



July 2022

Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

Abby Leibach's Miracle Moment

After hearing about Miracles when I first became a student at the University of Iowa three years ago, I finally got the chance to sign up to volunteer for classes this past spring. I am originally from Champaign, Illinois and, unfortunately, I had never heard of anything like this. What a unique experience to get involved in! I stick to side walking for now since I do not have much experience with horses and am planning to enter the field of occupational therapy, so I love spending time alongside the kids!

One of the things that I love most about coming to miracles is that you can so clearly see growth in the kids in just a couple of weeks. Whether they are gaining more confidence to have control of their riding, sitting up straighter, or being more vocal, it is awesome to get to be a part of their journey! My experience at Miracles has been nothing but joy so far and I hope to be able to continue this experience, maybe even as a therapist one day!



From the Desk of the Director of Operations:

Several times a week I see firsthand why Nick, our property manager, Maggie our volunteer coordination, the volunteers, board members and donors work so hard to ensure that Miracles continues to fulfill our vision and mission year after year.

We have therapeutic riding classes multiple times a week. Here we can see how our students benefit from the movement of the horse. Riding relaxes and strengthens their muscles as it improves their posture and coordination. Needing to follow the instructor's directions can improve cognitive skills. The riders need to pay attention in an environment that is much different than being in a classroom or a therapist office. There are also life skills such as trust and respect - trusting and respecting the horse, the side



walkers and the instructors. The student's interactions with their horse and volunteers gives the students practice at these skills. Then there is the sensory input of being with the horse and being on the Miracle's property. There are so many sights, sounds and smells. We have an entire sensory trail developed to provide experiences - hearing the horse's hooves crossing the wooden bridge, going up and down hills, playing musical instruments, seeing planes and their jet stream overhead and hearing the wind rustling through the corn fields. For some the interaction of being with other riders and volunteers brings on the fun and laughter.

Miracles is certified through PATH, which stands for Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. Our programs and instructors follow over 100 quality and safety standards. All of this allows our riders to be safe, improve physically and mentally and have the sheer enjoyment and experience of being on a horse. As we know horses teach all of us so much! So thank you to all!

Deb Leichsenring



Save the dates!

October 1st – Miracles volunteers at Oktoberfest in the Amanas

October 15th – Boo at the Barn

Our scholarship fund needs replenishing!

Donations to the Miracle's scholarship fund make sure that no one is turned away from our classes due to lack of funds. Guidelines for financial support for an adaptive riding student are on our website.

Donate through our website at www.miraclesinmotion.com or mail a check to the Miracle's office – 2049 120th Street NW, Swisher, IA 52338

You can also read about applying for a scholarship criteria on our website.

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