

TAILS FROM THE BARN

*The latest news and updates from Tara's Chance
"A place where therapy feels like play"*



Edited By

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Program Director Update

by Cindy Howells, Program Director

Tara's Chance joined forces with No Limits, a nonprofit day program for adults with special needs in Brea, in early 2023. Since then, this partnership has significantly contributed to the growth and development of over 40 adults with special needs who participate at Tara's Chance.



Every week, between six to ten students from No Limits visit Tara's Chance to engage in a variety of activities tailored to their individual interests. Some enjoy riding horses, others find joy in grooming, while some prefer cleaning the stalls. Each individual has the opportunity to participate in activities they love, fostering personal growth and fulfillment.

One of the special riders from No Limits is Michael, who has been a student there for 8 years. When the partnership began, Michael initially enjoyed grooming and petting the horses at Tara's Chance. He would confidently lead the miniature horses around the ranch to ensure they got their exercise. Over time, our goal was to help Michael overcome his initial hesitation towards the size and power of horses, gradually building his confidence.

To prepare him for riding, we spent several weeks patiently standing on the mounting blocks, gradually familiarizing Michael with the process. This incremental approach was crucial for Michael, as building comfort and confidence on the blocks marked a significant achievement in his journey.



Program Director Update Cont.

by Cindy Howells, Program Director

After patiently waiting and gaining confidence over four months, Michael finally took the leap and mounted Sierra for the first time. As he circled the arena, we could see his initial nerves fade away and turn into a sense of calmness and joy. Michael’s anxiety transformed into excitement and his pride shined through his smile. It was an incredible moment celebrated enthusiastically by his peers from No Limits. After he dismounted, he told me, “I am going to ride Sierra next time and the next time and the next time and the next time.”



Michael’s journey is just one example of the transformative impact witnessed at Tara’s Chance through our collaboration with No Limits. Each week, we witness remarkable progress as these young adults with special needs surpass expectations, grow more confident, and thrive in their own unique ways.



Volunteer at Riding With The Stars

We are in need of Volunteers for our Gala.

- Check In
- Server
- Bartender
- Set Up/Clean Up

10/05/2024



Please contact Kat in the office at kat@taraschance.org for more information or questions.



Rider Spotlight - Jaxson

by Adriana, Jaxson's Mom

Jaxson was diagnosed with autism spectrum when he was 2 and he is currently 8-years-old. As parents of Jaxson, we have given him different types of therapies such as: Applied Behavior Analyst (ABA), Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech and other therapies to help with his sensory needs.



After trying all the conventional therapies, we were in a situation where the therapies were not working anymore. We started to look for alternatives to increase social skills, language and provide sensory input.

Initially, we did find a horse therapy group session but they did not have accommodations for Jaxson's sensory needs as he is only able to wear shorts and requirements were to wear pants. Jaxson was unable to connect with the staff nor the horse. This led us to try another therapy and by luck we found Tara's Chance. After waiting for almost a year and a half we were so thrilled when we received the call from Tara's Chance. Our first meeting with their staff was fantastic, the venue was amazing, and right away we felt like home.

We had our initial meeting and he passed the test and we were super excited. He seemed really happy and natural at the initial consultation but in the first class everything changed. His behaviors started to show after that.

Cindy and Jaxson connected right away so her patience and dedication to Jaxson have been key to his success. Cindy created a strategy that the parents were going to stay away during his session so she could have full control of class and most importantly, his trust.

Our initial challenge was picking him up from school and driving to the venue. He would cry stating "No horse class, no horse class!" After getting to the venue some of the challenges were not wanting to get out of the car, not wanting to wear a helmet or dropping on the floor and not wanting to get up for the session.

Another difficult task was to get him on the horse, but with dedication, patience and experience Cindy and staff were able to persuade Jaxson to get on the horse. This was a key factor of not giving up on Jaxson and giving us hope as a family. Little by little we were making progress, we started to provide snacks during our car ride, and created a visual schedule and reward system for completion of courses. At the end of each session, Cindy would provide feedback and strategize what was the best option for all of us and to move forward.



Rider Spotlight - Jaxson Continued.

by Adriana, Jaxson's Mom



We started to see an increase of time that Jaxson was on the horse and less negative behavior. Cindy and staff started to connect with Jaxson with preferable items such as ABC letters and applying them into horse therapy sessions which was a total success.

What can we say about the horse? If I could describe it with one word, I could say that the horse knows Jaxson more than us as parents. The horse is very calm and around all the chaos with Jaxson, was able to connect... which makes it emotional even writing this.

Currently, we are happy to say that the behaviors have significantly decreased driving to the horse class session. He is not trying to get away from the entrance, he is able to wear his helmet, and we started to watch him from the benches with no negative behavior. He looks relaxed and happy on the horse. His speech has increased, and he is more balanced with his sensory needs.



Autism is a journey where you do not know what you are going to get day by day, but the most important is not giving up even if it feels you are not moving forward.

This organization has changed Jaxson and our lives and we want to thank Cindy, the staff that truly changes people's lives and are genuinely great people who care.

Items Needed for

Riding With The Stars

We are in need of Silent Auction Items for our Gala.

- Wine - Spirits
- Theme park tickets
- Any type of gift cards - Nordstrom, Amazon, Target, Restaurants, Total Wine, Bevmo, Trader Joe's, etc.
- Local Restaurants, craft breweries and wine tasting experiences
- Golf Foursomes, Top Golf, golf accessories, experiences
- Local business you frequent who would love to donate and support
- Unique experiences - boat rentals, spa experience, concert, etc.
- Family Baskets - Family Game Night, Movie Night, Ice cream basket, etc.



Please contact Kat in the office at kat@taraschance.org for more information or questions.



Executive Director Update

by Matt Howells, Executive Director

It has been busy at Tara's Chance in 2024. Our therapeutic riding program has never been more active or served more children with special needs. We have launched a new partnership with Reimagine, an adult day program for individuals with disabilities in Fullerton. This amazing program brings 6 individuals with special needs to Tara's Chance weekly for therapeutic riding. The riders have begun developing confidence and we have progressed into riding for many of the participants.

Tara's Chance has experienced a lot of growth this year. Our therapeutic riding program has reached new heights serving 90 riders a week! We are so excited to be serving more riders than ever before and couldn't do it without your support.



Can you believe it's almost October already? The 10th Annual Riding with the Stars event is right around the corner. Tickets and sponsorships are available now at taraschance.org/gala. This year we are going to have our most successful event yet with even more seats available, an amazing list of riders to showcase their talents, and even bigger and better auction items. We hope that all of you can participate in making this event a success.



We invite all of you to participate and help make this event a resounding success. Tara's Chance relies on the support of our community, and we challenge you to find a way to contribute. Here are several ways you can get involved:

- Sponsor the event: Support our cause by becoming an event sponsor.
- Donate items: Contribute live or silent auction items.
- Purchase tickets: Buy a table or individual tickets to attend.
- Make a donation: Any amount helps us continue our mission.
- Spread the word: Share this event with friends and family.
- Volunteer: Offer your time or talent to support the event.

If you would like to get involved or need more information, please contact me directly at matt@taraschance.org or 714-230-6247 ext. 4. We look forward to seeing you there and appreciate your continued support!



TARA'S CHANCE

Riding with the Stars

ANNUAL DINNER AND RIDER SHOWCASE

Presented by:



SATURDAY

OCTOBER | 5TH | AT 4:30 PM



TARA'S CHANCE

219 E Claire Ave., Fullerton, CA 92835



Volunteer Highlight - Steve

by Steve Huntington

My name is Steve Huntington, and I am a Volunteer at Tara's Chance. I have been working and sharing time with the kids for about 1 year now. I have been loving every new day and the challenges that come with it. The kids are great and the staff even better. The staff at Tara's Chance have been my biggest inspiration for volunteering. They are the most awesome group of people I have met in a long time.

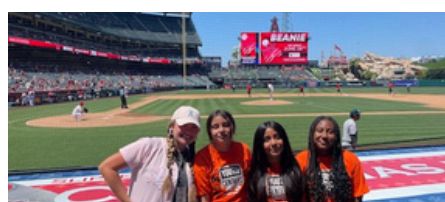
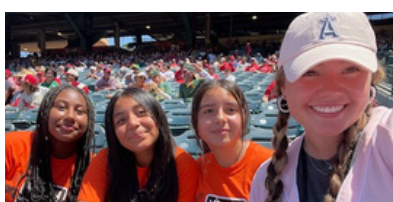
Recently I played in the Ryan Nolan Annual Golf Tournament. It was a beautiful day and the turnout was great at the event. My golf game is just ok, so I had fun making my way around the course and socializing. No prizes for me...except for a great day of fun and great memories.



After the round of golf, we gathered for dinner, recognitions and awards. The slide show and the participation were great. I ended up winning a basket in the silent auction with four tickets to the Angels vs A's baseball game.

It just happened that the Youth Centers of Orange, another group of kids I like to hang out with, were attending the same game. Seeing as my 4 tickets were behind home plate, in the first row I might add (Thanks to an awesome person at Tara's Chance) I worked with Cam, the director of YCO, to rotate kids in and out of the seats between innings. The kids had a blast!!!

Thanks to everyone at Tara's Chance who make great things happen for all of these kids. I will continue to pray and support them for time to come. It is truly an awesome summer. See the attached photos.



Philanthropy

by Laura & Kurt Alvarado

Kurt and I have been involved with Tara's Chance since the beginning and it's amazing how the program has grown with generous donations from so many donors! As you're thinking about ways to help Tara's Chance you may want to consider:

- Company financial contribution matching programs
- Company financial donations for volunteer hours served
- Company benefits towards healthy living reimbursements that make it easier to volunteer (i.e. our company reimbursed me for boots and a riding helmet that I use when working with the horses)
- Do you have a vacation rental or know somebody who does, that would be willing to donate a few nights for one of our auctions
- Sharing the TC story may spark a donation (Tim & Cindy talked about TC when traveling and the owner of the B&B donated a week stay at their Belize condo!)
- Volunteer for TC to help during lessons or at the ranch (even a few hours a week is a huge bonus for us)
- Volunteer time at our events (our annual gala Riding with the Stars, Ryan Nolan golf tournament, firework stand, etc.)
- Inquire with friends/family that own businesses if they can donate goods, services or event tickets that we can use as auction items
- Ask friends that are part of other charitable organizations if they can sponsor or donate to Tara's Chance (i.e. Women's Club of Fullerton chose us as their charity of the year ... and they also helped us obtain a sponsorship from Subaru for new arena lighting)

We try to come up with new and creative ways to contribute every year. If we meet somebody who loves horses, kids, or knows someone who would benefit from Tara's Chance we share what we love about the program. People are often so moved that they want to get involved. Just sharing how the program has enriched your life, or the life of a loved one or friend in the program can spark a creative idea that helps us expand our program and shorten the waiting list.



Board Update

by Paul Miller, Board President



First and foremost, as the new Tara's Chance Board President, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Susan Smith for her dedicated service as Board President.. Susan's profound knowledge of nonprofits and her deep commitment to our mission have been instrumental in elevating Tara's Chance into a more established and professionally-run organization, setting a strong foundation for future growth. On behalf of our Board of Directors and the entire Tara's Chance community, I extend our sincere thanks to Susan for her leadership, dedication, and unwavering support during her tenure.

My own passion for Tara's Chance stems from a lifelong dedication to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities in our community. Throughout my career at Cal State Fullerton, I focused on creating and implementing a system across UC campuses to enhance accessibility and support for individuals with disabilities. As the Founding Director of Ability Counts, a vocational development program for individuals with special needs, and having been appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, I have consistently advocated for advancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. It is this commitment to our special needs community that drew me to Tara's Chance.

I firmly believe in the mission of Tara's Chance and the profound impact equine therapy can have on children with special needs. I am enthusiastic about collaborating with our Board of Directors and the entire community to expand our reach and reduce the current waitlist of 105 children. With your support, I am confident we can maximize the number of children benefiting from our services.

I challenge each of you to join me and our Board of Directors in wholeheartedly supporting the invaluable work and mission of Tara's Chance in providing equine therapy to children with special needs. I am committed to giving my utmost as Board President and leading Tara's Chance into its next chapter as a thriving nonprofit dedicated to making a significant difference in the lives of children and families with special needs. I look forward to working together to achieve these goals and deliver the best outcomes possible during my term.

With sincere appreciation,

Paul Miller, President, Tara's Chance Board of Directors

Volunteer Highlight

by Jessica Stempniak, Volunteer

I have known the Howells for many years. I have always loved horses. I work as a project manager for a small commercial general contractor. At the first company I worked at I was advised to find another hobby as I was working too much. I looked up horse riding lessons and found Coyote Hills Ranch where I ran into Cindy again after many years. From there I took lessons from Cindy and eventually half leased Sonny for about 6 years. Everyone loved Sonny, he was like a big dog. Meghan and I reconnected and they needed volunteers to help with the horses. I had been around and worked with special needs kids for a few years in high school and did my Girl Scout gold award with special needs kids. Since I work a lot I am not always able to be there during the week but started helping on Saturdays and have been there ever since. It's probably been about 7 years or so since I started. I get to be around great people, hang out with my friends, work with the horses, and see the kids grow. I never thought when I started volunteering that I would be an instructor, but now I have my two kiddos I instruct, Kyle and Axl, and I love seeing them grow!

We truly appreciate Jessica and love having her here at Tara's Chance! Thank you Jessica!



Thank You

Murphy Family Foundation
Inspirations Gift & Home
Wilson W. Phelps Foundation
Fullerton South Rotary
US Bank
John and Jeanette Svet
100 Companies that Care
Woman's Club of Fullerton

Amigos de los Niños
Dhont Family Foundation
ALPHA
Laura and Kurt Alvarado
Ocean Subaru of Fullerton
Ryan Nolan Family
Eagle Print Dynamics

Credit Union of SoCal
Gable Tax Group
Judy's Joy
The Summit House
Kristoff Family
Yorba Linda Woman's Club
YMI Jeans

Guez Family
Flam Family
People Partners Foundation

Ebell Club of Fullerton
OC Elder Law
John H. Grace Foundation

Azria Family
Twisted Vine
Elizabeth Camp
Todd Goldsmith

Carol Geisbauer
VIP Rubber
Weidner Family
King Off Road Shocks
Oliver Family

La Habra Police Dept.
Furton Family
Carol Phelps
Edie Israel Team

Century 21 Discovery
Fullerton Rotary Club
McWatt Family
Chad Holland
Chris Koorstad
Martinazzi Family
John Wedge
Butler Pediatric
Dentistry
Overholt Family
Lamppost Pizza
McKinley Family
Capel & Associates
Mills Family

Hutchison Family
Bob & Elizabeth Jahncke
Theo Posch
Turissini Family
Photo-Sonics, Inc
Page Family
KF Professional Group
Todd & Jana Williams
Susan & Gary Smith
Gonzales Family
Rojas Family
Pacheco & Pacheco
Bogdan Family

Arbor Wealth
ESV Group
Miller Family
Tricia Eagan Ojala
Quayle Family
Barbara Eller
Ellen Skaggs
Dave Paynter
Topline Veterinary
Doug Chaffee
Christine Snowberger
Bobbett Family
Watts Family

CDB Architects
Muller Family
Foundation
Iandiorio Family
Ambassador Wealth
Davis Family
Jahncke Family
Bechtel Ranches
Progressive Builders
Coyote Hills Ranch
Kenneth Verheyen
Mike Parizino
Brown Family
Reinhart Family