



2024

SPIRIT Open Equestrian Program Annual Report

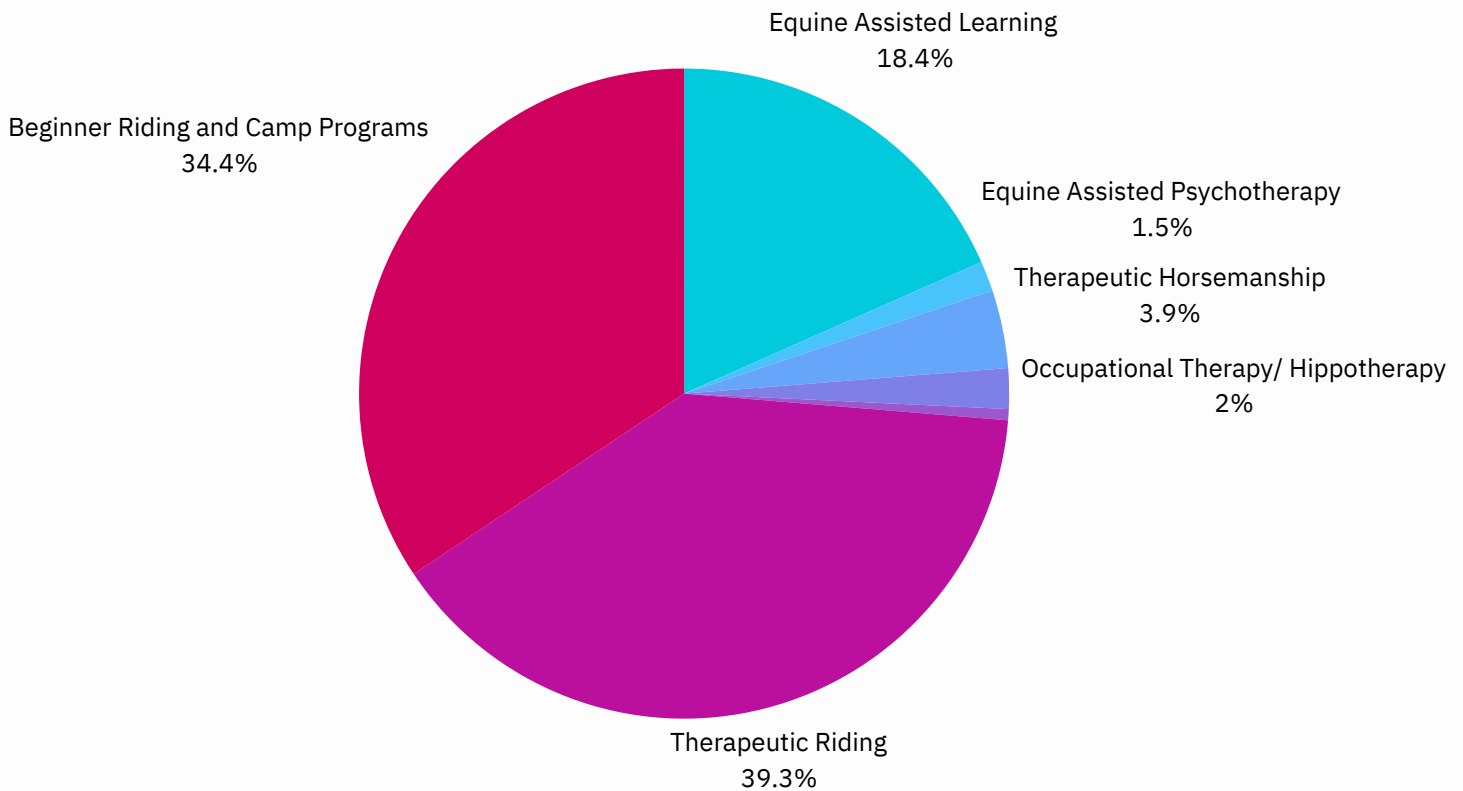


Our Mission



Our mission is to foster healing
and teach life skills through
interactions with horses

2024 Programs



In 2024, SPIRIT provided 3,627 hours of equine assisted services to over 350 participants. Our programs include:

Therapeutic Riding
Therapeutic Horsemanship
Equine Assisted Psychotherapy
Equine Assisted Learning
Occupational Therapy/Hippotherapy
Veterans Program
Community Workshops

Testimonials

Nicole Springer:



“The part of the lesson I look forward to the most is trotting as well as trail rides. The program has made my muscles stronger. More importantly, it’s helped with my confidence, making me realize I can do anything. SPIRIT means so more to me than anyone will ever know. The friendships I formed there are my closest. My relationships with Grace and Max is closer than some people are with each other. Grace always takes great care of me and I trust her completely. She always gives me a great ride. She’s helped me do so much stuff. Max increased my confidence and gave me so many laughs and smiles. Huckleberry taught me independence. I always look forward to riding, trotting, grooming, giving treats, and seeing my friends, four and two-legged. Thank you SPIRIT!! I’ll never be able to thank you enough.”

The Wokeck Family:

“We attended a horse expo at Frying Pan Park a few years ago, which is where we found out about SPIRIT. We were looking for a therapeutic program that would allow Cheryl to spend time with horses, talk to them, practice grooming skills and have social interaction with other adults. The unmounted therapeutic program was exactly what we were looking for. Cheryl took part in riding programs when she was younger, but was no longer interested in riding. She looks forward to her time with the horses every week. On SPIRIT day, Cheryl’s mood is upbeat as she anticipates her session with her “kids” as she calls them. She has already chosen her outfit the day before (horse themed, of course). She dutifully prepares “treats” for the horses every week (apples and carrots). I think it is her favorite activity outside of therapy. She considers her therapists her friends and enjoys talking with them as well as the horses. SPIRIT is definitely the highlight of Cheryl’s week.”



2024 Workshops



SPIRIT welcomed students from the Eastern Ridge School to have an experiential learning day about horses.



SPIRIT offers scout programs to educate about horses and the mission based work that we offer.



SPIRIT hosted two staff development workshops, using horses to facilitate communication and team building skills

2024 Volunteers

195 Program & Farm Volunteers

7,698 Program & Farm Volunteer Hours



SPIRIT volunteers are generous individuals of all ages. While working with SPIRIT's core programs, volunteers receive personal training and gain valuable, lasting experience in working with people with special needs and horsemanship. Not all volunteers engage directly with participants—many contribute behind the scenes, helping with facility maintenance, fieldwork, horse care, and administrative, public relations, and fundraising efforts that support our organization. We are proud to partner with Eagle Scouts for individual projects, South Lakes High School as they participate in their Secondary Transition to Employment Program, and Bishop O'Connell High School students who volunteer during service days.

2024 Events



SPIRIT kicked off the new year hosting an appreciation event for our staff, volunteers, participants and their families.



Our first Boo at the Barn event was a fun community event for participants, volunteers and staff to get in the Halloween spirit and share the horses with their families and friends!

Special Recognition

*Thank you to our donors and those whose services
continue to support SPIRIT!*

Annadurai Amirthalingam

Ashley and Lucas Rusch

Ashley Dobson

*Barry Dresdner

Blair Curzi

Bonnie Barr-Briggs

Bradley Reidle

Cailan Nichols

Chris Oliver

Christopher & Lynn Millar

*Chuck Gumas

*Claire Hosker

Courtney Lisull

*Cynda Zurfluh & Keven Golla

Cynthia & James Soltys

Daniel & Gayle D'Aniello

Darcy Lindsey

Deborah Gale

Diane Pires

Donna Porta

*Doug & Suzanne Gaibler

Edward Wojitan

Ellen Myerson

Gina Cotto

Guggan Datta

Ilana Bowen

Jenee Petersen

*Jennifer Cibula

Jessica Lyons

Joanna Friedrich

Joe Maline

Julia Scoville

Karen Rank

Kathleen Bailey

Katie Brown

Kris Dilallo

Kristen Noell

Krystal Plonka

Kyle Bowker

Laura Dixey

Lauren Meurlin

*Lauren Wong

Megan Schmid

Meredith Walker

Pamela Mika

*Patricia & Huey Sullivan

Ralph & Maria Sickinger

Renette Oklewicz

*Robert Mennell

Ryan McAleer

*Samuel Schwall

Stephanie Zimmerli

The Virginia Horse Industry Board

Thomas Dombrowsky

Walt & Ellen Sanders

Program Staff

Cynda Zurfluh, Therapeutic Horsemanship & Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Emma Walsh, Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Hannah Rice, Instructor

Jenna Klein, Instructor

Jessica Barry, Equine Assisted Psychotherapy

Lauren Wong, Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Michelle Gnozzio, Instructor

Sandra Mueller, Occupational Therapy & Hippotherapy

Susan Reiziss, Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Vesma Montvillo, Therapeutic Riding Instructor

Office Staff

Michelle Gnozzio, Executive Director

Alison Wood, Volunteer Coordinator

Elizabeth Phillips, Admin Support

Vesma Montvillo, Bookkeeper

Officers & Directors

Samuel Schwall, President

Cynda Zurfluh, Vice President

Rachel Schwall, Secretary

Vesma Montvillo, Treasurer

Barry Dresdner

Chuck Gumas

Claire Hosker

Davorka Suvak, Founder

Diane Pires

Douglas Gaibler

Jennifer Cibula

Lauren Wong

Leslie Vernon

Patricia Sullivan

Robert Mennell