities. Often volunteers tell us that we help them as much as we feel they are helping others. Best of all – you'll see the warmth of a smile!



Types of Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies

Therapeutic Riding is teaching independent riding skills to those with disabilities. Lessons are structured so that physical skill levels are appropriately addressed, and educational components are often utilized as part of the activities done on horseback.

Hippotherapy is performed by occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists. These professionals take a prescribed treatment plan and use the horse's movement to facilitate the therapy.