**High Hopes Report to the Board of Trustees**

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

**Second Quarter Report: October –December 2022**

**Operations Update –** Jeanna Pellino, Operations Director

High Hopes is fortunate to have a team of highly skilled and dedicated team members.

Primary Areas of Focus

Volunteer Area – Initially, 75% of my time was dedicated to the volunteer area including – assessing needs and challenges related to recruitment and training to increase volunteer resources as quickly as possible, developing an action plan to include screening prospective volunteers, revised training formats and materials, and learning the systems in place for managing the daily schedule and data (technology and database functionality). Progress has been made and going forward more attention will be placed on targeted outreach/recruitment efforts and up-training of active horse handlers. The Volunteer Manager and other team members have temporarily taken on additional duties while seeking a new Volunteer Coordinator.

Organizational Culture – Significant time this past quarter was dedicated to working collaboratively with key team members to promote equitable and professional norms for the work culture and enhance leadership skills.

Center Resource Assessment – Looking ahead, more time and focus will be placed on assessing center resources for maximum use potential, effective operations and diversifying services and educational programs to determine opportunities for revenue generating opportunities.

**Program Services Update – Chelsea Bourn, Program Director**

Equine-Assisted Services Academic 22-23

* 162 participant spots filled (2 participants dropped out for personal reasons; spots will be filled.)

Breakdown of Services:

* 60 therapeutic riding, 48 unmounted, 40 unmounted/ride rotation,
* 12 carriage driving, 2 drive unmounted

Weekly Groups:

* Recovery at Wildwood Farm, SARAH Inc., Veterans

New Participant Assessments:

* 3 assessments scheduled in December (one is a current participant who is switching services)

Waitlist:

* + 101 on the waitlist with paperwork completed (50 are brand new, 51 remaining are previous participants) A small percentage may not meet our participation parameters but most not being served due to need for volunteers (horse leaders).

Potential Participant Leads:

* 98 active leads within the last 12 months, 67 of whom have submitted no paperwork and 31 of whom have submitted partial paperwork.
* There are 50 brand new participants pending assessment – all paperwork submitted, but no appropriate spot are currently available based on our resources.

Special Programs

* + - Portland Senior Center- 7 attendees, unmounted
    - East Lyme Senior Center- 9 attendees, unmounted
    - North Branford Kindergarten- 4 attendees, unmounted
    - Two EAL sessions for staff/volunteers- 16 attendees, unmounted
    - Safe Futures- 4 attendees, mounted
    - Veterans Open house- 21 attendees, unmounted

Collaborations

* 1. Recovery at Wildwood Farm- first rotation completed, with lower than expected enrollment. A new rotation with new participants will begin in January.
  2. SARAH Inc. - A group of 6 continuing for Academic 22-23 but taking winter off.
  3. Safe Futures – A 22-23 grant for continued services approved with special activities scheduled.(2 mounted field trips and four unmounted field trips.)
  4. Region 18- Increased ridership for 22-23 semester- Spring contract drafted with one added rider.
  5. New London Public Schools- first rotation of students ends February 2023. This rotation is more behavioral and less physically involved than previous semesters.
  6. Nature Day around Earth Day 2023 in collaboration with RTP Audubon, DP Nature Center in Groton, and Friends of the Forest of Essex confirmed for a one-day event April 2023.
  7. CT Coastal Academy attended fall/winter - will take the remainder of the semester off but are interested in returning for summer 2023.
  8. Youth Empowerment Program. Saturday program start delayed due to lack of interest. Will begin program as soon as there are 4 registrants or consider doing one-day groups to foster interest.
  9. Resilience Reins- collaboration with Upreach and University of Alabama to validate an EAL curriculum for youth that have experienced trauma. The first rotation had 5 participants signed up and ended with 3. The curriculum was successfully implemented with paid LCSW. The Parent Café piece will require a staff member. The February rotation currently has no participants signed up. Rocky Hill Youth & Family Services expressed interest and will be meeting with CB.
  10. TRAIN / GAS goals project is back underway with approved MOU between High Hopes and Cathy Hybels. 20-21 data was submitted Q1 but has not yet been reviewed. 21-22 data was cleaned by instructional staff over the November break and has been submitted.
  11. HH will begin a collaboration with Middlesex Health- Mayer Center in February 2023. They intend to send their professionals to support the program and complete two rotations of six for unmounted lessons. They are seeking grant funding and the contract will be drafted shortly.
  12. Blue Star Mothers of America attended HH Veterans Open House day and intends to remain involved in Veterans outreach and special programming.

Program Engagement and Improvement Efforts

1. Program Task Force has new co-chairs, Maris Wacs and Sarah Kitchings-Keenan. The team met once and supported a lounge décor project for participants in November. The group will re-convene in the new year to review group evaluation of community organizations and therapeutic interventions. Task force goal: determine eligible services for programming/ to learn from other community organizations.
2. Instructor Enrichment to provide continuous mentorship of instructors. The first session in November was on Rider Biomechanics; the February session topic is Volunteer Management.
3. Unmounted Curriculum- instructor Lily Bensko created nature-based (One Health) unmounted lesson activities for instructors to incorporate into lessons. Lily is also creating a collection of EAL activities organized by goal type for the participant.
4. Summer Camp – this summer’s camps will include 2 weeks of tiny trotters, a literacy based week, social skills/pre-teen group, Youth Empowerment, and Nature based weeks as well as our traditional Immersion, VetKids, and Horse Sense weeks. The curriculum is under development for the new programs and Summer Camp registration will begin early in the new year.
5. Nicole Birkholzer of Mindful Connections provided a workshop on being mindful/present/non-judgmental in our work. Instructional staff appreciated and benefited from the opportunity.

Staffing Updates

* + Jeanna Pellino and Chelsea Bourn attended the PATH Intl. Conference in St. Louis, Missouri
  + Carissa Jackson intended to submit for CTRI testing in December but has been delayed.
  + Hayley Plas will test for her CTRI in February.
  + Audrey Vela began mentored teaching this semester.
  + Marie Cahill will begin an Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Goodwin University in January 2023. We have accommodated her teaching schedule.
  + Chelsea Bourn will begin as an ESMHL Faculty Apprentice in February 2023. 2

Risk Management: Q2

There were 8 Risk Management reports:

* + Horse Bite -1
  + Horse in wrong paddock -1
  + Rider Biohazard- 3
  + Participant Behavior-2
  + Horse stepped on foot -1

# **Training and Education Update – Sarah Miller, Training & Education Director**

PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL)   
In November, High Hopes hosted a three-day workshop with one-day skills test for 14 attendees (five individuals withdrew last minute for personal reasons). Upcoming events scheduled for February and June 2023 are each projected to serve 18 attendees and will include a new faculty member.

### Educational Webinars

* + - 9 individuals purchased a total of 28 individual prerecorded webinars as of 12/19.

### Mentored Teaching hours/ Mentoring

* + - One staff member will be working towards CTRI required mentored teaching hours this semester.
    - One Instructor in Training from NY for January- May to get 25 mentored teaching hours.

### Internships

### One intern from ECSU (Psychology) begins in January for 11-13 hours per week through May.

### One intern from CT College (Human Development) February – April for 20 hours per week

### Outreach and Educational Events

* A staff member attended Johnson & Wales University Career Fair to share HH training and education and internship opportunities available throughout the year.
* Several staff worked the Equine Affaire PATH Intl. booth to promote training
* Presented to SUNY Cobleskill students for their Equine Studies/ Instructional class.

### Lyme Hunter Pace- From Q1

* After a two year break due to COVID, the event was held Sunday, September 18th with High Hopes receiving $3,772.

**Equine & Facility Updates – Holly Sundmacker, Equine Operations Director**

Herd Updates including new & trial horses

* Current herd stands at 22.
  + September trial horse “Churro” has been accepted into the program. He was donated by Southern Reins Center for Equine Therapy in Tennessee.
  + An unsuccessful trial was completed with the horse not suitable for beginner handlers and was returned home.
  + 3 prospective horses remain in the queue for trials. Next trial will begin in January.

3

Horse Workload (efficiency September 1 to December 31, 2022)

* + Maximum available horse usage (all horses working at their maximum availability) was 2,660 units over 14 program weeks.
  + Actual available horse usage (this is maximum less unsound or unwell horses) was 2,484 units over 14 weeks, 94% of maximum.
  + Actual utilized horse usage was 1,310 units, this equals 53%\* of actual available usage.

Herd utilization stats: \*low rider numbers due to HH shortage; \*\*Includes 101 usage from August field trip events.

* Fall semester 2021 = 66%
* Winter semester 2022 = 43%
* Spring semester 2022 = 72%
* Summer semester 2022 = 78%\*\*

Staff

* New caretaker, Nicole LaJeunesse, began October 1st and is doing well providing the evening facility and horse night checks and cleaning the building five nights per week.

Building & Grounds

* Capital projects budgeted for this fiscal year:
* New picnic tables – arrived and in use.
* Painting drywall in the indoor arena – completed in November.
* Replacement of the classroom bathroom floor – completed in November.
* Roof replacement on 5 run-in sheds – completed in December.
* Handimove lift replacement – to be completed in April.
* Outdoor arena fence – materials ordered/paid for, installation TBD/in warmer weather.
* Outdoor arena footing
* Interior painting in multiple areas
* Sidewalk installation (outside the classroom door and the small door in the lounge)
* Boiler replacement

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