



ANNUAL REPORT

"RIDING TOWARDS STRENGTH, HEALING, AND INDEPENDENCE...THE MILESTONES' WAY"



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2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I reflect on 2024, my first year as Board President of Milestones, Inc., I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride. This year has undoubtedly been one of both challenges and triumphs. Navigating through a major staff change and significant organizational shifts, we have witnessed firsthand the strength, resilience, and unwavering commitment of our community.

My personal journey with Milestones began in 2022 when my son, Austin, started riding. Austin was born at just 28 weeks and has faced numerous health challenges, including cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, and uncontrollable epilepsy. From the moment Austin began his therapeutic riding sessions, we saw the positive impact of equine-assisted therapy on his physical, emotional, and mental well-being. It became clear that this was his "happy place," a place where he could feel empowered and free. For me, there is no greater joy than walking beside him as he rides, seeing him up on a horse, defying all odds and showing us just how far he has come.

In 2024, we celebrated a major milestone of our own—Milestones, Inc. turned 25! This incredible achievement is a testament to the dedication of our amazing staff, fellow board members, volunteers, donors, and partners. Together, we have built a legacy of hope, healing, and transformation for individuals and families just like mine. I cannot express enough how grateful we are for all of your support and hard work that made this milestone possible.

Looking ahead to 2025, I am excited about the opportunities that lie before us. As we continue to grow, we will focus on bringing Milestones into the modern age, incorporating new technologies and expanding our programs. We plan to add more "horsepower" to our team—more horses, more staff, and more resources to help us reach even more individuals in need. Together, we will build on our success and take Milestones to new heights, ensuring that we can continue to make a lasting difference for years to come.

I am also thrilled to share that in 2024, Milestones was voted the Greater Cincinnati Nonprofit of the Year for Therapeutic Camps. This recognition is not only a reflection of the incredible work we do but also the strength of our community. We are truly humbled and honored to receive such an accolade.

Thank you to each and every one of you who has been a part of this journey. Your support and belief in our mission mean the world to us. As we continue to grow, I am confident that the best is yet to come. Together, we will continue to transform lives and inspire hope.

With gratitude and excitement for the future,

SAMUEL A. LANGE

Board President
Milestones, Inc.

MISSION , VISION, HISTORY & PROFILE

MISSION:

Milestones, Inc. is dedicated to empowering individuals with challenges by providing therapeutic horsemanship programs that enhance their quality of life. Through the transformative power of horses, we guide each rider toward building independence, confidence, and vital social skills. In a safe, supportive, and compassionate environment, we help riders develop the strength to overcome obstacles, grow into innovative contributors, and achieve their fullest potential. At Milestones, we are riding toward strength, healing, and independence—one stride at a time.

VISION STATEMENT:

Milestones, Inc. is dedicated to becoming a financially stable and nationally recognized nonprofit, esteemed for the diversity and excellence of our equine-based programs for individuals with disabilities. Set within our state-of-the-art facility, we offer transformative experiences designed to enhance cognitive, physical, and psychological functioning while nurturing the emotional well-being of each participant.

As a nationally accredited organization, our mission is to empower individuals within our community by fostering growth through therapeutic horseback riding. We are committed to helping each rider build independence, self-confidence, and vital social skills, all in a safe, compassionate, and joyful environment.

At Milestones, we believe in the transformative power of the horse to inspire strength, healing, and independence—one stride at a time.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY & PROFILE:

Milestones, Inc. was founded in 1999 with a clear mission to meet the needs of individuals in our community facing a range of physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges. From the very beginning, our founders, Teresa Morris, who directed a similar program in Cleveland, OH, and Mary Lunn, our current Program Director, have guided the organization through steady and meaningful growth. Together, they established Milestones as a place where individuals with special needs could experience healing, independence, and personal growth through the transformative power of therapeutic horsemanship.

Over the years, Milestones has made a profound impact, serving individuals with a wide range of conditions, including Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Hearing Loss, Autism, Down Syndrome, Cognitive Delay, Fragile X Syndrome, Angelman Syndrome, Sensory Integration Dysfunction, and other genetic and developmental disorders. Each year, we continue to provide life-changing services, helping individuals enhance their quality of life through our innovative programs.

At the heart of Milestones' success is our belief in the Human-Animal Bond, and the unique power that horses have to enhance the lives of our riders. The special connection formed between horse and rider has proven to improve physical and emotional well-being, making therapeutic horseback riding an invaluable tool for healing and personal development. Our commitment to safety, excellence, and a fun, family-friendly atmosphere for riders, volunteers, and their families ensures that every experience at Milestones is meaningful and enriching. We also believe in the power of teamwork—our dedicated staff, volunteers, and riders work together as a cohesive unit to foster an environment of support, trust, and personal growth. This culture of collaboration extends to our horses, who are an integral part of our program, helping both our riders and volunteers experience the therapeutic benefits of equine-assisted activities.

Our Facility

Milestones is proud to call a 44-acre farm our home. Our state-of-the-art facility includes:

- An indoor arena with an attached observation/multi-function room, where riders and their families can enjoy a comfortable, safe viewing area.
- A multi-stall barn and hay barn to support the care and wellbeing of our therapy horses.
- An outdoor riding arena offering expansive, open space for training and therapy sessions.
- Two run-in barns for the horses to enjoy shelter and rest.
- A care-taker's home, providing staff with on-site accommodations for round-the-clock care and attention to our horses and operations.

Leadership and Governance

Milestones operates under the guidance of a dedicated Board of Directors, which oversees the overall operations and strategic direction of the organization. The board is composed of eight members, with four individuals serving as the Executive Committee, including the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Administrator.

The day-to-day operations are managed by our Equine Manager, working closely with a Volunteer Coordinator and Program Director. Together, they ensure that Milestones continues to provide top-tier services and remains a welcoming and nurturing environment for all those involved.

Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program

Description:

The Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program at Milestones, Inc. is designed to support individuals ages 3 and up with a range of physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges. This transformative program harnesses the unique power of horses to improve riders' balance, coordination, strength, and social skills while fostering emotional growth and self-confidence. Each lesson is tailored to the individual, ensuring a personalized experience in a safe and supportive environment.

Key Outcomes & Achievements:

In 2024, Milestones' Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program served 189 riders across four seasonal sessions:

Winter Session: 50 riders, Spring Session: 47 riders, Summer Session: 46 riders, Fall Session: 46 riders

Each session consists of 10 weeks of lessons, totaling 40 weeks of instruction annually, providing invaluable therapy and support to our riders.

Testimonial:

Barbie's Journey at Milestones

"Our daughter Barbie has CHARGE syndrome, which affects almost every system in her body. She began riding at Milestones when she was just 3 years old, and we immediately saw the positive impact it had on her. Barbie loved riding and grooming her horses, and some of her first peer friendships were made at Milestones. Within months, her posture, balance, and stamina improved significantly, but the most miraculous change was the improvement in her severe gastric reflux. We went from seeing Barbie vomit 4-5 times per day to only once, and we believe horseback riding was key to this improvement. This led to better nutrition, weight gain, and an overall boost in her health and strength. Barbie is now 23 years old and participates in Special Olympics, where she's even a fast runner—something we never imagined for our fragile baby girl. Milestones helped shape the resilient, happy person she is today. We highly recommend Milestones for its dedicated staff, gentle horses, and unwavering commitment to safety and care."

– Terri and Joe Schulte
Parents of Barbie, a long-time rider at Milestones

Silver Saddles

Description:

The Silver Saddles Program is designed for riders ages 50 and over to improve flexibility, balance, and muscle tone, as well as general horsemanship. Through weekly lessons, older adults gain physical benefits and emotional wellness in a safe and supportive environment.

Key Outcomes & Achievements:

In 2024, the program served 83 riders across four seasonal sessions: Winter: 20 riders, Spring: 20 riders, Summer: 21 riders, Fall: 22 riders

Horse Tales

Description:

In partnership with the Benton County Public Library, Horse Tales allows children in grades 1-5 to read to therapy horses. This program helps improve reading skills while benefiting the horses through social interaction.

Key Outcomes & Achievements:

In 2024, 418 children participated in Horse Tales, strengthening both literacy and the bond with our horses.

The Mini Adventures of Ranger and Silver

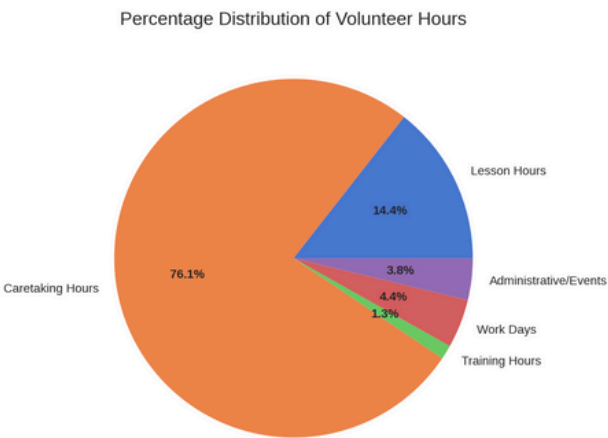
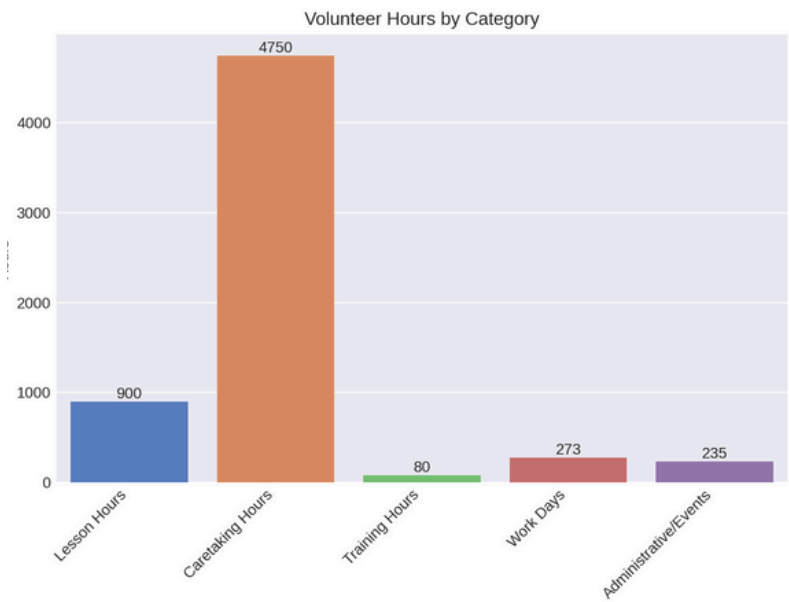
Description:

Ranger and Silver, our two miniature horses, visit schools, camps, libraries, and daycares throughout the year to bring equine education to the community.

Key Outcomes & Achievements:

In 2024, Ranger and Silver had 11 adventures, engaging with children and promoting positive animal interactions.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS & IMPACT CONT.



Total Hours Breakdown:

Lesson Hours:
900 hours (14.4%)

Caretaking Hours:
4750 hours (76.1%)

Training Hours:
80 hours (1.3%)

Work Days:
273 hours (4.4%)

Administrative/Events:
235 hours (3.8%)

MEET OUR HORSES



RANGER



ODIE



CHAMP



CHARLIE



DATH



SHILOH



OPAL



JOE



LEO



WILLOW



SILVER



HENRI



REGASUS



SAMPSON

Success Stories

RIDER TESTIMONIAL



“ We are incredibly thankful for Milestones Equine Therapy in Independence, Kentucky! The volunteers and horses are simply the best.

Our son has gained a new sense of confidence and has healed from trauma because of this unique therapy. ”

In case you haven't met him, let me introduce you to Henri, one of our therapy horses. As you can see, he is a pretty special guy. This year he met a little girl named Madison and they have become very good friends. In fact, Madison's mom, Marlene shared with us that Henri was the star of Madison's 4th birthday party. She said, "He has made such an impact on her life." Madison has Cerebral Palsy and because of the core and leg strength she has developed while riding Henri during lessons she was able to take her first steps after just a few weeks of participating at Milestones. Although victories such as these may seem small to the average person, you and I know that they are not. That's why you are connected to Milestones. Your connection may be small – perhaps you visit us during the Kenton County Farm Tour and have enjoyed watching our rider demos, or maybe you have come to Horse Tales in the summer and read to one of our 16 therapy horses. Maybe you attended a work day event or have come on a weekly basis to volunteer during lessons. The point is, you have a connection and Milestones means something to you just as it means something to the staff, board members, riders, and volunteers. When asked to put into words what "that something is" we all struggle. But I think it all comes down to the fact that the riders and the horses have touched your heart in a special way.



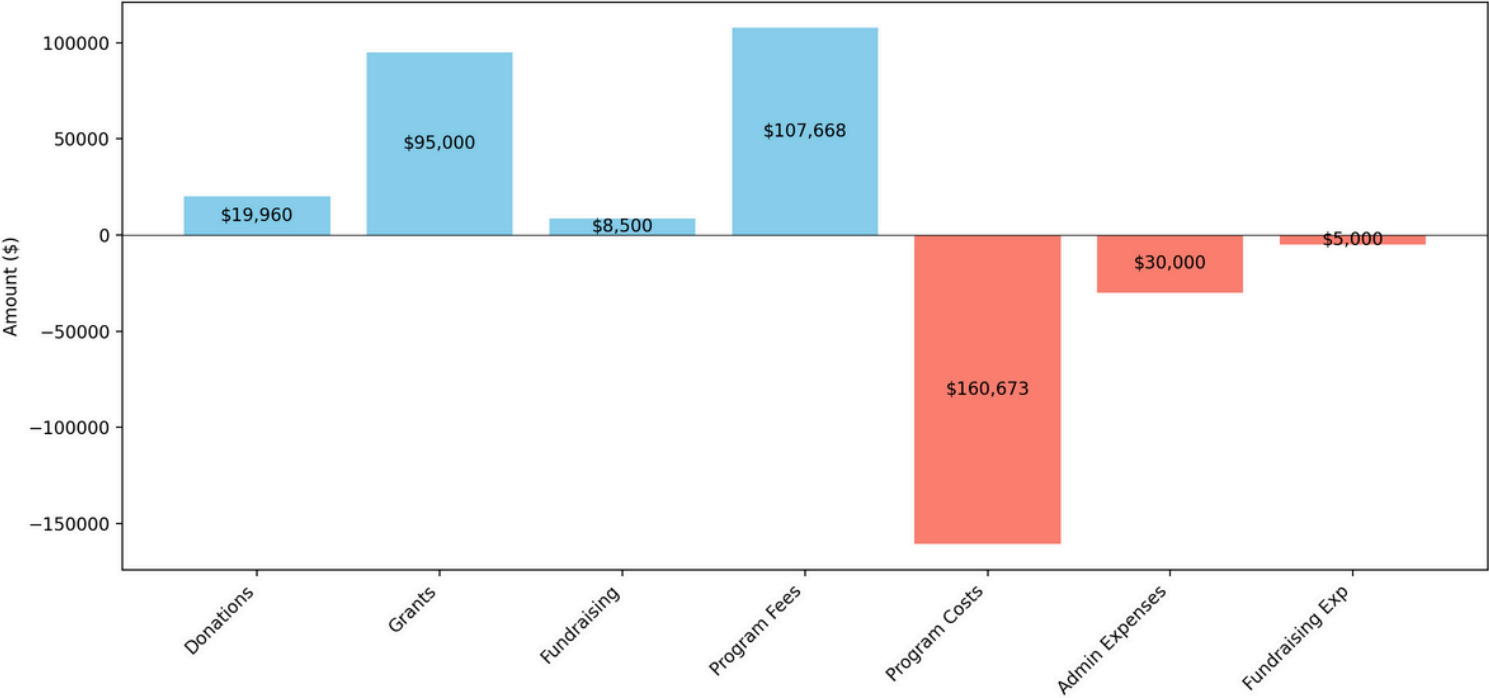
Revenue:

Donations: \$19,960
Grants: \$95,000
Fundraising: \$8,500
Program Fees: \$107,668

Expenditures:

Program Costs (e.g., horse care, instructor salaries, therapy equipment): \$160,673
Administrative Expenses: \$30,000
Fundraising Expenses: \$5000
Net Income: \$35,455

Revenue and Expenditure Breakdown



GRANTS

RC DURR
Charles H. Dater Foundation
Spaulding Family
Seligman Foundation
PNC Chairtable Trust
Dorothy B Francis

RIDER RODEO SPONSORS

Drees Homes
Terracon Engineers
NKY Family Dentistry
Struckoff and Britt Orthodontics
Jude's Towing
Independence Dentistry
Linnemann Family Funeral Homes
Mubea Cares
St. Elizabeth Healthcare
E.J's Southern Fixin's

BOARD MEMBERS

Samuel Lange, President
Kevin Bonhaus, Vice President
Lauren Bevilaqua, Administrator
Mary Bruckmann, Treasurer
Jenn Lunn, Legal Advisor
Shannon Gregory, Equine Advisor
Tracy Brumley, Events and Funding
Patty Kappaser, Events and Funding

CARETAKING STAFF

Shannon Gregory
Haley Desentz
Laura Brod
Joshua Koch
Tracy Reddin
Dalton Krebs

HORSE CONDITIONING TEAM

All Instructors and Caretakers
Ann Donalon
Mindy Burke
Jackie Holland
Annente Schonabaum

ADMINISTRATION

Mary Lunn, Program Director
Trisha Kremer, Equine Manager
Tracy Reddin, Volunteer Coordinator

TEACHING STAFF

Trisha Kremer, CTRI
Clarie Crosby, CTRI
Kylie Karissa, CTRI Candidate
Haley Desentz, CTRI Candidate
Elizabeth Lunn, CTRI Candidate

MAINTENANCE TEAM

Joshua Koch
Jim Kremer
Brian Kremer
Peyton Mittens
Samuel Lange
Kevin Bonhaus
Jenny Burkich

"In 2025, we plan to expand our therapeutic riding program by adding new horses and serving an additional 25 riders. We also aim to enhance our community outreach efforts through local partnerships and fundraising events."

CONTACT INFORMATION

Milestones, Inc.

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