

TAILS FROM THE BARN

*The latest news and updates from Tara's Chance
"A place where therapy feels like play"*



Edited By

Miriam Everette

IN THIS ISSUE

PROGRAM UPDATE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

PHILANTHROPY - CAROL GEISBAUER

NEW HORSE - SIERRA

RIDER SPOTLIGHT- JONES

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

BOARD BITS

RIDING WITH THE STARS

BAILEY BY BAO

Program Update

by Cindy Howells, Program Director

The Equine Assisted Riding Program (EAR) continues growing every month and it's wonderful seeing the progress of our riders. We have seen amazing transformations in our riders who struggle with mental health issues. We have watched children progress in a matter of weeks from looking down with no expression to smiling faces! It's amazing how the change in environment and companionship of a horse can lift an individual's spirit.

The mental health impacts of isolation and COVID have been severe on our youth. The EAR program allows Tara's Chance to serve so many different mental health challenges through horsemanship skills and the companionship of a horse. Our program participants are seeing drastic changes in their level of depression, anxiety, communication skills, mood, and more. Tara's Chance is the perfect peaceful environment that creates the inner peace we all need.

This Fall we have seen record levels of families falling ill and riders missing their therapy at Tara's Chance. While this is challenging for our riders, parents, and team we know that things will continue to improve. Since doubling the number of riders served at Tara's Chance to 68, we still have never canceled a lesson due to inadequate staff or volunteers. That is an amazing accomplishment in the equine therapy field and I would like to thank all our amazing staff and volunteers for making that happen. It's been magical to see the organization accompany 68 riders and grow. We are so fortunate to serve so many children who would otherwise still be on our waiting list if it wasn't for you, thank you.

Executive Director Update

by Matt Howells, Executive Director

On November 1st 2022, Tara's Chance began its new fiscal year and our 11th year as an organization serving our special needs community. To summarize our year in one word, it would be success! We doubled our programs from serving 34 children with special needs weekly to 68, we had the largest fundraising year to date, we expanded our team and our herd, and made significant investments in our future. We continue to grow each month with additional riders in the Equine Assisted Riding Program (EAR) and create new partnerships in our community.



Tara's Chance is excited to partner with community benefit organizations to better serve our special needs community. We are partnering with My Day Counts, No Limits, PRISM, Discovery-Mood & Anxiety Program and other adult day programs to benefit their program participants through equine therapy. The EAR program is based on a progressive skill-building methodology where students work with horses, both on and off the horse, to achieve particular personal goals through horsemanship skills. With these new partnerships we continue growing our mission and improving the level of equine therapy services provided in North Orange County.



Philanthropy - Carol Geisbauer

Carol Geisbauer is well-known in the Southern California nonprofit community through her experience as an Executive Director and grant writer. In 1995, she launched a freelance grant writing practice, developed a three-day grant writing workshop, and taught grant writing throughout Southern California for 15 years. She met our co-founder Tim Howells when he was a student in her grant writing workshop. Carol joined the Tara's Chance Board of Directors in 2019 and has provided strategic planning for the organization since.

Since Carol spent most of her professional career working in the nonprofit sector, giving back to the industry she served is very important to her. She found success in her career raising funds for nonprofits in Orange County and she now feels that it is her turn to be the one making financial contributions to our community. Carol has made Tara's Chance a priority in her philanthropy since learning about the organization. In 2021 she provided the leading gift for Tara's Chance to hire a volunteer manager and has provided scholarships to riders in need. Carol shares, "Giving to a small grassroots organization like Tara's Chance really allows my investment to have a major impact."

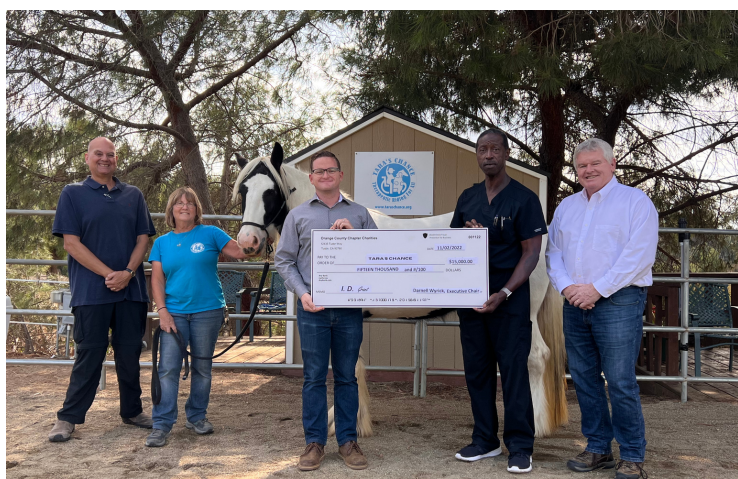
Carol's impact and legacy at Tara's Chance will indeed be major because she has named Tara's Chance as a beneficiary of her estate. She wants to ensure that Tara's Chance continues to change lives through the power of horses well after her lifetime. With Carol's bequest she has named Tara's Chance as a percentage beneficiary of her estate. A bequest is a gift from your estate and can be a transfer of cash, securities, property, or other assets. Naming Tara's Chance in your estate is a powerful way for you to make a difference at Tara's Chance in perpetuity. We are honored and so grateful that Carol has made this gift to Tara's Chance and it cements her belief that our mission will live on for generations.



New Horse - Sierra

by Matt Howells, Executive Director

We are so thankful for the support of the Orange County Chapter Charities and the Fullerton South Rotary Club for purchasing Tara's Chance newest horse, Sierra. At 4-years-old, she is the bright future of our therapeutic riding program. As the youngest horse to ever join our program, she will serve children with special needs at Tara's Chance for over 20 years. Sierra is a 4-year old Gypsy Vanner mare from Newhall, California. She stands at 14 hands tall but her build allows her to handle much heavier riders than horses of that size. Her color is Piebald which means she has splashes of white and black. I would also like to thank the Amigos De Los Niños for sponsoring Sierra to cover the annual cost of her feed, boarding, veterinary, shoeing, and equipment.



Fun Fact!

Sierra is a Gypsy Vanner, which is a type or breed of domestic horse from the islands Great Britain and Ireland. It is a small, solidly-built horse of cob conformation and is often, but not always, piebald or skewbald; it is particularly associated with Irish Travellers and English Romanichal Travellers of Ireland and Great Britain. From about 1850, travelling people in the British Isles began to use a distinct type of horse to pull their vardos, the caravans in which they had just begun to live and travel. The color and look of the breed were refined in the years after the Second World War. Horses of this type were first exported to the United States in 1996.

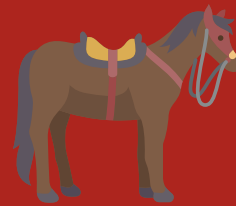
Give the Gift of Riding

This Holiday Season, honor your family, a friend, or rider and make a donation to Tara's Chance this Holiday Season in their name.

When you give a gift in their name you give the gift of hay, horse shoes, therapy lessons, and program supplies.

How does it work?

You make a donation to Tara's Chance and we send your family member or friend a card notifying them you made a donation as their holiday gift to Tara's Chance. If you would like to participate please visit our website to donate today!



4TH ANNUAL

RYAN
NOLAN

MEMORIAL GOLF
TOURNAMENT

Los Coyotes
Country Club

8888 Los Coyotes Dr.
Buena Park, CA 90621

SAVE THE DATE!



MAY 1, 2023

Rider Spotlight-Jones

by Kelly Sue Milano

With the exception of sitting up, Jones was late to every physical milestone. We believed his struggle to crawl was due to him being Frank breech during the majority of my pregnancy. We began physical therapy at 8 months but even after he started crawling (at 15 months) it became clear there were other things going on—mainly his complete lack of speech. By the time he turned 18 months, the combination of his lack of words and his inability to stand/walk prompted my pediatrician to suggest early Intervention through the Regional Center.



We were living in LA at the time and at the height of the COVID pandemic. We attended clinic sessions as often as we could but it was difficult to practice those skills outside of our sessions given that we couldn't leave our house. As the world started opening up again, someone suggested equine therapy. I had heard amazing things about it and began researching. I grew up riding horses and loved the idea of this for Jones—plus it was outdoors!



One day I mentioned this search to my older sister and she had said that a friend of hers had had incredible things to say about Tara's Chance. Even though it was in Fullerton, I was willing to make the drive. I signed up, was put up on the waiting list and spent many months hoping for a call. During that time, we had made the decision to move out of LA to Fullerton to be closer to family and get Jones more services through the Orange County Regional Center. About two months after Jones was officially diagnosed with Autism, we got the call! I felt like I had won the lottery.

Jones' particular challenges were lack of speech, low muscle tone and core strength, and trouble with change. He also had a handful of sensory issues, like not being able to wear hats. His first few sessions weren't the most fun for him—there were a lot of tears and a lot of resistance. But each week, I got to see him blossom into a joyful and skillful rider! He tries new things willingly (even if they aren't his favorite) and looks forward to his Tuesday rides more than any other activity.

In the five months that we've been attending Tara's Chance, I have seen more leaps in his development than in any other therapy. It has improved his emotional regulation, his communication, his patience, and his ability to handle changes. The relationship he has with his teachers and his pony, Riley, are more special than any other. It has been nothing short of magical.



Volunteer Spotlight - Natalie

by Natalie Kalkanian & Kat Cazares

I have always loved horses, and when I got the chance to work at the ranch I was so excited! I went to Cal State Fullerton and studied communications. I applied at Tara's Chance to work as an intern and after interviewing with Kat she offered me the position. I started as a social media intern for Tara's Chance in August of 2021. My primary responsibilities were creating social media posts surrounding the 2021 Riding with the Stars Gala and helping during the gala itself. After my internship period was over in December 2021. I continued volunteering at the ranch because I love the people there and seeing the amazing work that Tara's Chance does. I graduated in January 2022 and now I help Kat when she needs social media work done and I love volunteering at events like the Ryan Nolan golf tournament and gala.



Natalie has done amazing work for Tara's Chance and it really has been a great pleasure to have her continue volunteer here at Tara's Chance beyond her internship in Fall of 2021. Natalie has helped with so many different outlets here at Tara's Chance from photography, social media planning, content creating, working events to much more. We cannot thank her enough and are so grateful for all her hard work she has done for Tara's Chance and continues to do.



Board Bits

by Susan Smith, Board President

At the November Tara's Chance Board meeting, we had the opportunity to learn from staff how far we have come in our short 10 years. With the support of a generous community, we have been able to improve our ability to serve children and young adults with special needs. As we learned the stories behind a couple of the families that have come to Tara's Chance for support, we felt the importance of reducing the amount of time a child is on our waiting list. We also recognized the essential role we play in the north Orange County community by making programs such as Equine Assisted Therapy and Equine Assisted Riding available to help with managing the challenges that come with the various diagnosis of our students. We had a sense of great responsibility for stewarding the Mission of an organization that is changing and improving lives every day.

To help us meet the needs of the special students that come to Tara's Chance, we have added a new member to the Board of Directors, Dallas Stout PsyD. Dr. Stout moved to Fullerton in 1994. He has worked in the non-profit community in Southern California for nearly 30 years including many years leading Orange Counties' largest adolescent residential drug rehab and sober high school. He has served on the Board of Directors for a variety of local, countywide and statewide programs for troubled youth and related issues. Dr. Stout is on the faculty at California State University Fullerton, University of Arizona, and Brigham Young University Idaho where he teaches a variety of undergraduate & graduate courses in Psychology and Child Development as well as Non-Profit Principles, Practices, Governance & Finance.

Today he uses his experience to assist a variety of non-profit programs in Southern California thru DoctorS Nonprofit Consulting, which he co-founded with his wife Dr. Debra Stout in 2004.

At this holiday season, I would like to thank you for your investment in Tara's Chance that enables us to bring the Mission to life! Together we are making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

With gratitude,
Susan B. Smith, MA, CFRE
President, Tara's Chance Board of Directors



Riding with the Stars 2022

by Matt Howells, Executive Director

Thank you to everyone for making this year's Riding with the Stars our most successful yet! Thank you to all of our event sponsors, auction participants, and donors for supporting our mission. Thank you to our staff, volunteers, in-kind donors, and community for making the event possible and a success. Thank you to Bao, Logan, Bella, Jameson, Bianca, and Diego for inspiring us all.

While the planning and execution of this event is a massive undertaking, we would not be able to serve our riders without it. This year we raised 40% of our annual expenses at Riding with the Stars. These funds are crucial in allowing us to continue to provide equine therapy, care for our horses, and continue expanding to serve those on our waitlist. We are very excited for the 10th Annual Riding with the Stars next year on October 7th, 2023 and we hope to see you there.



In Loving Memory of Bailey

It is with great sadness that we share the loss of Bailey. She battled health issues for 3 years and passed at the hospital on October 16th. She died at 26 years old and served hundreds of children with special needs at Tara's Chance. May she forever rest in peace.



"My beloved Bailey gave me purpose and peace, she was my other half. I trusted Bailey completely in keeping me safe in the many years we rode together. Occasionally, we had some stumbles, but in the end, we trusted each other enough to know that it would be okay. Bailey had the soft, gentle coat like a silk blanket, and her warmth encompassed me through my sadness and sorrows. People are shaped by what happens in their lives, and Bailey has built me into the person that I am today. One of the most vital lessons I have learned in life was on the back of Bailey. I learned not to be afraid when I fell out of the saddle, and to find the courage to get back on. I learned to put down walls I built, and allow myself to be my authentic self. Sometimes it seems that the biggest lessons horses teach us have nothing to do with riding. Bailey taught me confidence, leadership and communication. I reached Bailey through not only my tone, but also my body language. I kept my shoulders back, head tall, and an assertive voice to keep her on track. I will always treasure my last day with Bailey. I was the last person to ride her at Tara's Chance. Today, I'd like to say goodbye to my other half. I've not been able to say it even after you passed away. I've been holding you back and today, I am letting you go. I now know the true meaning of "What is grief, if not love persevering."

Bao Heffron - Rider



"Bailey was one of the sweetest horses I have ever known. She would always stick her head out of her stall to greet you. Her loss has been devastating to the barn and the entire program."

- Cindy Howells, Program Director

"No matter the mood or challenges of the person riding Bailey, she remained steadfast in the task at hand as well as her gentleness and ability to transform the worst of moods into the brightest of smiles. She will be greatly missed."

Amy Davis, former Executive Director

We Have A Match!

Kimberly Ann Williams has been friends with Cindy Howells for over 25 years and she knows the power of horses as a long time horse owner and rider. When she heard of Bailey's passing, she wanted to honor her by purchasing Tara's Chance next therapy horse. Kimberly has made a gift to Tara's Chance that will match up to \$5,000 towards the purchase of a new therapy horse. If you would like to make a gift towards Kimberly's match and the purchase of a new horse at Tara's Chance please reach out to Matt Howells, matt@taraschance.org.

Under the Stars Fore a Cause

Glow Ball Golf Tournament

Saturday February 25, 2023

5:30 Check-In

6:45 Shot Gun start

9:00 Post Event awards



David L. Baker Golf Course

**10410 Edinger Ave.
Fountain Valley, CA 92708**

Thank You

The Murphy Family Foundation

Wilson W. Phelps Foundation

George Hoag Family Foundation

Fullerton South Rotary

Orange County Chapter Charities

John and Jeanette Svet

Amigos de los Niños

US Bank

The Lara Team

Laura and Kurt Alvarado

Susan & Gary Smith

The Martins Family

The Dhont Family Foundation

Carol Geisbauer

Inspirations Gift & Home

Credit Union of Southern California

Picerne Family Foundation

Judy's Joy

Mel and Susan Shaw

Gable Tax Group

OCCF

American First Credit Union

Woman's Club of Fullerton

Fullerton Rotary Club

Butler Pediatric Dentistry

The Campbell Family

Pamella Oliver

ALPHA

Brokers in Arms

Barbara Eller

Schultz Family

YMI Jeans

Autism Speaks

Ebell Club of Fullerton

The Robinson Foundation

Yorba Linda Woman's Club

The McWatt Family

Gene & Louise Hernandez

The Stark Family

The Williams Family

Hope Share Care Foundation

Anaheim Community Foundation

Century 21 Discovery Foundation

Special Children's League Whittier

Mike Willis

Michael Quayle

The Twisted Vine

Sue Garvey

Miller Family

The Israel Family

The Kroischke Family

SoCal Gas Company

Barbara Eller

Barbara Dunagan