

MEET THE TEAM 2024 JHTR STAFF



Tori Plennes
Executive Director

Samantha Melton
Program Director

Mara Kingscott
Equine Director

Jessica Eastman
Occupational Therapist

Sydney Bonham
Volunteer Coordinator

Lindsay Woods
Equine Specialist

Amber Schonert
Head Instructor

Nichole Cox
Instructor

Aleese Holiday
Instructor

Maegan Sawyers
Instructor

Francesca Weikert
Instructor

Christi Yannelli
Instructor



A LOOK AT OUR SEASON AHEAD

Please mark your calendars for another fun-filled year:

- VOLUNTEER TRAINING**
Ongoing in-person or virtual trainings throughout the year!
- SESSION DATES**

SESSION 1: May 6th – 31st
SESSION 2: Jun 17th – Jul 26th
SESSION 3: Aug 12th – 30th
SESSION 4: Sep 16th – Oct 12th
- FAIR HORSE SHOW**
Saturday, July 20th
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- VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY**
Wednesday, September 11th
- COMMUNITY HORSE SHOW**
Saturday, September 28th

AFFECTING CHANGE THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM



I'm thrilled to be joining the exceptional team at Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding this year and am so looking forward to connecting with our extraordinary group of volunteers and participants. My path to joining this organization is a deeply personal one, largely driven by the loss of my mother to ALS. I find myself in good company amongst the ranks of our volunteers, many of whom were led to making an impact through JHTR after personal experience with challenging life circumstances.

Our volunteers come from a diverse range of backgrounds with myriad reasons to make a meaningful contribution in their local community. What they do share is the drive to empower ability and foster autonomy through the powerful connection

between horse and rider. Because of our volunteers, we're able to offer transformative and memorable experiences to each and every participant.

The unwavering commitment and dedication of our volunteers is truly the essence of JHTR and we are immensely grateful for their spirit, generosity and time. It's a privilege to work with individuals so passionate about affecting change and serving their community. I look forward to learning from them!

New and returning volunteers, please contact us for a 2024 Volunteer Application!

SYDNEY BONHAM
Volunteer Coordinator



NEW FACES INNOVATIVE IDEAS

This year, we welcome several new team members to the JHTR family. Each brings a unique set of skills and fresh perspectives that promise to enrich our offerings. Their diverse backgrounds and innovative approaches will help us explore new methodologies and enhance the overall experience for our participants.

We are also excited to introduce a new miniature horse program designed to cater to a broader range of needs and interests. "Seabiscuit" is one of the newest members of our herd...and by far the smallest! This adorable gentleman will allow us to reach new groups of people, including those who may not be able to physically ride or individuals who are initially reluctant to engage with such a large animal. We will also expand our winter programming via visits to the Children's Learning Center, Community Entry Services, Sage Living, the Senior Center, and more!

As we look forward to the year ahead, we are filled with excitement and optimism. The changes in our staff and the introduction of new programs position us to better serve our community. We are committed to expanding our reach, touching more lives, and making a lasting impact.

Thank you for your continued support! Without the dedication and generosity of individuals like you, none of this would be possible.

SAMANTHA MELTON TAKES THE REINS



"I am thrilled to step into the role of Program Director. After being an instructor with the program for the past six years, it feels like a natural and welcome fit. I've been lucky enough to spend my time at JHTR getting to know our participants, horses, volunteers, and families, and have seen our programming flourish and evolve to match the needs of our community," said Melton. "I'm truly honored to be offered the opportunity to grow our program—we

JHTR is proud to announce Samantha Melton as its newest Program Director. Since joining the program as an instructor in 2018, Samantha has demonstrated unwavering commitment to our mission and participants. Her adept management skills and collaborative approach facilitated the continuation of services without interruption during her time as interim program director earlier this year, ensuring that participants received the support they needed.

have lots of exciting things in the works! JHTR feels like home—for myself and so many others—and to know that I get to play a small role in fostering such an empowering environment is all I could ask for. I'm excited for what's to come and appreciate the support I've been shown so far!"

Samantha's exceptional leadership qualities, paired with her deep understanding of our participants' needs, make her the ideal candidate to lead our program into its next chapter of growth and success. Her vision for the future of the program promises exciting opportunities, as we continue to make a positive impact on the lives of our participants.

Samantha follows former Program Director, Adriene Henderson, who served in the role from 2020 to 2024. Under Adriene's guidance, our program expanded its reach and impact, touching the lives of countless individuals in our community. We are grateful for her hard work and years of service.

Please join us in congratulating Samantha on her well-deserved appointment and wishing Adriene all the best in her future endeavors.

TORI PLENNES
Executive Director

NEW TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

WELCOMING NEW ARRIVALS

JHTR is excited to introduce three new horses to our herd!

Pot Roast is a 12-year-old pony gelding who is a versatile addition because he can be ridden independently or in classes with volunteers for a more adaptive class. We are so thankful for Colleen and John Murray for helping us to acquire and name him!



The addition of this little guy was made possible by the Garaman

Tulsa is a 17-year-old gaited gelding who has already been immersed in the world of adaptive riding before joining JHTR, having spent the last year as a lesson horse for an adult with blindness. His smooth movement and strong build make him a great addition. We cannot thank Toby Biolchini enough for his generosity, which enabled us to purchase this stunning horse! And we absolutely love his name.

JHTR is excited to add a miniature horse to our herd! Though small in size, Seabiscuit is big in personality and very friendly. We are excited to expand our program offerings with miniature horse visits in our off season!



BIDDING FAREWELL TO OLD FRIENDS

Being a therapeutic riding horse takes a very special skill set and we are proud to honor the amazing horses that make our program possible.

Sometimes that means retiring some of our most trusted steeds so that they can enjoy their well-deserved golden years after all they have given to our program.

Rodger has left Wyoming for California's sunny skies to live out his days with his original owner. JHTR would like to thank the Zacco Family for sharing Rodger's talents with us for so many years and we are excited for him to enjoy retirement.

JHTR is also sad to announce the loss of one of our team members, Tater this winter. Tater's passing has left a big hole in many hearts around the arena. We are grateful for all the years he gave to empowering ability in the lives of those who had the privilege of working with him.

MARA KINGSCOTT
Equine Director