





THANK YOU  
FROM THE BOARD

2023 was a special year for Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding as we celebrated 30 years of helping people of all ages in this community. We feel lucky to be a part of this remarkable program and to have the continued support of our donors, volunteers, and staff.

Each time one of our riders gets on the back of one of our beloved horses the magic begins. Everyone involved has an essential role in making the hour we have together produce confidence, inspiration, and encouragement for our riders. The horses, instructors, and volunteers collaborate to allow the riders to reach their full potential. These hours have added up to 30 wonderful years of making a difference in so many beautiful lives. It is with your help and compassion that our program exists.

To all of you who have helped us in so many ways, the JHTR Board of Directors would like to thank you for keeping our treasured program running. We could not do it without each one of you. Let's begin now, together, to create another 30 years of positive connection in this unique community.

Have a safe and healthy winter. See you in the spring!

thank you

KRISTIN NIELSON  
Board President

OUR FIRST 30 YEARS  
AT A GLANCE

As our 30th anniversary year reaches its conclusion, we reflect on the incredible journey that has led us to where we are today. Together, we have transformed lives and built a community of inclusivity and support. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all who have joined us in this remarkable adventure. While this chapter may be ending, the story of our impact will continue to unfold, promising even more moments of inspiration, enrichment, and empowerment in the years to come. Thank you for being an essential part of our mission!

1993  
JHTR IS FOUNDED

JHTR began as a gathering of three friends who wanted to help improve people's lives.



2002  
1ST STOMPING THE DIVOTS

The first Stomping the Divots was hosted at the Melody Ranch Polo Fields on Sunday, August 4, 2002. To this day, it serves as our most significant annual fundraiser.

2011  
VETERANS PROGRAM

Veteran Equine Therapy began in 2013. Local Veterans continue to benefit from this program, free of cost.



2020  
JHTR ADAPTS

In response to COVID-19, JHTR creatively adapted. Despite the challenges faced, JHTR remained resilient and persevered.



1998  
A PERMANENT HOME

After a massive fundraising effort spearheaded by founder Robin Lightner, JHTR finally had a permanent home.

2005  
PREMIER ACCREDITATION

After a thorough evaluation of strict standards across the industry, JHTR was named a Premier Accredited Center- a status we've maintained ever since.

2019  
JHTR REBRANDS

To more accurately reflect the organization's expanded purpose, while holding true to the program's initial values and intent, JHTR was rebranded.

2023  
JHTR TURNS 30

Today, JHTR celebrates the many people who have inspired the work, supported the mission, and impacted the program.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF IMPACT  
THE POWER OF COLLABORATION AND COMPASSION



As Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding marks its 30th anniversary, it is a time for celebration, reflection, and heartfelt gratitude. Over the past three decades, this remarkable organization has transformed countless lives and become a symbol of inclusivity and empowerment within our community. Each year has been a unique chapter in this remarkable story, demonstrating that together, this program is greater than the sum of its parts.

From the generosity of donors who have provided the essential resources to the dedicated staff and volunteers who have poured their hearts into this mission, every role in the organization has been vital. The participants and their families, who have shared their stories of hope, resilience, and transformation, have been at the core of this journey.

This milestone is a testament to the power of collaboration and compassion, where everyone's collective efforts have created a legacy of enrichment, empowerment, and positive change. As we celebrate this milestone, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who have walked alongside us on this journey. Your unwavering support, dedication, and generosity have been the driving force behind our mission.

To all those who have opened your hearts and wallets to support our cause, we are truly grateful. Your belief in our mission has allowed us to touch the lives of countless individuals and families.

To our participants, thank you for allowing JHTR to be a part of your journey toward overcoming obstacles and accomplishing your goals. Your resilience and determination inspire everyone who has had the privilege of witnessing your bravery, hard

**This milestone is a testament to the power of collaboration and compassion, where everyone's collective efforts have created a legacy of enrichment, empowerment, and positive change.**

work, and progress.

To our JHTR families, thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement. You have been the pillars of strength for your loved ones, and your belief in the potential for

positive change through our programs has been instrumental.

As we celebrate 30 years, let us continue to cherish this unity and move forward with renewed commitment to the incredible work that lies ahead. Together, we can achieve remarkable things.

TORI PLENNES  
Executive Director



## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### JOSH ZIOLKOWSKI



Josh has been a consistent and dependable volunteer at JHTR since 2018. Serving in any role that is needed, Josh is always willing to come to the arena before or after work when he knows additional help is required for our participants or staff. Over the years Josh has become the volunteer we call when we need specialized support for a participant. His willingness to jump in and help with anything and everything—including tacking, mounting support, facility repairs, and emotional support to our participants—never goes unnoticed or unappreciated.

When not throwing himself into any task he can assist with around the facility, he can usually be heard laughing with one of the instructors or getting to know our participants and fellow volunteers. He truly personifies the mission of JHTR. He is compassionate, inclusive, and enriches the lives of those he interacts with.

On behalf of the team at JHTR I want to congratulate and thank Josh for his service to our participants over the last five years. His unwavering kindness and selflessness are evident in all he does. We are proud to honor him as the 2023 Volunteer of the Year.

MARA KINGSCOTT  
Volunteer Coordinator

JHTR is proud to honor Josh Ziolkowski as the 2023 Volunteer of the Year.



## CONGRATULATIONS, JEAN, MARY, JP, AND ROBIN!

### 2023 RIDERS OF THE YEAR

In honor of the JHTR 30th anniversary, the Brad Swett Memorial Rider of Year was awarded a bit differently in 2023. Instead of one recipient, we were thrilled to award this honor to four individuals who epitomize empowerment and inspiration. It is often said that “age is just a number” and our 2023 Riders of the Year prove that sentiment true week after week. Mary Bleck, Jean McBean, and John ‘JP’ Trudelle are all residents of Sage Living, the St. John’s Health Senior Living Community. While they all have joined our program with minimal previous equestrian experience, and ages ranging from 80 to 94 years young, each of these incredible individuals display the heart and soul of the JHTR program, working hard and enjoying themselves along the way.

Not only did they participate at JHTR this season, they also all worked throughout the offseason with our Program Director – Adriene Henderson. This work took place at Sage Living and it aimed to continue their therapy and social goals while utilizing the equicizer – a machine that mimics the movements of a horse – while also preparing them for the following JHTR riding season. They all worked hard on increasing their physical strength while also engaging in equine assisted learning activities guided by their individual goals.

Mary, Jean, and JP amaze us each week with their courage,

**“ To be a small part of returning some independence to their lives is both a joy and a privilege. ”**

adeptness and the gratitude they exude towards all that they encounter. They provide a refreshed outlook on learning new skills, facing fears and living each day to its fullest. To be a small part of returning some independence to their

lives is both a joy and a privilege.

Sadly, our community lost a wonderful individual on August 3, 2023 – Robin Weiss – who was our fourth JHTR Rider of the Year. Robin came to JHTR with a rich and impressive equine background, that quickly resurfaced the moment she was on a horse. She worked hard both in the arena and during the sessions at Sage, and she never ceased to make us smile. She was a huge inspiration for the JHTR and Sage partnership, and she is deeply missed. She rode with us for the last time a few weeks before Stomping the Divots, and it was her best ride at JHTR to date. Because she passed away prior to receiving this award, we held a moment of silence in her honor at Stomping the Divots.

It is a true honor to know Mary, Jean, JP – and to have known Robin – and an even greater honor to award them as the 2023 Brad Swett Memorial Riders of the Year.

ADRIENE HENDERSON  
Program Director

## VOLUNTEER highlights

### 2023 VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Volunteer of the Year:**  
Josh Ziolkowski

**Rookie of the Year:**  
Jonah Baltes, Ryan Lane,  
Isabelle Fralin

**DeDe McDonald Award:**  
Patti Drui

**Robin Lightner Award:**  
Sarah Beninga

**Elaine Infanger Award:**  
Susan Moore

**Sunny Dawn Petersen Award:**  
Susan Conner

**Robin Weiss Award:**  
Dana and Eric Macy

**Unsung Hero Award:**  
Jordan Frantz

**Ronai White Stomping  
the Divots:**  
Colleen Murray

U  
3,005  
TOTAL HOURS DONATED



# RIDER HIGHLIGHT DAVID'S STORY



From across the country, this sweet child came to me, his paternal grandmother, with a myriad of challenges. The saying goes "A parent should never have to bury a child", I say..."A toddler should never have to bury a parent."

“ **Not all challenges can be seen. Not all challenges are obvious...his challenges are tucked away in the very essence of who he is and how he processes every minute of every day.** ”

being met where he is at, and encouraged to grow in a way that works for him. He is in a place where he can be accepted for exactly who he is.

RITA SKINNER  
David's Grandmother

David came into the world and immediately faced circumstances and immense obstacles that were out of his control. At two years old, his mom died. At two and a half, he came to live with my husband and I. Less than one year later, his father, my son, died.

David was uprooted from everyone and everything he knew at such a young age. I knew right away that this young soul would need "The Village" to help him overcome these tragedies life had handed him. Thanks to some caring folks, I was referred to Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding.

Not all challenges can be seen. Not all challenges are obvious. With David, while he appears to be a beautiful, blond haired, blue-eyed, happy go lucky child, his challenges are tucked away in the very essence of who he is and how he processes every minute of every day.

Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding has been instrumental in many ways. First and foremost by being accepting and supportive of David as well as myself. To place David on these beautiful soulful creatures and lead him around patiently and with such love and compassion is such a blessing. While at JHTR, David is doing so much more than riding a horse. He is learning important life skills, working on trust, communication and compassion. He is



# A TRIBUTE TO OUR FOUNDERS

Thirty years ago, three remarkable women came together to lay the foundation for what would become Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding. Elaine Infanger (mother), DeDe McDonald (physical therapist) and Robin Lightner (equestrian) knew that therapeutic riding was helping people around the world, and that in horse country like Jackson, it could be a particularly relevant method of therapy. Inspired by transformative experiences of their own, they were determined to establish a program that would expand the possibilities and augment the strengths of people living with disabilities.



As we celebrate 30 years of Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding, we pay tribute to these three extraordinary women and the legacy they built. We applaud their strength, value their passion, and honor their vision. They challenged us to think bigger, be better, and to always keep sight of our mission. Their vision lives on in the countless success stories, the smiles of participants, and the bonds forged between humans and horses.

Their determination created a future for JHTR, one that continues to thrive and grow. Their legacy is not just in the past but also in the present and the promising future that lies ahead.

In the face of adversity and countless challenges, these women would not be dissuaded. They transformed an idea into a reality, bringing forth an environment where individuals with diverse challenges could find strength, comfort, and empowerment in the presence of horses.

Their journey was one of sacrifice, sweat, and tears, yet they pressed on with persistence and courage. Through their advocacy, they raised awareness about the therapeutic benefits of equine therapy, leaving an indelible mark on the community. They rallied volunteers, garnered support, and kindled a flame of hope that still burns brightly today.

but also in the present and the promising future that lies ahead.

To our founders who ignited this journey, we say thank you. Your love, your strength, and your dedication have changed lives, built a community, and illuminated the path toward an even brighter future. We carry on your legacy with pride, knowing that every stride we take is a tribute to your passion and vision.

TORI PLENNES  
Executive Director

# A LEGACY OF LOVE A FOUNDERS REFLECTION OF 30 YEARS



Often as we get older, we reminisce of the past: our family, friends, accomplishments and wishes. Our children are grown, grandchildren grown, spouse gone, friends – some still here and some gone and WOW those were great years. Memories – I treasure mine and Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding is at the top of the list.

I remember one special boy, Craig. He came to us at two years of age. He couldn't sit up, couldn't talk, couldn't crawl or walk. DeDe McDonald our therapist lifted him on to the back of "Big Deal". Laid him on his tummy and we began – at first just walking him around. Later we put a rider up to hold him in a sitting position. DeDe did her magic with him and I am very proud to say Craig walked in to his first-grade class with a walker to aid him and had started talking. That was definitely a WOW!

Then there was Jon. Jon is probably almost 50 years old today. He started riding with us when he was about 18. He is nonverbal,

but he learned to tell the horse to "walk on" with his hand and he never wanted to get off. Although he could not tell us with words his smile said it all. Pure bliss.

You must know about Johnny. He had autism. He participated with us for years but one time when he arrived he threw a fit. Screaming, kicking and refusing to get on the horse. We struggled but were able to lift him up and start the horse walking. That was a super horse. The screaming, flopping around etc. didn't bother him and after a minute or two Johnny calmed down and participated in the ride. He rode with us for years. Graduated from High school and went on to the University of Wyoming.

One of my favorites was a little girl from Idaho. Her parents brought her over every week. She was blind and could not walk or talk, but when she was laying down on the back of the horse feeling its warm body and soft hair with the motion of the walk she smiled and was happy.

So many memories. I do treasure them and as to my wish – I hope JHTR brings as much happiness to its riders, volunteers, staff, and supporters as it has brought to me. It's special and to describe it I would say it's LOVE!!

ROBIN LIGHTNER  
JHTR Founder

# LENNIE: HORSE OF THE YEAR



When asked what makes a good adaptive riding horse the answers may vary, but they typically include the words patient, willing, gentle, and kind. However, when asked what makes a great adaptive riding horse the answer will likely always be versatility. And Lennie, the 2023 JHTR Horse of the Year, is all those things and more.

Lennie joined the JHTR team in 2022. Before joining us, he spent his years living on the Red Rock Ranch, teaching their guests how to ride (and even vault!). Once at JHTR, he quickly became

“ In riding a horse, we borrow freedom. ”  
–Helen Thompson

a favorite among participants, volunteers, staff, and visitors to the arena. His ability to be used in a variety of lessons, from a 3-year-old who is riding for the first time in their life, to an advanced rider who is working on their trot and lope. He is also phenomenal for our participants who use the mechanical lift to mount their horse and those who are overcoming fears that have previously prevented them from participating. He can truly do it all and he enjoys every minute of it. It is obvious to everyone that he loves his job, and he is the type of horse that ensures quality programming for our participants.

With his luscious two-tone mane and curious expression Lennie has thrived living at the JHTR arena where he is pet and loved on by everyone entering or leaving the property. There are some horses that were destined for this line of work and Lennie is certainly one of them.

Upon entering the program, Lennie earned a new name thanks to Dan Hogan who purchased the right to rename an incoming JHTR horse at Stomping the Divots in 2019. Lennie was named after Dan's partner Lennie Sorensen, a longtime JHTR supporter. We are so glad to recognize Dan and Lennie's impact with renaming this horse in her honor.

MARA KINGSCOTT & ADRIENE HENDERSON  
Volunteer Coordinator || Program Director

## STRENGTHENING THE REINS THE IMPACT OF HORSE SPONSORSHIP

Horse Sponsors and pasture donors play a crucial role in supporting the health and happiness of our equine companions. Through their generosity, our herd is ensured top-notch care, including nutritious feed, training and exercise, veterinary and farrier care, winter board, and other necessary services to protect their wellbeing. By covering the cost of caring for our herd, we can continue providing life-enriching programs at an affordable price.

We would like to recognize and thank the following individuals for their generosity and support:

### HORSE & PASTURE SPONSORS

<b>Buckwheat</b> <i>Paul von Gontard</i>	<b>Rooster</b> <i>Deborah &amp; Jon Hirtle</i>	<b>Tuck</b> <i>Majo &amp; Franz Humer</i>	<b>Pasture Donors:</b>  <i>The Dietz Family</i> <i>Julie &amp; Chris Green</i> <i>The Holik Family</i> <i>The Infanger Family</i> <i>Eric &amp; Dana Macy</i> <i>Colleen &amp; John Murray</i> <i>Snake River Ranch</i> <i>Granite Creek Ranch</i> <i>Jennifer Walton &amp; Mark Fellermann</i>
<b>Captain</b> <i>Fran Biolchini</i>	<b>Shorty</b> <i>Eileen &amp; Greg Prugh</i>	<b>Twist</b> <i>Robert Zelnio;</i> <i>John Qualy</i>	
<b>Charlie Brown</b> <i>Ronai White</i>	<b>Sonic</b> <i>Hillary Munro &amp; Samantha Danahy</i>	<b>Help Purchase a Horse:</b> <i>The Garaman Family Foundation</i> <i>Tamara Palmer &amp; Marty Colombatto</i> <i>Heather Gray</i> <i>Robin Lightner</i> <i>John McDearman</i> <i>Colleen and John Murray</i>	
<b>Coal</b> <i>Katie &amp; Donnie Wackerman</i>	<b>Taco</b> <i>Kristi &amp; Brad Nielson</i>		
<b>Lennie</b> <i>Paul von Gontard</i>	<b>Tater</b> <i>Paul von Gontard</i>		
<b>Rodger</b> <i>Leigh Chrisinger and Jennie &amp; Thomas Fross</i>			



## STOMPING THE DIVOTS A RECORD-BREAKING YEAR!

On August 12th, Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding celebrated 30 years of empowering ability at the 21st Annual Stomping the Divots. One of the most anticipated summertime events in Jackson Hole, the fundraiser successfully sold out more than a month in advance.

From the fast-paced action of the polo match and the impactful demonstration by our participants, to the exhilarating live auction and stellar performance by The Famous Undercover Band, the event continues to be unlike any other in the area.

It is an event that people look forward to year after year; not only because of its uniqueness, but because of the incredible mission it supports. The funds raised directly benefit programs that empower ability by providing opportunities to overcome obstacles and thrive. Contributions make a difference in the lives of the hundreds of individuals in our community living with a disability, facing difficult life circumstances, or battling the

invisible traumas of war.

To the more than 400 individuals and organizations that supported JHTR through Stomping the Divots, thank you! Thank you for attending, donating, volunteering, purchasing an item, and otherwise being there to cheer on our participants and support the JHTR mission. We would also like to recognize our generous event sponsors (below) who help to offset the cost of hosting the event, ensuring a greater percentage of the proceeds directly impact our participants, horses, and programs.

With your help, we surpassed our fundraising goal and set a record: more than \$340,000 raised (net). Your participation and generosity ensure we have the critical dollars necessary to support our work and bring our mission to life.

TORI PLENNES  
Executive Director

### THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS





A Division of NBH Bank, Member FDIC



## WHEN THE RIDING'S DONE

You know I'll always ride here  
Even when my riding's done  
In the whisper of the pre-dawn  
Or the final burst of sun  
At the corners of transition  
Where the changes are obscured  
I will ride and if you see me  
It's because our love endured

You know I'll never leave you  
Even when I'm far away  
In the moments when the words stop  
And your breath gets in the way  
I will softly say I love you  
Barely louder than a breeze  
So I hope you gently listen  
To my voice between the trees

You know I'll try to hold you  
Even when my arms can't grasp  
Just to try to bring you comfort  
When your throat lets out a gasp  
The feelings that we share here  
Will transcend just what we see  
And my horse will still be waiting  
Right beneath our favorite tree

You know you are forever  
But it's easy when we're here  
Just a hand away from holding  
And a hug away from fear  
So you have to make a promise  
That your hope will never run  
And you know I'll always ride here  
Even when my riding's done

—JP GORHAM

## SORROWFUL GOODBYE TO TWO SPECIAL HORSES

The horses of Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding are essential members of our team and nothing is harder than saying goodbye to them too soon. This year we unfortunately lost two members of our team, Josh and Two Socks.

Josh



Josh was a favorite among participants and volunteers for his goofy personality and stoic presence. Before being loaned to JHTR, Josh had a successful career as a dressage horse with his owner, Margie Engel. Josh gave six seasons to our program and instilled confidence in all those who encountered him. He will always be remembered as JHTR's Gentle Giant and leaves a big hole in our hearts.



Two  
Socks

Two Socks was our resident goofball known for his always dirty nose from his hay cubes. He joined our herd in 2018 and gave six seasons of service to JHTR. He was a favorite among many participants and staff for his playful demeanor as you could often see him playing and splashing in his water trough on a hot day. Two Socks will be remembered for his youthful spirit and loving nature and we miss him immensely.

We are so grateful for each horse that calls JHTR home. We will move forward with them in our hearts and continue the work they both were so passionate about: empowering ability.

MARA KINGSCOTT  
Volunteer Coordinator

## AN EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY DAKOTA RETIRES AFTER 12 YEARS



If there is one horse whose name has become synonymous with Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding, it is Dakota. He spent 12 incredible years providing therapy and companionship to

people of all ages. Now, as Dakota enters his well-deserved retirement, it's time to celebrate the extraordinary journey of this four-legged teacher.

Joining the herd in 2011, Dakota has touched the lives of countless participants, volunteers, and staff members. Over the last few years the thought of retirement has been on the JHTR staff's minds but it never seemed to cross Dakota's mind. Each spring he would come back from winter pasture looking younger and healthier than most of the herd. In the last few years, he was designated to only carry our youngest participants; but he never stopped enjoying his job and serving our participants.

Dakota is happily settled into his new home in Kelly, Wyoming at the Biolchini Family Ranch. The Biolchini Family have been longtime supporters of JHTR and generously offered a spot in their pasture for Dakota to live out his days.

Dakota's legacy at JHTR will be remembered for the lives and hearts of the people he touched. His story reminds us of the incredible power of animals to bring comfort, healing, and joy into the lives of those facing challenges. Thank you, Dakota, for your years of service and enjoy your retirement!

MARA KINGSCOTT  
Volunteer Coordinator

## HORSE & PASTURE SPONSORS

JHTR is pleased to welcome Rooster, Coal, and Sonic to the herd. These three incredible horses have stepped into some significant shoes, following in the hoofprints of the many beloved therapy horses who came before them. Every day, they are proving themselves as champions, forging connections, and making a positive impact on the lives of participants. A big thank you to the Garaman Family Foundation, Rhianna and Reggie White, the Gros Ventre River Ranch, and Triangle X Ranch for making these additions possible!



ROOSTER



COAL



SONIC

## EMPOWERING ABILITIES IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE



This year, a remarkable group of young adults with disabilities, who once started their journey as kids riding at Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding, have now emerged as our first Teton County School District interns, taking on roles as sidewalkers, horse leaders, equine support and teacher's assistants.

“ **Their presence not only enriches the participant experience, but also serves as inspiration for the future generations of JHTR participants to aspire to.** ”

This program began in September of 2022 when students from Jackson Hole High School and the Transition Academy came to Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding for an educational outing. They participated in volunteer training and helped out around the arena. All of the students who joined us that day had previously participated as riders both with Teton County School District and privately. A majority expressed a continued appreciation for the program, but no longer had interest in riding themselves. However, that day both JHTR and TCSD staff were awed by their focus, dedication and genuine interest in the behind the scenes of JHTR lessons. An idea was born – could these young adults, who were previously JHTR participants, now act as volunteers in the lessons that helped shape so many years of their lives? We invited them all back for the next couple weeks to see how it went, and the response was unbelievable. All of the students settled into their roles quickly, and took such pride in giving back to their community. Additionally, the parents of the participants whose classes the interns were in were moved by the support their kids were receiving. Many mentioned how inspired they felt that their young

kids could aspire to be just like their interns one day.

The success of the 2022 pilot program inspired what is now our official TCSD intern program.

This program included a presentation over the winter to JHHS special education students and Transition Academy



students about JHTR, general information about internships, volunteer positions at JHTR as well as employee etiquette. The potential interns then filled out applications, and completed an interview process during which they formally applied for whatever position most interested them. They were each given a schedule, information to clock in and out, a nametag to wear and the staff they were to report to.

As interns in lessons they contributed not only to the participants' experiences but also to the overall program's success. Their insights into the challenges and triumphs of navigating the world with disabilities made them effective mentors, demonstrating resilience and determination to those they support. They understood firsthand the impact that participating at JHTR can have, and their presence as sidewalkers adds a layer of empathy and encouragement that goes beyond traditional volunteer roles.

Additionally, two interns joined us as sidewalkers at the 2023 Stomping the Divots, and when a younger rider was feeling nervous and overwhelmed, it wasn't the JHTR staff who were able to refocus the rider, but two of our interns. They displayed kindness, maternity and understanding at a time when this child needed it most – and it was incredible to witness.

These interns are more than just participants; they are trailblazers breaking down barriers. Through their dedication, they challenge preconceived notions about what individuals with disabilities can achieve. They exemplify a commitment



to inclusivity, proving that everyone has a valuable role to play in creating a supportive community. Their presence not only enriches the participant experience, but also serves as inspiration for the future generations of JHTR participants to aspire to.

ADRIENE HENDERSON  
Program Director

## CONGRATULATIONS, MARA!

As our organization continues to grow and evolve, we recognize the need to adapt to ensure that all aspects of our operation are addressed in the most optimal, effective, and cohesive manner. To that end, we created the year-round position of Equine Director that will help us to better serve our herd and position ourselves for continued success.

It is my pleasure to announce that effective January 1, 2024, Mara Kingscott (current Volunteer Coordinator) will assume the new title of Equine Director. Mara has been an integral part of our team since 2019 and has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, dedication, and expertise.

The Equine Director will have the primary responsibility of overseeing all operational and administrative functions related to the JHTR herd. Through the development, management, and administration of equine training, conditioning, and health care, the Equine Director will ensure that the most excellent care is provided to our horses throughout the year. She will provide the day-to-day leadership and management of JHTR's herd to ensure that equines are in prime condition, physically and mentally, and trained for safe, effective, and enjoyable equine-assisted activities and therapies. Additionally, acquisition of new horses and expanding the herd will be among her top priorities, allowing for JHTR to serve a greater number of participants moving forward.

Carrying out this great scope of responsibilities requires a very broad



skill set, one that Mara indeed possesses. Mara's passion for horses has been lifelong. She began riding at the age of six, spending her school years showing locally and regionally in the Hunter Jumper discipline. In high school, she competed on the Varsity Equestrian Team at the Madeira School (a boarding school in McLean, Virginia). Later, while receiving her degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the College of Wooster, she was a 4-year member of the Hunt Seat Team (serving as captain for two of the years). Following graduation, Mara worked for two summers at the Goosewing Ranch as a wrangler, looking after the herd and guiding rides. In each of these endeavors, Mara gained vital knowledge and skills that will aid her in her new role.

Today, Mara's passion for horses continues. While not at the JHTR arena, you can find her riding her two young horses in the mountains, roping, and competing in local ranch horse events. She further serves on the board of a local horse rescue, helping to assess and train horses for adoption.

With more than two decades of diverse equine experience under her belt, we are thrilled to see where she will lead the equine department – and the organization as a whole – in his new position. Please join us in congratulating Mara on her promotion!

TORI PLENNES  
Executive Director



**JHTR STAFF**  
YEAR-END 2023

**Tori Plennes**  
*Executive Director*

**Adriene Henderson**  
*Program Director*

**Mara Kingscott**  
*Volunteer Coordinator*

**Jessica Eastman**  
*Occupational Therapist*

**Katie Benson**  
*Instructor*

**Nichole Cox**  
*Instructor*

**Sarah Hoffmann**  
*Instructor*

**Kara Keim**  
*Equine Specialist*

**Samantha Melton**  
*Instructor*

**Maegan Sawyers**  
*Instructor*

**Amber Schonert**  
*Instructor*

**Christi Yannelli**  
*Instructor*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
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**Eileen Prugh**

**EVERY DOLLAR & EVERY GIFT** *matters!*

For 30 years, JHTR has seen firsthand the transformative power of your generosity. Every donation you have made to JHTR has directly enriched lives. From a young child struggling with speech to an adolescent overcoming trauma, and from an aging adult with memory loss to a Veteran battling PTSD, your gifts of time and resources have helped countless individuals confront challenges and overcome obstacles.

As we approach the conclusion of three decades of service to the Jackson community, we invite you to join us in continuing your impact by considering a year-end gift. Your donation, no matter the size, has the power to create profound change, helping us ful-fill our mission and empower even more lives.

We are excited about what the future holds, and we are so very grateful to have you by our side.



*Please consider a year-end gift*

**Your contributions make a  
meaningful and lasting difference.**

**TO DONATE ONLINE OR TO LEARN MORE: [jhtr.org](https://jhtr.org)**

