

## Victory Riding Academy Annual Report

Year: 2023

*Empowering Lives Through Equine-Facilitated Learning and Horsemanship*

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### Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

As we reflect on an incredible year at **Victory Riding Academy**, we are filled with pride and gratitude for the progress we've made in improving the quality of life for those we serve through **Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)**. In 2023, our mission to help students persevere, overcome, and conquer life's challenges was realized in ways we never imagined.

From **Veterans** and **first responders** to their families and individuals with special needs, we've seen firsthand how the bond between humans and horses can heal, restore confidence, and unlock new possibilities. Our horsemanship classes have not only educated but also empowered individuals to develop a sense of security, competence, and resilience in their lives.

None of this would be possible without the support of our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and, of course, the courageous individuals who participate in our programs. Your belief in the transformative power of horses enables us to provide a safe and supportive space for growth and healing.

In 2023, we also faced a significant challenge from the city—one that required us to improve our facility's infrastructure to remain compliant with local regulations. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to address this challenge head-on through a special fundraising campaign that enabled us to pave a new **driveway and parking lot**, ensuring safer, easier access for our participants and visitors.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us continue our work. We look forward to the year ahead and the new opportunities we will create together.

Sincerely,

Tony Barnes  
Executive Director  
Victory Riding Academy

## About Us

### Mission Statement

Improving the quality of life for students with equine-facilitated activities. Helping students persevere, overcome and conquer any of life's challenges. Educating the community through horsemanship classes, providing training and instruction to develop competence and security.

### Our Services

We offer a range of services tailored to the unique needs of each individual we serve:

- **Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) for Veterans and First Responders:** Addressing the emotional, mental, and physical challenges faced by these individuals through structured interactions with horses.
  - **Family Programs:** Fostering connection and communication within families through shared experiences with horses.
  - **Special Needs Programs:** Providing support for individuals with special needs to enhance social skills, emotional regulation, and self-confidence.
  - **Horsemanship Classes:** Offering education and training in horsemanship, focusing on safety, skills development, and relationship-building with horses.
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## Our Impact in 2023

### Total Participants Served:

- Veterans and First Responders: 63
- Families: 7
- Individuals with Special Needs: 5

### Key Achievements:

- **Program Growth:** We increased the number of participants in our equine-assisted learning programs compared to last year, reaching new communities and individuals in need.
- **Expanded Horsemanship Classes:** Our horsemanship program saw an increase in enrollment as more individuals sought to learn the skills of working with horses and experience the confidence-building benefits it offers.
- **Partnerships:** We formed new partnerships with Veteran support groups to provide additional resources and expand our reach.
- **Success Stories:**
  - **Veteran Healing Program:** "Working with the horses has given me a sense of peace I've been missing since returning from service. The trust and calm I build with the horses help me find a sense of grounding again."
  - **Family Program Impact:** One family shared, "Through this program, we've learned how to communicate better, work together, and feel more connected. The horses have been our teachers in patience and empathy."

- **Special Needs Program:** “I never thought my child would be able to interact so calmly with animals or people. The growth in his confidence is incredible, and he’s now more open to social situations.”

## Financial Overview

**Total Revenue:** \$345,493.13

**Total Expenses:** \$158,960.00

**Revenue Breakdown:**

- **Donations:** \$192,882.92
- **Grants:** \$6,259.00
- **Programs:** \$36,176.75
- **Fundraising Events:** \$110,174.46

### Use of Funds:

In 2023, we allocated 45% of our total revenue directly to program services, ensuring that every dollar supports the ongoing operations and expansion of our programs. Your contributions enable us to continue providing life-changing opportunities to those who need it most.

The remaining 55% of our funds were allocated to meet the city's infrastructure requirements for our facility. This included the construction of a concrete driveway and parking lot to stay within regulatory compliance. These improvements are crucial to ensuring accessibility, safety, and the smooth operation of our services

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## Looking Ahead: Our Goals for 2023

As we enter 2023, we are excited to build on the progress we’ve made and continue to expand our programs to reach more individuals and communities in need. Our strategic goals for the coming year include:

- **Expanding Reach:** We aim to increase the number of Veterans, first responders, and families we serve by 20% through targeted outreach and new partnerships.
  - **Developing New Educational Resources:** We will introduce additional horsemanship classes and workshops focused on leadership, teamwork, and stress management, providing more opportunities for growth.
  - **Therapeutic Growth:** We plan to introduce new therapeutic horsemanship approaches that will deepen the impact on emotional and psychological well-being for participants with special needs.
  - **Sustainability and Growth:** We aim to secure sustainable funding through grants, partnerships, and individual donations to ensure the long-term impact and growth of our programs.
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## Get Involved

We invite you to join us in making a difference:

- **Donate:** Your support allows us to continue offering high-quality programs, expand our services, and ensure that no one is turned away due to financial barriers.
- **Volunteer:** From working directly with horses to helping with administrative tasks, your time and skills can make a profound difference in our programs.
- **Spread the Word:** Share our mission and success stories with your network. Your advocacy helps raise awareness about the power of Equine Assisted Learning.

For more information on how you can help, please visit our website at [www.victoryride.org](http://www.victoryride.org) or contact us at [info@victoryride.org](mailto:info@victoryride.org)

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## Acknowledgments

We are deeply grateful to our donors, volunteers, staff, and partners. Your generosity and commitment make everything we do possible. We could not continue our work without your support.

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## Conclusion

Thank you for being part of our community and supporting the life-changing work we do. The connection between horses and humans has proven to be an extraordinary tool for healing, learning, and growth. Together, we will continue to empower individuals to overcome their challenges, develop new skills, and achieve lasting change in their lives.

With sincere gratitude,

Tony Barnes  
Executive Director  
Victory Riding Academy

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## Contact Us

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