



Naples Therapeutic  
  
 Riding Center

# Scene + Herd



MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER

## Letter from the Board of Directors

We've had a busy season with successful fundraisers, special events and growing programs – all passionately supported by dedicated donors and volunteers.

Our now expanding campus has been abuzz with riders making strides physically, mentally and emotionally while being nurtured by our very special army of volunteers. Whether mucking stalls, helping in the office or keeping riders safe, volunteers are the backbone of NTRC. They help us maintain our high standards of care, support our mission and advance our goals.

To honor them, in March, we gathered together for one of the staff's favorite annual events, the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, with the "Volunteers Rock" theme. With dyed hair, black t-shirts, leather pants and lots of rock-n-roll hand salutes, everyone got into the spirit while we broke bread together and celebrated our award-winning "bandmates". We honored Lee Pinto, with the "Barn Dance Volunteer of the Year" and "Board President Service Award" and Misty Gaynor was named "Volunteer of the Year". We also acknowledged our dedicated board members going off the board for their four-year commitment and leadership: James Dati, Gregory Otis, David Winebrenner and Harry Witt. We are privileged and grateful to work alongside each and every one of you who help our programs thrive.

Volunteers don't just support our efforts. Several once again volunteered at the Naples Children and Education's record-breaking Naples Winter Wine Festival. NTRC gratefully received \$249,000 for our children's programs from this year's proceeds. Many are also donors who, along with matching funds from the Richard M. Schulze Foundation and the Collier Community Foundation, helped NTRC receive \$50,873 from the Give Where You Live Collier 24-hour online giving challenge!

As we wrap up season, there are still plenty of ways to support NTRC. Our volunteers are working hard planning the Kentucky Derby Party on May 7th. Our expansion committee volunteers are planning and hosting Giddy Up for Good parties, tours and dreaming up new events to invite the community to support the future needs of NTRC – something we realize will require a sizeable expansion of our volunteer team.

On behalf of our riders and their families, thank you for giving your time, talent and treasures to support their growth and the NTRC mission. We couldn't do it without you.





# Donor Dollars at Work

## MINIATURE HORSE PROGRAM THRIVING, ENHANCING PROGRAMMING AND EXPANDING OUTREACH

The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation's investment in the launch and continuation of our miniature horse therapy program is paying off big. In addition to helping young students become confident readers, lifting spirits and reducing stress, Itty Bitty and Toulmin are helping spread much needed awareness about our volunteer recruitment, expanding programs and need for financial support.

The minis bring the therapeutic benefits of horses to worksites and organizations throughout SWFL communities such as hospitals, schools, hospices, nursing homes, and rehabilitation centers. Having mobile therapy services allows NTRC to respond to community needs such as COVID-19, natural disasters or other high-stress situations based on current and emerging mental health needs.

Through a collaboration with Collier County Public Schools, during COVID, the minis were called upon to motivate students, who have histories of trauma, are on the autism spectrum and have emotional or behavioral challenges, to want to read in a low stress, safe and fun environment. NTRC recently partnered with ABLE Academy to conduct a 7-week research study with their students to provide data on how the horses help the reading process. The information collected will help build additional relationships within the school district to expand the Mini Tales Literacy program.

In addition, our minis can be seen all over town these days bringing big smiles for pictures often shared on social media, thus expanding our reach. They are helping support our fundraising and volunteer recruitment efforts at popular community events such as Pets on Third, where we took home the Judges Choice Award, and our own events like the Giddy Up for Good party hosted by End the Wait expansion campaign chair Joe Logrippo. There guests mingled and snapped selfies with the minis before taking tours and hearing from the board about our future growth needs.

*In addition to helping young students become confident readers, lifting spirits and reducing stress, Itty Bitty and Toulmin are helping spread much needed awareness about our volunteer recruitment, expanding programs and need for financial support.*

## Donor Spotlight

### PRIVATE CAPITAL MANAGEMENT SPONSOR FOR KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY

Private Capital Management (PCM) is a boutique investment and wealth advisory in Naples. Dating back to 1986, PCM is deeply rooted in the Naples community and was initially launched with the support of the Collier family. Since that time, PCM has been recognized for its stellar investment record and today advises about 200 families – half of whom have direct ties to this community. PCM partners believe in giving back to the community by supporting worthy causes our clients and employees are passionate about. As Managing Director and an NTRC board member, I advocated for PCM's financial support for NTRC and we are delighted to be the presenting sponsor for the annual Kentucky Derby Party.

We have a strong preference to give to organizations where we can see our dollars utilized first hand. After joining the board, I could quickly see how efficiently donor dollars were spent, which only enhanced my confidence that I wanted to support NTRC personally and professionally through both my time and treasure – in fact we've made it a family affair.

The more I learned, the more impressed I became. This is no "small time" operation with kids riding horses. NTRC is a professionally-led and staffed organization that not only goes the extra mile for our riders, but the on-campus team includes PATH certified instructors, professional therapists and mental health professionals, not to mention experienced and talented executive leadership. While focused on our core therapy mission, it's also a remarkably ambitious organization.

NTRC events are so unique and include light-hearted fun. Naples doesn't need one more stuffy "suit and tie" fundraiser. The Kentucky Derby Party will give attendees an opportunity to support the mission in a pleasant and casual setting.



*"NTRC wrings a lot of value out of each contributed dollar. My hope is that through our investment in the mission, they can do more of the same – be creative with the programming and get more riders on horses week-after-week and year-after-year."*

**– Jeffrey M. Fortier,  
Managing Director  
Private Capital  
Management**

# The Scene at NTRC



# Welcome



## **CARLA BENEFIELD**

Part-time clinical manager  
Carla Benefield will provide counseling for equine-

assisted group services, including psychotherapy, which are conducted in collaboration with more than a dozen community partner health and human services agencies. Carla is currently the Clinical Manager at LifeWorks in Port Charlotte where she serves adults with substance use challenges individual and group therapy, focused on cognitive behavioral therapy, relapse prevention, and anger management. In the practice, she also serves as the Director of their HorseWorks Program, an equine-assisted self-awareness program that incorporates horses into the therapeutic process.



## **AMY BURRELL-CORMIER**

Volunteer services coordinator Amy

Burrell-Cormier has 35+ years experience as an equine professional. She began her career as a child prep rider for ponies and worked her way up to a team that qualified for the Olympic games in Sydney. Amy then segued to training on her own. She is principally trained in dressage and she has prep riding expertise with jumpers. She most recently worked in biomechanics and rehabilitative work, which prompted her to start a performance horse rescue.



## **CATHERINE HAFHEY**

Part-time instructor  
Catherine Haffey is newly certified after working a

year under the guidance of NTRC lead instructor Lea Haven. She is currently an exercise rider for NTRC therapy horses. She has prior experience in horses showing on the hunter jumper circuit. She previously served as the fitness director and equine specialist for Path2Freedom, an NTRC community partner that serves girls who have been victims of sexual trafficking. Catherine is also a certified health and wellness coach, personal trainer and plant-based nutritionist who works with cancer patients and survivors.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## **Kentucky Derby Party**

**May 7, 2022 | 4:00 pm | NTRC**

Chairperson Marc Halcrow and his committee invite you to a day at the races at the Kentucky Derby Party presented by Private Capital Management. Come ready to bid on your winning horse and enjoy hors d'oeuvres, one complimentary specialty drink and a cash bar. A 50/50 purse will go to the winner. Prizes will be awarded for Best Hat for the ladies and Crazy Pants for our gents.

Proceeds from the Derby Party help on-board new horses.

The cost is \$250 per person with an open bar wrist band or \$200 per person with no wrist band.



## **Reeling for Riders**

**August 12-13, 2022 | 7:00 am - 3:00 pm | NTRC**

Young Professional Strides Committee member Briana Anderson and event chair Jenn Williams invite you to the 2nd Reeling for Riders. The catch-and-release fishing tournament brings anglers of all ages together for a fun (and competitive) day on the backwaters. Prizes will be awarded at an awards dinner to the individual with the largest catch of Redfish, Snook and Trout and a trashcan slam winner with the largest catch of Catfish, Ladyfish or Jack. Raffle tickets will be sold in advance and announced at the dinner. Proceeds support the operating costs for NTRC's programs. The cost is \$400 per boat/per team. Let's reel in the support for our riders!



## **Bootstrap Boogie Barn Dance**

**November 12, 2022 | 5:30 pm | NTRC**



The date has been set for our signature fundraiser, the 17th Annual Bootstrap Boogie Barn Dance! The committee will spend the summer party planning and soliciting sponsors and auction donors. Guests will enjoy live music with the Blue Stone Circle Band while chowing down on tasty vittles, taking barn tours and supporting our wildly creative fundraising activities including the Pony Pie Bingo, Golden Boot Raffle and a special cash call. Proceeds support NTRC's annual operating costs. Be sure to save the date and let us know if you would like to be a sponsor, volunteer on the committee or donate to the auction.

# I'd Rather Be at Horse Therapy

*A poem by Crystal Miller  
Expressive Theater Therapy with  
a Horse Program Participant*

**SLOW AND STEADY  
EVEN TEMPERED  
CALMLY PLANTED  
ANCHORED TO THE GROUND**

**HORSES PRESENCE  
CALMS AND CLEARS  
THE WEBS OF LIFE  
FROM HERE OR THERE**

**A BREATH TOGETHER  
WALKING BESIDE ME  
A STROKE ON ITS SIDE  
THE CALM TRANSFERS IN**

**ANOTHER DEEP MOMENT  
SOMETHING CONVERGES  
LIFE KEEPS ON PLOWING  
WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING  
KEEP CLOSE**

**LEAD THE WAY  
COMMAND RESPECT  
BE DIRECT  
SOFTLY AND TENDERLY  
REMAIN, NO DISDAIN**

**A CREATURE MADE PERFECT  
A PICTURE OF SOUNDNESS  
FIXED AND FIRM  
RESPONSIVE YET STUBBORN  
TENDERNESS TRANSFERS**

**IN PATS MIXED WITH STROKES  
THOUGHTS DRIFT OR WANDER  
TIME PASSES BY  
SITTING HERE WAITING  
OR COOKING, OR WORKING  
JUST DREAMING OF BEING  
AT HORSE THERAPY**



## Meet a Rider

**NTRC SUPPORTS THE MILLER FAMILY IN CREATIVE WAYS**

Trauma devastated our family. I was hospitalized with a health scare that was complicated by severe allergic reactions and COVID. Now a COVID long hauler, it has been mentally and physically draining. It affected my husband, who cared for me while I detoxed and desperately sought treatment.



**The Miller Family**

My daughter, who has been horse crazy since she was little, also suffered a trauma. She started stuttering, shaking, screaming and lashing out. She became quiet and reclusive. I began searching for a horse therapy solution for her and myself. When we found NTRC, they recommended occupational therapy (OT) with a horse for her. We began the year and half wait to ride.

My husband and I decided to try the Expressive Theater Therapy with a Horse as a healing date night where we learned that improv could help our son with autism. We enrolled the kids in improv at Naples Players. It became something we could all share. We learned the importance of body language. Kids are like horses and sponges and respond to our body language.

As we began to heal as a family, our daughter was able to start riding. In OT, she connects with the horses and interacts better with people after lessons.

I love the feel of NTRC. Everyone is there to recover and get or give help. It's a perfect healing bubble. Horse therapy became a respite for my family after a very difficult and long road. We now plan to volunteer.



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## Board of Directors

Brian McNamara – *President*  
Lee Pinto – *Past President*  
Caroline Ridgway – *Vice President*  
Jeff Fortier – *Treasurer*  
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Kristin Carolan, Joe Logrippo,  
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William Villafranco

## ABOUT NTRC

*NTRC improves the lives of children and adults with physical, social and mental health needs through therapeutic riding and equine-assisted programs. Volunteers and donors make it possible for NTRC to serve 800 participants each year. NTRC is funded by Naples Children & Education Foundation, The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, Clare Family Foundation, Clark Family Foundation, and private donations. NTRC is a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship Premier Accredited Center (PATH Intl).*

## Volunteer Spotlight

### MISTY GAYNOR NAMED VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

When I was little I worked with horses at a horse camp. I loved being around them and riding barefoot. My friend had a horse and would let me ride in exchange for cleaning out her stalls.

When I moved to Naples four years ago, I sought out any opportunity I could to be with horses and found NTRC. I started sidewalking at first and then became a leader in lessons. Now NTRC is my home away from home. I help take the minis to Able Academy once week and for community outreach. I also volunteer in the barn every week doing turn out and mucking the stalls. I like to fill in wherever I am needed. That can also include helping with volunteer orientation, serving on the Development Committee and supporting our fundraisers.



**Misty Gaynor**

NTRC is like family. I didn't know anyone when I moved to Naples, but now my entire friend group is from NTRC. I've made so many lasting friendships with the staff and volunteers. We do things socially and ride together. I've also brought my family along with me to support NTRC. My daughter volunteers during events and my husband, who is a special needs educator, volunteers in lessons.

Being named Volunteer of the Year was very humbling. I always feel so appreciated by the staff and families. I love the people I get to work with and seeing the participants' progress. It's amazing to see how far they come. I really believe I get more out of volunteering than they get from me.