



2021

At A
GLANCE



**NORTHERN VIRGINIA
THERAPUETIC RIDING PROGRAM**

IMPORTANT NEWS IN 2021

Completion of the Jean Edelman Indoor Arena

The dream has become a reality. If you've been with us for a while, you know this project has been a very long road with lots of unexpected twists and turns, but arrived at the finish! Our clients can now count on year-round riding, regardless of the weather. The new space includes the 17,000 square foot arena, with fans for air circulation, and the attached climate-controlled client observation and waiting rooms, Harbitter Learning Center, and restrooms.



We're Back!

NVTRP officially suspended services on March 16, 2020 due to COVID-19. While facing the challenges of a pandemic head-on was not on our bucket list, as we look back, we've had so many things to be thankful for and joyful moments to celebrate, which include:

- After resuming limited services in June 2020, by Fall Session 2020, more than 50% of clients were able to participate in-person. By Spring Season 2021, we returned to full client capacity.
- The pandemic also provided an opportunity to flex our creative muscle and introduce alternative program opportunities. These included: Facebook's Teddy Time Live; Teddy's Tack Boxes sent to our youth from marginalized communities program clients; virtual horsemanship lessons; and the Good Night Farm Drive-Thru.

Greg Pellegrino Excellence Award to Honor Military Personnel

In April, our community suffered a tragic loss when Greg Pellegrino, an NVTRP Board Member, passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack. Greg was passionate about helping to grow our programming for recovering service members and veterans. The military program has seen significant growth despite the pandemic, providing 170 more sessions in both 2020 and 2021 than in 2019. Greg's keen mind and generous spirit will live on through the lives of the military clients who will heal through programs at NVTRP he helped make possible.

Recognizing Greg's deep commitment to our country's service men and women, NVTRP established the "Greg Pellegrino Excellence Award" which will be presented annually to a military client who has demonstrated excellence in pursuing both their own recovery and the advancement of the NVTRP community. Carol Baillie received the inaugural award in recognition of her dedication as both an NVTRP client and volunteer.



Executive Director, Kelsey Gallagher's 20th Year!

"I'm celebrating 20 years working with NVTRP and it is a true privilege to be a part of this organization. I am reminded that, beyond the incredible physical benefits and the many mental benefits of equine-assisted services, one of my favorite things horses bring us is an opportunity for adventure. Not only is adventure FUN, it leads to courage – courage to try new things, courage to connect with new people, courage to be our best selves."

In Kelsey's 20 years at NVTRP, our organization has come so far. She began as a volunteer when NVTRP had 5 horses, rented a farm and only dreamed of a place to call home someday. Since then, we've purchased a permanent location of O'Shaughnessy Farm, have 16 amazing horses, and completed construction on the long-anticipated Jean Edelman Indoor Riding Arena. What a year 2021 has turned out to be!



Polo Classic 2021: One for the Record Books

NVTRP held its 15th annual Polo Classic at Great Meadow in The Plains, VA – with a record-setting net income of \$180,000 to support program operations – while complying with all safety standards and protocols for a safe, in-person fundraiser in light of COVID-19. Guests were treated to an afternoon of polo with a COVID-friendly event format including individual tents with private lawn and deck space to allow for social distancing.



THE ORGANIZATION:

HORSES



We welcomed *three* new horses to our herd! (**Sur, Taco, Henry**)

16 program horses
1,841 bales of hay
441 bags of grain
130 farrier visits

HELP



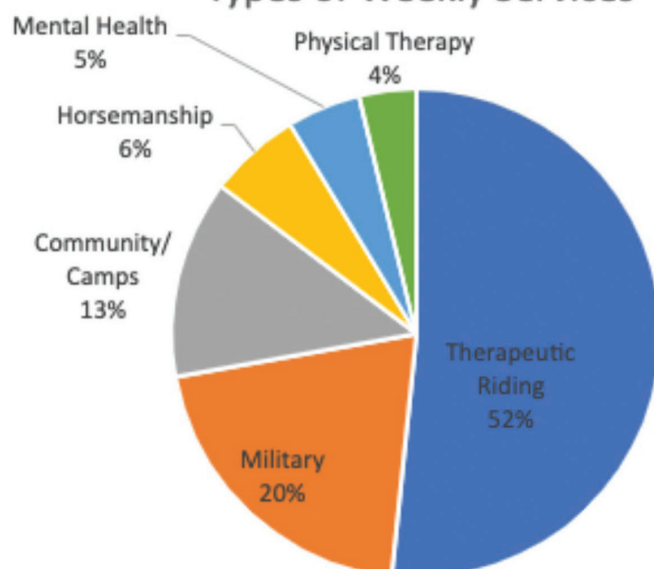
242 barn and lesson volunteers
5 workday volunteers
9,657 donated volunteer hours

HANDS



18 Staff members **3** Full-time staff
8 Instructors and **2** Therapists

Types of Weekly Services



** Detailed financial information is available at nvtrp.org/financials or upon request from the VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.*

INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN 2021:

98.10%

of clients reported improved mental well-being

4,766

Units of Service Provided

84.6%

of clients reported improved physical well-being

240

Unique Clients



SPECIAL THANKS

2022 CHAMPION CIRCLE DONORS

NVTRP Thanks these individuals/businesses for their donation of \$1,000 or more in 2021.

Anonymous (2)
AT&T - Virginia
American Legion Post 177/Fairfax
AmerisourceBergen Corporation
Faye Austin
aXseum Solutions
Carol Baillie and Lauren Goebel
Bob and Susan Baldassari
Michael Barth
Leslie Beck
The Becker and Bernat Family
Sherrie Beckstead
Bentley Tysons
Gail Bolen
Jody and Donald Bradshaw
Rebecca Brown Thompson
Barbara Brown-Hawthorn
Michael and Linda Burke
Melissa Burnett
Burns Family Charitable Trust
Carol and Landon Butler
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Barbara Chappell
Kristine and Rene Chaze
Children's Charities Foundation
Christopher Reeve Foundation
Sheila Clark
Victoria Clarke and James Graham
Clifton Lions Club Charities
Alla and Barry Cline
Jeannine and Jeff Cody
Congressional Sports for Charity
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David Cooper
Leah Coxsey
Ginny and Bill Craig
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Claire Davis
George and Anne Decker
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Patricia DiCarlo
Disabled Veterans National Foundation
Claire Dwoskin
Jean and Ric Edelman
Katherine Ellsworth and Pete Petronzio
Brian Engler
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Julie and Tony Ennis
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Laurene Gallo
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Herndon Woman's Club
Daphne and Stuart Himelfarb
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Otto and Carrie Hoernig
HORUS Technology
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Mark and Rebecca Huppert
Zarrar and Liz Husain
Sarah Jancuska
Sheila C. Johnson
Jason and Crystal Kampf
Kay Family Foundation
Robert and Amy Kelly
Mary and Bob Klein
Ronald and Rhonda Knapp
Elizabeth Krein
Chris LaMarca
The Lagasse Family
Shari Lama
James and Tamara Laurent
Mark Lowham
Lisa and Jeff Lutz
MEBS Global
Bernadette Mahon and John Kuzin
Ann and Ron Marlow
Donald and Mallory McNamara
Merritt Charitable Fund
Amare Merz
Sheila Meyer
James and Jill Mitchell
Bill and Molly Morris
Morrissette Family Foundation
Lani and Patrick Morrissey
NOVA Chapter AFCEA
NOVEC - Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative
Deborah and Alan Nash
Northrop Grumman Corporation
Rita Norton
Janelle Nowak-Santo and Brian Santo
Jim O'Farrell
Barbara and Dermot O'Reilly
Peter and Sara O'Keefe

Old Dominion Land Conservancy
Cathy and Bill Onufrychuk
Ourisman Fairfax Toyota
Maura and Frank Perrier
Donald and Maureen Peterson
Roberti Family Foundation for Civic Engagement
Theresa and Robert Rogers
Jeff Ross
Rumsfeld Foundation
Salamander Resort and Spa
Benjamin and Lucia Sanchez
Conrad and Lisa Schmidt
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Sharon Sheehy
Shelley Family Revocable Trust
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SOLID
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Mara and Evan Thayer
The Arnold Baggins Foundation
The Ewing Family Foundation
The Fremont Group Foundation
The Gemma Family Charitable Account
The Helaine and Ronald Mario Fund
The LEEPS Foundation
The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
The O'Shaughnessy-Hurst Memorial Foundation
The Sunnen Foundation
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Blake Thompson
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Gary and Marilyn Welschenbach
Matt Widmer
Marlene Wilklow
Jeff and Sally Wilklow
Wise Foundation
Dan and Jett Wooldridge
Wounded Warriors Family Support
David Yurman

ALYSSA PETERSON

Eleven-year-old Alyssa Peterson is the happiest child you would ever meet.


According to her mom, Traci, she jumps and bounces all day long. She loves reading and math. She could spend all day writing and animating her own comic books. She loves drawing, building with Legos, and listening to music while bouncing on a yoga ball.

From the outside, she looks like every other 11-year-old. But on the inside, she struggles daily.

Alyssa has autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

“She feels such frustration with being misunderstood, not being able to communicate ‘typically’, and not being able to express herself for others to understand and accept,” Traci shared.

Alyssa was born without her corpus callosum, the largest single structure in the brain that joins the two hemispheres. As a result, she couldn’t even physically cross the midline of her body with her arms.

A photograph of a young girl, Alyssa Peterson, standing in a dirt paddock next to a light brown horse. She is wearing a pink riding helmet, a light pink long-sleeved shirt, and teal riding pants. She is holding the lead rope of the horse. The horse has a white blaze on its face and is wearing a purple boot on its front left leg. The background shows a line of trees and a blue sky with white clouds.

“From the outside, she looks like every other 11-year-old. But on the inside, she struggles daily.”

After many attempts at traditional physical therapy, the Peterson family found the Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program (NVTRP) in Clifton, VA.

Alyssa started physical therapy sessions incorporating horses (formerly known as hippotherapy) and the results were remarkable.

“Early on, we saw the benefits of riding from a physical perspective,” said Traci. “Within a year of hippotherapy, Alyssa had completely even muscle tone on both sides of her body, she could easily cross midline, and was so balanced that standing on a horse while walking posed no issue.”

But what her mom is even more proud of is the peace that Alyssa has found at the farm.



“She knows that if she can stand on a horse, she can do anything.”



“While the physical changes and benefits are nothing short of incredible, what it does for her mind, body and spirit is even more amazing. NVTRP is Alyssa’s happy place. She builds a trusting relationship with the horses and all the autistic ticks she has on a normal basis disappear. Her anxiety subsides. There is a sense of calm that comes over her and allows her to observe and enjoy her surrounding environment. This is the only therapy she does that allows her to feel like a kid. Her childhood has been lost to therapies, doctors’ visits and surgeries. But here - at NVTRP - she finds joy.”

The Petersons have also found added benefits that come from equine-assisted services - the ability to take what you experience at the barn and translate that into Alyssa’s everyday life.

Traci explains, “With riding, she can see and feel the difference that it has made, which has given her a confidence that she has not found elsewhere. She is now able to carry that confidence with her to brave new challenges, overcome obstacles, and believe in herself. She knows that if she can stand on a horse, she can do anything.”

“Alyssa knows that at NVTRP, no one cares what her diagnosis may be. They care about who she is. They don’t see autism or ADHD,” said Traci. “They see a kid who doctors thought would never walk or talk, having the time of her life, putting forth her best effort, and finding out more about who she is as a person every time she rides. It is the only place that makes her feel like a person, and not a diagnosis.”

“For her, horseback riding and NVTRP are home.”

“Alyssa has found peace at the farm.”



“NVTRP is Alyssa’s happy place.”



NORTHERN VIRGINIA THERAPUETIC RIDING PROGRAM

MISSION: *To help each individual realize their highest potential by providing equine-assisted activities to people with disabilities, youth from marginalized communities, recovering military personnel, and others in need in an inclusive, community setting.*

2021 NVTRP STAFF MEMBERS:

Kelsey Gallagher, *Executive Director*

Kelly Ayers, *Shift Leader*

Wendy Baird, *Development Director*

Hela Baer, *Licensed Master Social Worker*

Nicole Bass, *Instructor*

Mike Burke, *Facilities Coordinator*

Nalani Cochran, *Shift Leader*

Lisa Dowell, *Development Associate*

Christina Germinario, *Operations Director*

Clarice Gutman, *Equine Coordinator*

Tessa Hassett, *Program Director*

Rose Khattab, *Shift Leader*

Sarah Maceyak, *Instructor*

Kenna Mauro, *Volunteer Coordinator*

Shelby Morrison, *Grants and Communications Manager*

Sydney Sawyer, *Physical Therapist*

Kristen Stombres, *Program Assistant*

Katie Wanstrath, *Office Manager*

ORGANIZATIONS NVTRP PARTNERED WITH OR SERVED IN 2021:

Second Story+

Washington School for Girls+

Fairfax County Parktakes

Fairfax County Sheriff's Office+

Larmax Homes

Wounded Warrior Project

Chesterbrook Residences

Brightview Senior Living

National Capital Treatment and Recovery*

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center*

Major Local Military Installation*

+Fully subsidized by NVTRP

*new in 2021

Board and Staff Lists as of 12/31/2021

2021 NVTRP BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Kelly Harbitter, *Treasurer*

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Jean Edelman, *Board Member*

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Mitch Martin, *Secretary*

Rita Norton, *Board Member*

Will Thomas, *Board Member*

John Tuthill, *Board Member*

NORTHERN VIRGINIA THERAPUETIC RIDING PROGRAM

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