

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Changing Lives One Stride at a Time



A Message from the CEO

Dear Friends, Partners, and the HETRA Community,

Reflecting on 2025 fills me with profound gratitude for the incredible community that anchors Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy. As we celebrate more than 37 years of service, our mission remains beautifully unchanged: ensuring that the life-changing bond between horse and human is accessible to the children and families in our community who need it most.

At HETRA, we believe every participant deserves a path to independence, regardless of the challenges they face. Whether it is a non-verbal child speaking their first words to a horse or a student with autism finding the emotional regulation needed to thrive in school, these “miracle moments” are the heartbeat of our mission. While these breakthroughs feel miraculous to the families experiencing them, they are supported by evidence-based research showing that Equine-Assisted Services can significantly improve social-emotional regulation and spontaneous communication in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The horse’s rhythmic movement mimics the human gait, helping strengthen the nervous system, improve motor planning, and build skills that carry into everyday life.

The need for these specialized services has never been greater, and 2025 was a year of historic growth. HETRA delivered 8,977 programming hours to 3,171 unique participants, representing a 29% increase in service hours and a remarkable 65% increase in participants from 2024. While these numbers are significant, their true meaning is reflected in the progress, confidence, and independence gained by those we serve.

This impact would not be possible without the two pillars that sustain our barn, our horses and volunteers. Together, our therapy herd and more than 400 dedicated volunteers, who filled 343 weekly shifts in 2025, helped ensure safe, and effective experiences for everyone served.

As demand continues to grow, accessibility remains our uncompromising priority. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we provided 48% more scholarship assistance in 2025, ensuring families could access services regardless of financial circumstances.

HETRA’s commitment to excellence is only possible because of the community behind our mission. Your support helps care for our horses, empower our volunteers, provide scholarships, and ensure life-changing services remain accessible to those who need them most.

With deepest gratitude,
Edye Godden
Edye Godden





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Retired - Police Department

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Asst. VP at Union Pacific

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Board Treasurer
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Mission, Vision & Values

Our **MISSION** is to improve the quality of life both physically and emotionally of adults and children of all ability levels through equine-assisted activities.

We **ENVISION** a world where equine-assisted services are accessible to all who can benefit.

Our work is guided by these **VALUES**:

- Safety & Support – Creating a welcoming, secure space for participants, volunteers, and horses.
- Affordability – Keeping sessions accessible through financial assistance and fair pricing.
- Well-Being – Promoting physical and emotional health for everyone involved.
- Integrity – Holding ourselves to the highest ethical standards.
- Excellence – Ensuring quality through top-tier training and care.
- Innovation & Growth – Advancing the field through continuous learning and leadership.

Volunteers

The HEART of HETRA

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FOR INDIVIDUALS:

Barn Maintenance, Greeter, Groomer/Tacker, Horse Leader, Instructor Assistant, Side Walker

FOR GROUPS:

Corporate Teams, Community Organizations, and School Groups help with property maintenance for over 20 acres and 30 horses.



VALUE OF
HOURS
\$987,236

\$36.14/HR.

"I've been a volunteer for HETRA for almost 15 years. At first it was because of my passion for horses, but it has grown to be so much more! The individuals who come for therapy are such a joy to be around. I get attached to them and am amazed at their ability to make advancements!" - Eddie L.

441
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

27,317
DONATED VOLUNTEER
HOURS

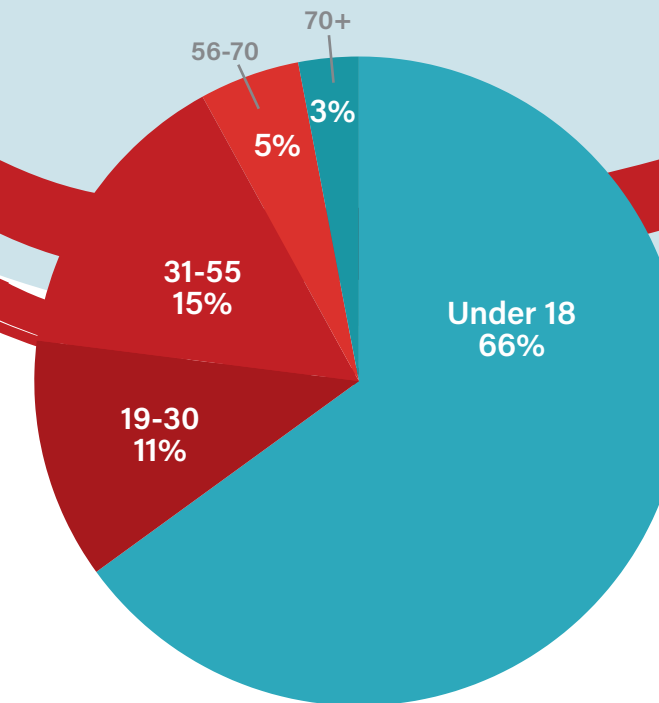
NEBRASKA COUNTIES SERVED:

Cass, Crawford, Dodge, Douglas, Harrison, Hall, Lancaster, Madison, Otoe, Platte, Pottawattamie, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward, Washington

Participants

Those We Empower

PARTICIPANT AGES IN CORE PROGRAMS:



3171
TOTAL SERVED

71%
PARTICIPANTS SERVED
WITH DUAL DIAGNOSIS.
Primary Diagnosis Categories =
Physical, Social/Behavioral,
Mental Health

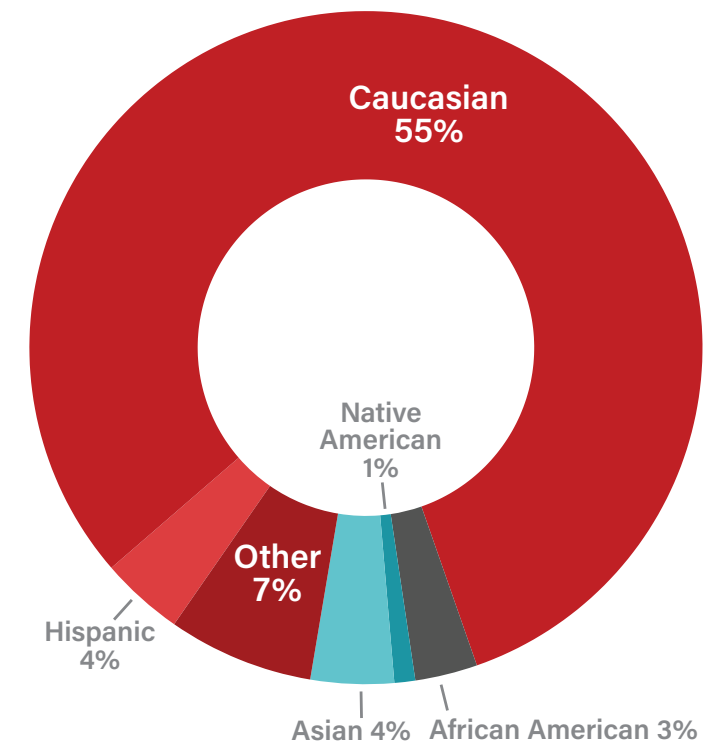
GENDERS:

34%
MALE

66%
FEMALE



ETHNICITIES OF PARTICIPANTS SERVED:



Programming

Where Growth Happens

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN
CORE PROGRAMMING
270

TOTAL PROGRAMMING
HOURS COMPLETED
8,977

PROGRAMMING PARTNERS

Rite of Passage - Uta Halle, Kids Can Community Center, The Collective for Hope, QLI, 360 Community Services, Bennington High School, Aspire for Greatness, Brookstone Meadows, Gretna Public Library, Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home, Newport House, Fremont Public Schools, Wilson Performing Arts Center, Rose Blumpkin Jewish Home, Westside Transition Program, Westgate Assisted Living, Emerald Legacy Pointe, Wahoo Public School, Mead Public School, Lyons-Decatur Public School, College of Saint Mary

PROGRAMS OFFERED

- Adaptive Carriage Driving
- Adaptive Riding
- Equine-Facilitated Mental Health
- Group Activity Programming (GAP)
- Life Skills
- Specialty Programming
- Therapy Services



"I find myself sharing all the time about what my daughter has learned at HETRA, the relationships she has developed, and the pure joy she experiences each week when she rides. HETRA has truly enhanced her quality of life."
- HETRA Participant Parent

HETRA University

Pathways to Advancement

HETRA University brings the expertise of our Instructors and Therapists directly to you through online resources.

CONFERENCES:

HOSTED AT HETRA:

- HETRA University Live - Happy Health Sane & Sound
- Saddle Fit workshop

HETRA STAFF PRESENTED AT:

- Region 7 Conference
- Horses & Humans Foundation Conference
- PATH International Conference

WEBINARS: **728** VIEWS



TOTAL STREAMS
& DOWNLOADS
9,229

NOT JUST A PONY RIDE PODCAST:

36 PRODUCED
AVERAGE **128 PLAYS**/EPISODE

WHO'S LISTENING?

United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, United Kingdom, India, Poland, South Korea, Germany, Austria, Spain, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Ireland, Ethiopia, Italy

HETRA Herd

The **Power** Behind Our Mission

Horse Sponsorship

Partners in Every Stride

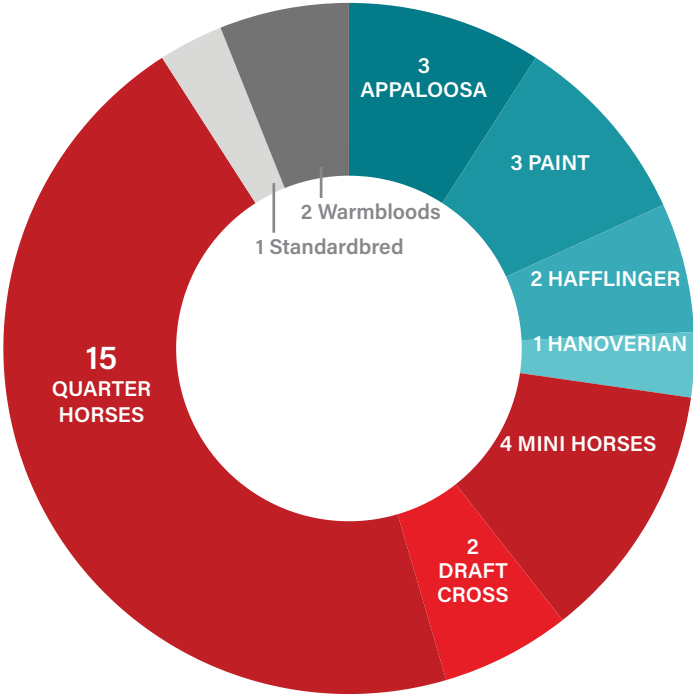
DID YOU KNOW?

Equine-Assisted Services is the fastest growing industry, thanks to the powerful bond between humans and horses. Riding mimics the natural rhythm of walking, offering both physical and emotional benefits.

35
HORSES WORKED
IN PROGRAMMING

\$217,296
TOTAL ANNUAL COST
OF CARE

BREEDS IN OUR HERD: 9



2025 HORSE OF THE YEAR:
HONEY

HORSE SPONSORS

- Cheech:** Always in our Hearts Barbara J. Hergenrader and Dale & Christina Silvius
Chipper: Anonymous
Coby: Edward Jones - Lori Blum
Diamond: Joan Henninghausen
Frank: Darrell & Coe Leta Logemann
Georgie: A Friend of HETRA
Halo & Ruger: The Sherman Family
Honey: William R. Patrick Foundation
Jewel: Barb Carpenter
JJ & Vern: Colleen Potts & Family
Levi: Anonymous
Lunchbox: Horsemen's Park
Smarty: Nebraska Equine Veterinary Clinic
Thunder: In fond memory of Hope & Fritz Brockman
Merry & Lala: The Wolfson Family and In honor of Brody Barger
Blue & Stormy: Madi Storm

BECOME A SPONSOR

Join the generous supporters who help us uphold the high standard of care our herd deserves.
Scan the QR code or visit:
www.HETRA.org to learn more.



HETRA Success Story

Maeleigh's Story of Strength

At just ten years old, Maeleigh has faced more than most will in a lifetime, yet her determination and smile never fade.

Born premature, she suffered a brain bleed as an infant that required surgery. Despite the odds, she grew into a strong, energetic little girl, running on the soccer field, riding her bike, and laughing with friends.

In October 2023, everything shifted.

IT ONLY TOOK A MOMENT TO ALTER MAELEIGH'S WORLD

A routine surgery led to complications that **left Maeleigh unable to walk, talk, or even hold her head up.** In an instant, she lost the abilities that had once come so naturally.

Madonna Rehabilitation recommended HETRA to her parents, and they knew it was a sign. "We had already looked into horse therapy. We understood the benefits, and HETRA came highly recommended," Maeleigh's mom said.

FINDING STRENGTH

When Maeleigh first arrived at the barn, she wasn't strong enough to sit on a horse. **Her journey began on the Equicizer**, a mechanical horse, that helped her start rebuilding her strength and balance. **Week by week, we watched her grow a little stronger, a little braver, and a little more confident.**

MEETING HER NEW THERAPIST

Then came the day she met **Georgie**, a **kind, patient therapy horse** with big, understanding eyes and an even bigger heart. Georgie became one of Maeleigh's therapists, probably one of her favorites! Together, they've created something truly special, **a bond built on trust, love, and the quiet magic that happens when horse and human connect.**

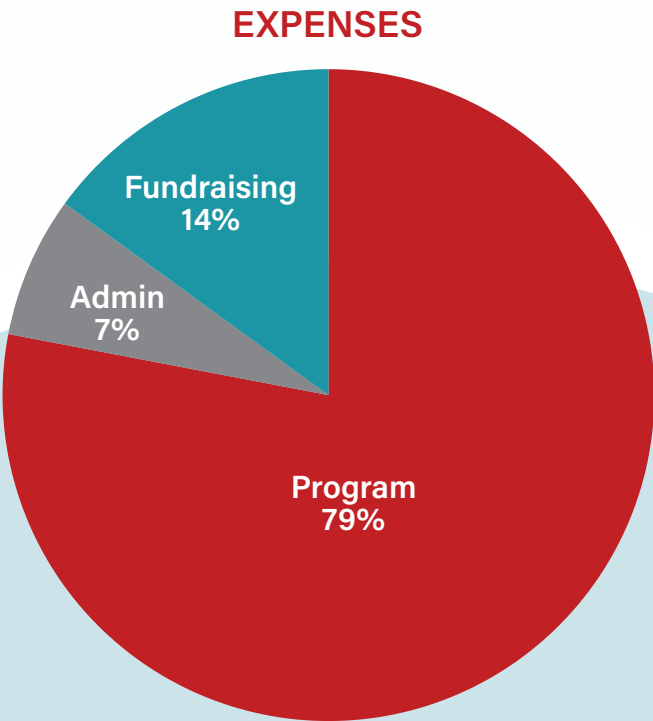
Scan to read
Maeleigh's full story.



Financials

Stewardship in Action

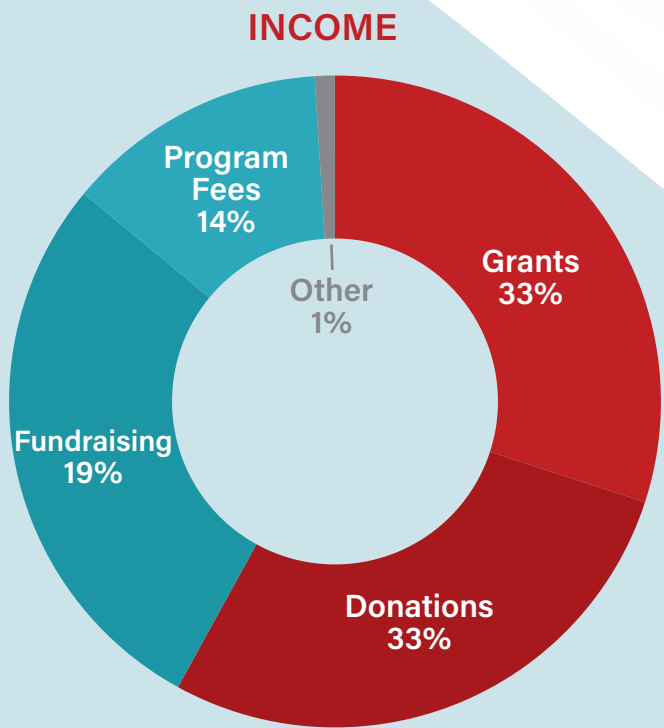
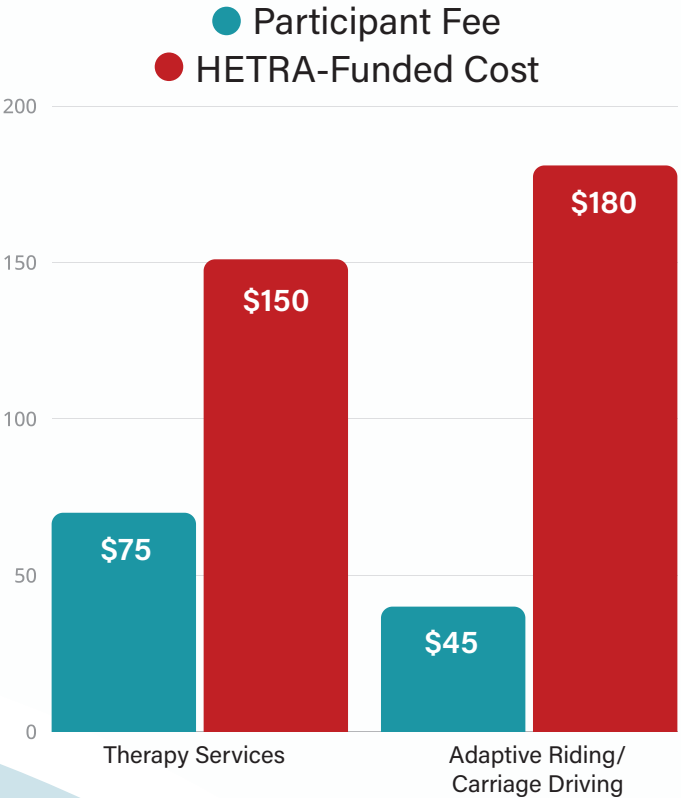
The cost of each session far exceeds what participants are asked to pay. Thanks to our generous donors, grants, and fundraising efforts, we're able to keep our services affordable and accessible to those who need them most.



75
PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED
SCHOLARSHIPS

\$99,248
TOTAL AMOUNT
AWARDED

2025 SESSION FEES Based on 30 min. session.



Fundraisers

Striding Forward Together

COMMUNITY EVENTS & BENEFIT:

- 24th Annual Blue Jeans & Dreams Benefit
- 4th Annual HETRA Cornhole Tournament
- 5th Annual HETRA Fun Run
- Runza Night
- Tidal Wave
- Horsemen's Park Partnership
- NFM Gift Wrapping
- The Giving Machine
- Quasar Drive-in's Classics with a Cause



HORSEMEN'S PARK PARTNERSHIP

In July, Horsemen's Park teamed up with HETRA to raise support for HETRA Herd newcomer Lunchbox. Through a matching gift campaign, donations were matched up to \$2,500. The partnership will continue in 2026, helping sponsor Lunchbox and a friend.



**BLUE JEANS &
DREAMS RAISED**
\$379,977

BENEFIT HIGHLIGHT



24TH ANNUAL BLUE JEANS & DREAMS

610
ATTENDEES

88
SPONSORS

Foundations

Making a Lasting Impact



Lindsay Family Foundation
 Don C. Scott Foundation
 Lester A. Walker Foundation
 Rogers Foundation
 50 Mile March Foundation
 Alfred G. Thomsen Company Foundation
 American Quarter Horse Foundation
 Bellevue Community Foundation
 Cielo Foundation Boulder
 CL Werner Foundation
 CommonSpirit
 CSG Systems, Inc
 Debby Durham Family Foundation
 Enrichment Foundation
 Fremont Area Community Foundation
 Gary and Mary West Foundation
 Gretna Community Foundation
 Heider Family Foundation
 Immanuel Community Vision Foundation
 James C Semerad Foundation
 Lori & David Scott Foundation
 Mariner Foundation
 Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company
 Naro Family Foundation

**We recognize and thank our anonymous foundations.*

Donors

Investing in Possibility



PATH Intl. - National Philanthropic Trust
 Nebraska Council for
 Developmental Disabilities
 Nebraska Soldiers Foundation
 Peter Kiewit Foundation
 Rebensdorf Family Foundation
 Roy and Gloria Dinsdale
 Family Foundation
 Sports for Kids Foundation
 Teryl Myers & Alden Oswald
 Charitable Fund
 The Kind World Foundation
 Union Pacific Foundation
 Walmart Foundation
 William & Ruth Scott Family Foundation
 William R Patrick Foundation

DONORS OVER \$5000

Adams & Sullivan P C LLO
 Altar'd State Village Pointe
 Jeanine Carson
 Dayspring Bank
 Diane Duren & Drew Collier
 Friend of HETRA
 Jim & Kathy Helget
 Joan Hennighausen
 Hoich Enterprises
 Grant and Sara Janke
 Jack & Stephanie Koraleski
 Darrell & Coe Leta Logemann
 Marick Mechanical
 Gina McCormick
 Nebraska Equine Veterinary Clinic
 Bryan Phillips

Colleen Potts
 Rocket Car Wash
 Lou & Kathi Rotella, Jr.
 Scott & Julie Rouse
 Mitzi Sherman
 St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Michele & James Stecklberg
 Patrick & Kathy Sullivan
 Valley Corp.
 Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Workman



Our Impact



351,000

ADULTS IN NE
ACTIVELY EXPERIENCE
A MENTAL HEALTH
CONDITION.

WHY HETRA IS ESSENTIAL

In 2024, HETRA **served 1,918 individuals**, an increase from 1,752 in 2023. Participants ranged from ages 2 to 100 and represented a variety of diagnoses. Supported by **488 volunteers** who **gave over 25,000 hours**, our core programs helped people reach life-changing milestones: standing without assistance, walking independently, and speaking for the first time. These victories ripple through families, caregivers, and the community, fostering confidence, independence, and connection.

RECOGNIZING THE NEED

In Nebraska, **20%** of adults live with a disability, and **24.43%** of individuals experience a mental health challenge. Sarpy County, where HETRA operates, has **fewer than 1.5 mental health providers per 1,000** residents, and most Nebraska counties face a shortage. For those with disabilities, stigma, limited services, and provider shortages make care less accessible.



Strategic Plan

LOOKING AHEAD: HETRA'S STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2025-2030

As we continue to grow and evolve, HETRA remains deeply committed to meeting the expanding needs of our community through transformative equine-assisted services. Our strategic plan for 2025-2030 outlines a bold and thoughtful roadmap focused on four key pillars: **1. Programming**, **2. Financial Sustainability**, **3. Workforce Development**, and **4. Program & Facility Expansion**.



You Make Us Stronger!

Behind every number is a story—a child finding their voice, a veteran rebuilding trust, a caregiver finding hope. This is possible with the generosity of people like you.

Together, we can keep breaking barriers, building confidence, and creating opportunities through the power of horses.

FEELING INSPIRED?

Donate Today, Volunteer Tomorrow, Change a Life Forever.

Scan QR Code
To Give.



www.HETRA.org/Donate



www.HETRA.org

10130 S. 222nd Street, Gretna NE 68028

402.359.8830