

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS



Horses and Humans Improving Lives

The horse-human partnership can be traced back to approximately 3,500 BC when evidence suggests that the Botai settlements of Kazakhstan first started to domesticate the animals which had previously been hunted for food and sustenance. So why has the partnership between man and horse sustained long after man's need to use these amazing animals for transport, power or for food?

The reason is that our relationship with horses has evolved and developed from basic life sustaining to, one can argue, a different type of sustenance. Around the world horses continue to partner with humans in sports and recreation, but here at High Hopes they are our partners in physical, social and emotional progress. They have a great deal to teach us about living in the modern world and how powerful, symbiotic relationships can develop between our participants, our volunteers, our many forms of supporters, and our staff.

Mindfulness may be the latest buzz-word in research, management and alternative therapies, but as a prey animal, the horse is the epitome of mindfulness; being fully present, in the moment, without judgment. Every day they invite us to mirror that relationship. They remind us how we should continue to build a wide range of authentic partnerships with the common goal of improving the lives of all of those we serve.



High Hopes thrives today because of the many people who believe in the mission, see the benefit of our services and commit to ensuring our future. As an organization, we are stronger for each of these collaborations. We know that it “takes a village” and in our 2016–2017 Annual Report, we celebrate the Village of High Hopes.

In many ways, the partnerships formed at High Hopes are some of the most healing and important aspects of our program. In today’s fractured society, where too often we find ourselves isolated, and communicating only with electronic devices, it is more important than ever to rediscover the physical connections that bind us. The relationships forged at High Hopes teach us all about effective communication, trust, empathy and, most importantly, understanding and acceptance.

As we are already near completion of our 2015–2019 Strategic Plan, we have started work on our vision for the future. In that new vision we must recognize that “growth” can be quantified in many ways. Over the 2016–2017 fiscal year we have seen manageable changes in the numbers of participants that we serve (1,674), the number of Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies we deliver (10,291), and the number of volunteer hours

contributed (25,878). To that end, we have continued to build on the strengths of our Board of Trustees to plan for the future. Our Trustees bring connections to a wider community of interest in our work, as well as providing the oversight and governance that you have come to expect as our partners and stakeholders.

Partnerships come in all shapes and sizes; two horses mutually grooming one another; a committee of volunteers creating an event; riders working with their instructor and volunteers to complete a task, or a supporter providing the resources necessary for High Hopes’ operational stability. Within this report, we have highlighted just a few of the impactful partnerships which nurture and give us the strength to achieve our mission while progressing into a sustainable future.

So let us, together, celebrate you; our Partners in Progress.

Kitty Stalsburg
Executive Director

John Catlett
Board Chair

ABOUT HIGH HOPES

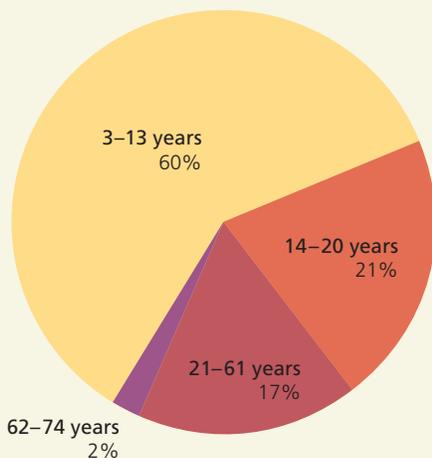
High Hopes Therapeutic Riding, Inc. is a premier therapeutic riding center and international instructor training site. We have served people with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities for over 43 years.

Our year-round programs in equine assisted activities and therapies include therapeutic riding, carriage driving, and unmounted equine learning. We also offer experiential learning through outreach programs, an integrated summer camp, and a variety of volunteer opportunities.

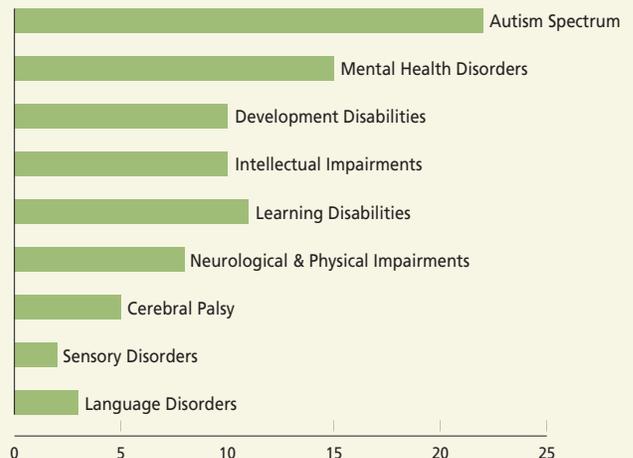
We offer PATH Intl. Approved Training Courses (ATC), and have served over 260 instructor candidates from throughout the U.S. and over 20 countries abroad. We also present continuing professional education and enrichment programs for those seeking lifelong learning. Our training is conducted by highly qualified professionals who are widely recognized in the field of therapeutic riding.

High Hopes is a place where people come to heal, to learn, and to make friends that last a lifetime. We strive to provide support and growth opportunities for all of our participants, families, caregivers, and volunteers.

AGES OF OUR RIDERS



PRIMARY DISABILITIES OF OUR RIDERS





HighHopes *Legacy Society*

The Legacy Society is a program for planned giving. You can become a member simply by notifying us that you have included High Hopes in your will, and helping us answer the questions:

- How do we engage future generations of donors and volunteers in a world that seems to allow less time for volunteering and less resources for philanthropy?
- How do we build on the shoulders of giants? How should we develop new leaders to further develop the work of our original supporters who believed in our mission and gave so much of themselves to deliver it?

It is clear that without our partners we would not have the strength we do to thrive and sustain. In the coming years The Legacy Society will also provide a solid base for the further strengthening of our endowment enabling High Hopes to look forward to its next 50 years.



HighHops
Therapeutic Riding
HORSES AND HUMANS
IMPROVING LIVES



Corporations in our Community

Since its founding 43 years ago, High Hopes has forged many beneficial relationships with local, regional and national corporations, that have been integral to our growth and stability. Most companies' method of support has been in the form of individual event sponsorship, from Symphony in the Meadows in 1985, to the Holiday Market in 2017. Some companies have gone on to deepen their support; employees and owners have become program volunteers, board members, event planners, or

have provided facility maintenance support. Take just one example: Jeff Ridgway, a partner in the home construction firm Caulfield & Ridgway. Over the years High Hopes has benefited from Jeff's expertise as he headed up the Buildings and Grounds Committee, oversaw the expansion of our facility, introduced vendors that could improve heating and cooling efficiency, and so much more! Jeff's experience has helped prepare our facility to host events that attract thousands of visitors in the space of a few hours.

Amy and Scott Huot have volunteered together at High Hopes since 2014 and developed a passionate commitment to the fulfillment of the High Hopes' mission. Wanting to share that passion with her co-workers at Kapco Global, an aircraft parts distributor located in Essex, CT, Amy and her colleagues decided that High Hopes would be the focus of their spring quarter's fundraising efforts. Staff joined one of two teams, donated money and also participated in "challenges". The team that won the most challenges had their donations matched by the company and in June the winning team visited High Hopes to present their check. They enjoyed a tour of High Hopes and had a chance to see first-hand the healing work which results from the horse-human bond. They also met the High Hopes' herd, and at the end of the day decided to adopt Summer, a Clydesdale mare who came to High Hopes in 2017. The financial support given through this "adoption" provides for Summer's care and ensures her continued success in our program. Fundraising and spending a work day at High Hopes, has engaged Kapco Global more completely in sharing and supporting our mission.

Another new corporate partnership is with MassMutual, a national life insurance company with over 5 million customers that came about at the recommendation of long time High Hopes volunteer, and MassMutual employee, Dawn Loughead.

Dawn is a regular program volunteer whose hours have been "matched" with a contribution by MassMutual. As a result of her volunteer experience with High Hopes, Dawn was asked to serve on a committee of employees that assesses and recommends how MassMutual should distribute its philanthropic gifts. This opportunity promises to provide Dawn with exciting new personal and professional opportunities – all resulting from her volunteer experience at High Hopes!

Over the past few years we have seen many similar stories. Some of our most mutually-beneficial, long-term corporate partnerships, such as Dominion Energy, Liberty Bank and Eversource Energy, have grown out of relationships with individuals who have been inspired



by High Hopes. They in turn have encouraged others in their organizations to become engaged in our programs and enjoy first-hand the impact their gifts have on our participants.

MassMutual is one of an increasing number of companies that seek to build community engagement by rewarding employee volunteerism with financial support for the hours they commit to a non-profit.

Nine years ago High Hopes was approached by LEARN Regional Educational Services about the prospect of conducting a joint summer program that would serve “at risk” youth. The structure of the program was to take middle school youth from Norwich and New London

High Hopes was approached by school administrators and teachers who were part of a program called “The Montville Academy;” serving students at risk of academic failure due to high truancy rates. A pilot program brought a group of students to High Hopes on a weekly basis

Pilot to Mainstream

and bring them to High Hopes for a four-week summer program. The participants enrolled in that initial program, “Horse Sense,” were failing academically and had limited opportunities for meaningful summer activities. The goals of that pilot were to develop teamwork and improve oral and written communication; all built around fun, and challenging equine activities. The skills the students learned at High Hopes would then be transferred to the classroom, where students worked on remedial academic projects.

Working with horses proved to be a powerful motivator, and the response from the students, parents and teachers was overwhelmingly positive.

Based on the success of the Horse Sense camp, High Hopes began to develop year-round programs that built upon the lessons learned over that first summer. With supporters such as The Bingham Trust, The Edward and Mary Lord Foundation, The Kitchings Family Foundation and The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut; High Hopes has developed partnerships with schools and social service agencies across Connecticut.

Nine years later the lessons learned from the pilot have permeated all aspects of the High Hopes program.

Another example is the partnership High Hopes has forged with the Montville School System. In 2014

over the course of a full academic year. Participation in this second “Horse Sense” program was focused on character development with the goal of improving school attendance and academic performance.

Through their interaction with the horses, students worked on developmental assets such as strength-based goal setting, responsibility, time management, communication, team-work, and empathy. Caring for and handling horses created a motivating environment, encouraged students to be present and mindful, and provided (for many) their first experience of bonding with an animal. This translated into improved relationship skills at home and school. The students were also able to carriage drive, which offered an additional opportunity for gentle, assertive leadership with the increased thrill of a mounted activity.

There has been an additional benefit of this relationship. Montville School system facilitates community internships, and during this fiscal year High Hopes accepted two interns. We enjoyed providing them with opportunities to work on job skills in a supportive and motivating environment.

The results of the partnership between the Montville Academy and High Hopes have been increasingly positive, and in 2017-2018 we look forward to our fourth year of successful collaboration.



Caring for horses creates a motivating environment, encouraging students to be present and mindful.



Partners in Leadership

Our mission is “to improve the lives of people with disabilities through the benefits of therapeutic horseback riding, equine assisted activities and therapies, and training and education, while being a proactive leader, mentor and advocate for our profession.” The embodiment of this mission can be seen through our leadership role within the Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT) community through PATH Intl. and beyond.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

High Hopes is one of only five centers in the United States that is authorized to offer the PATH Intl. Approved Instructor Training Course. Since 1996, we have trained and certified over 260 new PATH Intl. Instructors. These Instructors have taken their newly acquired professional skills to nearly 30 U.S. states and over 20 countries worldwide. We are proud that many individuals with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities, in countries ranging from Belgium to Japan; Ecuador to South Korea; Canada to Trinidad & Tobago, have been touched in some way by the High Hopes ethos.

Through some of these individual training partnerships, we have also developed mentoring relationships with other EAAT centers, both existing and in development; in the USA and beyond. Our reputation for strong leadership, evidence-based practice, and a robust corporate governance framework has resulted in our staff routinely presenting locally, nationally and internationally.

We are also a proactive leader in promoting the benefits of EAAT to educators, occupational and physical therapists, mental health professionals and other Allied Health Professionals. It is rewarding to see how pilot initiatives, where High Hopes staff have worked within multi-disciplinary teams, have now developed into fruitful, long-term service delivery and training programs.

IMMERSION

Our expertise in utilizing EAAT in childhood development and autism has been rewarded with a long-term partnership with Lawrence+Memorial (now part of the Yale New Haven Hospital System), through our Immersion program. This program enables Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, specially



trained volunteers, and PATH Intl. Certified Instructors to provide a four-day “immersive” opportunity for sensory experience and equine assisted skill acquisition for children between the ages of four and six. The High Hopes sensory trail, supported by the LaBoiteaux Family Foundation, provides the perfect setting for this program.

THE EQUUS EFFECT

In January 2016, we partnered with The Equus Effect to create programs that have been life changing for over thirty veterans. With the support of The Bingham Trust and the Thompson Family Foundation, we have provided five programs that empower participants with strategies to change self-limiting feelings and behaviors born of their time in the services. In addition to expanding to a planned seven programs, serving over fifty veterans at High Hopes during this coming year; we now offer an education program for other organizations wishing to deliver the Equus Effect. Within a national context of over 22 veteran suicides a day; this will help ensure that such a valuable program is available through many more therapeutic riding and veterans’ centers.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017

Assets

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$374,730
Pledge and Other Receivables	87,533
Prepaid Expenses	29,496
Unconditional Promises to Give	7,000

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS \$498,759

Property and Equipment – Net \$1,568,418

LONG-TERM ASSETS

Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$4,837
Unconditional Promises to Give	14,000
Investments	3,683,011

TOTAL LONG-TERM ASSETS \$3,701,848

TOTAL ASSETS \$5,769,025

Liabilities and Net Assets

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$43,114
Accrued Expenses and Deposits	13,343
Advance Fees for Services	51,407

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES \$107,864

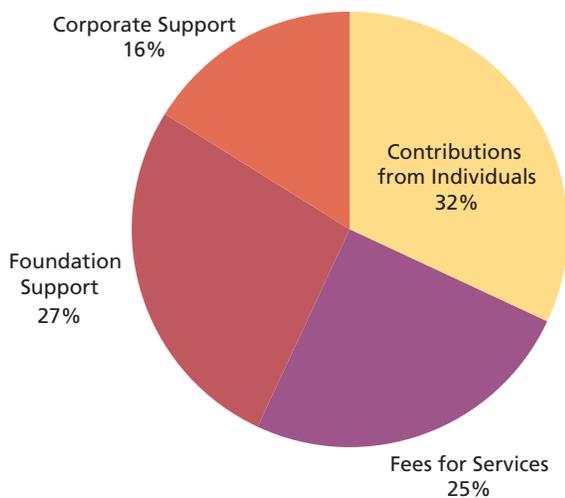
NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$2,331,262
Temporarily Restricted	1,753,736
Permanently Restricted	1,576,163

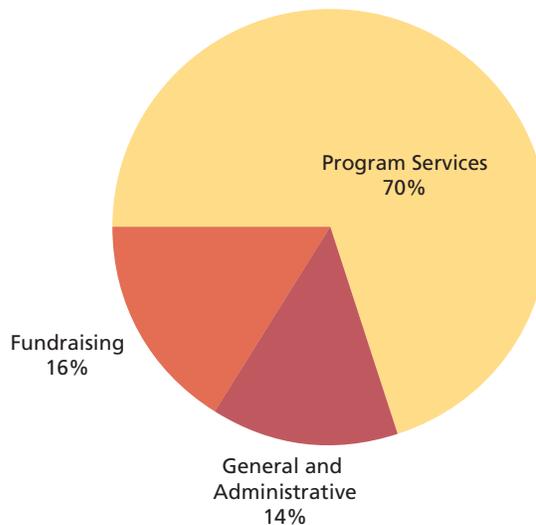
TOTAL NET ASSETS \$5,661,161

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS \$5,769,025

SUPPORT AND REVENUE



FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



Our Staff

Barbara Abrams	<i>Instructor/Expressive Arts Therapist</i>
Diana Artiles	<i>Office Manager</i>
Courtney Bernard	<i>Instructor</i>
Trudy Burgess	<i>Event Manager</i>
Kerry Burke	<i>Instructor</i>
Sarah Carlson	<i>Special Programs Manager</i>
Patti Coyle	<i>Training and Education Director</i>
Sarah Crisp	<i>Communications Manager</i>
Carrina Echeandia*	<i>Special Program Coordinator</i>
Imanol Echeverria	<i>Instructor</i>
Jonnie Edwards*	<i>Instructor</i>
Megan Ellis	<i>Program Director</i>
Lauren Fitzgerald	<i>Equine Resource Manager</i>
Karena Garrity	<i>Development Coordinator</i>
Pennie Garvin	<i>Caretaker</i>
Stacy Gendels	<i>Instructor</i>
Liesl Grigerek	<i>Barn Assistant</i>
Carolyn Jagielski	<i>Physical Therapist/Instructor</i>
Shannon Kelly	<i>Instructor</i>
Donna Latella	<i>Occupational Therapist/Instr.</i>
Anna Lennard	<i>Instructor</i>
Allie Leonard*	<i>Instructor</i>
Marie Manero	<i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>
Kate McCormick*	<i>Education Specialist</i>
Paula McHale*	<i>Finance Director</i>
Rachel Moser*	<i>Office Manager</i>
Laura Moya	<i>Instructor</i>
Caitlin Nuhn*	<i>Volunteer & Outreach Manager</i>
Lesley Olsen	<i>Finance Director</i>
Juanita Paris	<i>Barn Assistant</i>
Anne Peterson	<i>Mental Health Professional (L.P.C.)</i>
Sara Qua	<i>Development Director</i>
Kitty Stalsburg	<i>Executive Director</i>
Gail Stevens*	<i>Communications Manager</i>
Holly Sundmacker	<i>Equine Operations Director</i>
Stephanie Trafka	<i>Instructor</i>
Amy Tripson	<i>Volunteer Manager</i>
Carrie Wind	<i>Instructor</i>

*Staff Changes during 2016-2017

High Hopes Board of Trustees

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John Catlett

Vice Chairman for Development

Jeffrey Ridgway

Vice Chairs

James Scott Douglas

Seymour Smith

Secretary

Jacqueline Kangley

Treasurer

Deborah Welles

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Sarah Hill Canning

Hannah Childs

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Todd Machnick

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Robin Schonberger

Peter Watt

Barbara Willkens

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Cheryl Heffernan

Judith Lightfoot

Roger M. Smith

Wayne O. Southwick, MD †

Anthony C. Thurston †

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Cheryl Heffernan

Betsy Horn

Barbara Kashanski †

Judith F. Lightfoot

Pete Pierson †

A. Rives Potts

Jeffrey Ridgway

Roger M. Smith

Anthony C. Thurston †

Kelvin N. Tyler

† Deceased

Audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 was performed by MahoneySabol. Copies are available on request.
Report design and photography: Michael Fanelli



**10,291 Services provided
to 1,674 participants
by 22 instructors**

**625 Volunteers
donated 25,878 hours**

**25 Horses
4,500 bales of hay totaling
180,000 pounds per year
375 bags of grain totaling
18,750 pounds per year
91,250 gallons of water per year**