



# HETRA's Volunteer Handbook

*Revised on February 1, 2023*





# HETRA

HEARTLAND EQUINE THERAPEUTIC RIDING ACADEMY

est. 1989 / [www.HETRA.org](http://www.HETRA.org)

*Changing Lives One Stride At A Time*

**HETRA's mission is to improve the quality of life both physically and emotionally of adults and children of all ability levels through Equine-Assisted Activities.**

**“Where horses and you make dreams come true!”**

Welcome to HETRA, also known as the Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy. **VOLUNTEERS ARE VERY VALUABLE TO US!** Without dedicated volunteers most of our participants could not experience all of the benefits HETRA has to offer. Please feel free to send in any questions, or offer any comments you have on how the volunteer experience can be more enjoyable.

### **HETRA Contact Information**

HETRA Office Phone - (402) 359-8830

HETRA Volunteer Coordinator Phone - (402) 669-1504

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Contact information for all HETRA staff can be found on the HETRA website at [www.HETRA.org](http://www.HETRA.org).





# Who We Are



HETRA began in 1989 with one participant, one horse, and three volunteers. Since then the organization has grown substantially. Since then our team has grown to 13 full-time staff, 11 part-time staff, and 26 Equine Partners. Every week more than 130 participants from Nebraska and Iowa come to HETRA to partner with one of our gentle horses. Whether riding, carriage driving, or grooming, participants have access to the therapeutic benefits associated with working with horses including improved balance and confidence.

We serve a variety of participants including children and adults with mental and physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, brain tumors, head or spinal cord injuries, visual impairment, autism, development delays, epilepsy, bipolar disorder, PTSD, attention deficit disorder, anxiety, and depression.

HETRA is accredited by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) and is the only PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center in Nebraska. We have shown time and again that we operate above industry standards including safety, facility, horse care and training, volunteer training, and more.



# Our Programs

**Adaptive Riding** - Equine-Assisted Service that contributes to the cognitive, physical, emotional and social well-being of individuals with special needs or mental health conditions. Adaptive Riding provides benefits in the areas of strength, balance, flexibility, and independence. Participants learn to control the horse using skills such as reining and use of aids. Our Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructors are trained and certified through PATH, Intl. Before entering the program, each participant is carefully evaluated by a Physical or Occupational Therapist. Participants are then paired with an Adaptive Riding Instructor, as well as other students with similar ability levels. A horse leader and two sidewalkers accompany each participant at first to ensure their safety and assist with the rider's balance, if needed. Many participants progress to the point that they are able to ride independently.

**Therapy Services** - Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapists work one-on-one with participants using a technique called Hippotherapy. Hippotherapy is a therapeutic treatment technique in which a therapist partners with a horse to target a participant's need to achieve clinical results in areas such as fine and gross motor coordination, posture, muscle development, and flexibility. As stated by Sandy Rafferty, Occupational Therapist and Professional PATH Intl Advanced Instructor, has stated, "One horse can provide the same intervention as 35 pieces of therapy equipment."

**Adaptive Carriage Driving** - Participants that do not wish to be or who cannot be mounted on a horse experience the rewards of interaction and control of a horse while driving from a carriage seat. Using a horse and carriage gives participants an alternative or an addition to riding, opening up the world of horses to those who may be unable to ride. The program imparts knowledge of safety, horses, harnessing, and driving skills through teamwork. All sessions are conducted by a PATH, Intl. Certified Driving Instructor.

The **Life Skills** program is designed for young adults with disabilities who are transitioning into more independent lives. This program partners with horses and barn environment to teach participants skills which can be broadly applied to their



lives including communication, teamwork, task analysis, and following multiple step directions.

**Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL)** is an experiential learning approach that promotes the development of life skills for educational, professional, and personal goals. This approach utilizes the horse-human connection and is guided by planned experiences. Horses partner with individuals or groups to help them reach identified goals. Our horses are large yet gentle creatures and offer an opportunity for a person to grow in self-confidence and self-esteem through interaction.

**Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP)** is a form of psychotherapy involving horses. Due to horses' sensitivity to subtle changes, they are a powerful component to teaching life and coping skills in partnership with a Mental Health Therapist or Occupational Therapist. Horses respond differently to individuals depending on a person's mental state. As a person's mood changes, the horse's behavior will change as well. The horse provides biofeedback regarding a participant's changes in mood and behavior. This can provide participants with helpful growth opportunities.

Participants in our **Equine Services for Veterans** program include veterans, military personnel, and their families. Through this program horses help ease the transition from military to civilian life through EAL and EFP. Participants interact with horses to experience their unique communication style and behavior patterns, allowing them to relate these experiences to their everyday lives. Through one-day events or weekly sessions participants can focus on topics such as coping mechanisms, resiliency, and reintegration back into everyday life.

Through our **Public Riding** program, HETRA also offers English and Western group riding lessons to the general public. These lessons are popular with volunteers and family members of participants. All Public Riding participants are integrated with Adaptive Riding participants of similar ability levels creating a wonderful opportunity for learning for all.

Through **HETRA University** we offer virtual programming to participants, volunteers, Equine-Assisted Services professionals, and the general public. This includes webinars, a Podcast, coloring and activity pages, "Story Time with the Minis," and short videos. Visit [www.HETRAUniversity.org](http://www.HETRAUniversity.org) to learn more.



# Volunteer Opportunities



*All Volunteers must be at least 12 years of age. All volunteers must demonstrate appropriate maturity and decision-making ability for their volunteer position.*

## **HETRA has the following volunteer opportunities available:**

**Instructor Assistant:** Instructor assistants are at least 12 years old. They help instructors set up and tear down equipment in the arena, before, in between and/or after sessions. During sessions, they can help retrieve toys and equipment that may be needed in the arena and assist with many of the games and activities that the participants engage in.

**Sidewalker:** Sidewalkers are at least 14 years old. They have similar responsibilities to instructor assistants before, in between, and after sessions. They also walk next to the participant during sessions and assist with balance and exercises. They must be able to comfortably walk and jog, for short distances, next to a horse while supporting a participant. Tall and strong sidewalkers are 5'8" or taller and are designated to walk with those participants that need additional support or ride our taller horses.

*Volunteers on a weekly shift are eligible to attend additional training and pursue certification in the following skills:*

**Groomer/Tacker:** Groomers are at least 12 years old and tackers a minimum of 14 years old. These volunteers are responsible for assisting the Barn Leader in grooming and completing tack changes on the horses. Those interested in becoming a groomer or tacker must pass a proficiency test prior to serving as a groomer or tacker.



**Horse Leader:** Horse leaders are at least 14 years of age. We have three types of horse leaders: blue, gold and platinum. They are responsible for leading the horse during the session. All horse leaders must have successfully passed groomer/tacker training before going through New Leader Training. They must pass a proficiency test prior to serving as a horse leader.

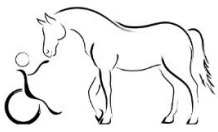
**Barn Leader:** Barn leaders report directly to the session instructors and are responsible for all activities in the barn area including: bringing horses in and out of pens, working with groomers/tackers to get horses groomed and tacked appropriately prior to the next session, checking over tack before the horse is taken to the arena, making sure horses and tack are put away correctly and that the barn is cleaned for the night. Barn leaders are individually selected by HETRA instructors and staff after becoming proficient as a groomer/tacker and horse leader.

**Greeter:** Volunteer greeters meet participants, volunteers, visitors, and prospective participants at the Main Entrance and help direct them where they need to go. They also help with some light administrative work and cleaning duties.

**Barn Maintenance:** Barn maintenance volunteers are at least 12 years old. They assist with barn maintenance duties such as stall cleaning, sweeping, cleaning waterers, and outdoor facility maintenance during weekly scheduled shifts outside of regular HETRA Sessions. These activities are completed under the direct supervision of a HETRA staff member and require a safety orientation.

**Administrative Assistant:** Administrative assistants help with general administrative duties of the organization including filing, typing, newsletters, and mailings.

**Special Events:** Special events volunteers help set up and clean up special events at our HETRA facility as well as other event locations. They may assist during the events and provide support prior to the events with advertising and soliciting auction or raffle items.



# Safety Rules

for All HETRA Staff, Volunteers, Families, And Participants



*The following guidelines have been developed for your safety.*

*Please follow all rules while at this facility.*

*Failure to follow these rules can result in your dismissal from the HETRA facility.*

1. No individuals should enter any space with a loose horse in it, **UNLESS** they have **PASSED** the appropriate training and have been asked to do so by a HETRA staff member or barn leader.
2. **ONLY** the barn leader or certified horse leaders are allowed to get horses from outside pens.
3. Please do not enter any outside pens **UNLESS** you have **PASSED** appropriate training and are asked to do so by a HETRA staff member or barn Leader to complete a specific task in this area. Once this has been completed please return to the proper volunteer areas.
4. Please **DO NOT** pet the horses in any outside pens.
5. Please **DO NOT** reach into or attempt to pet horses through the stall bars.
6. Please **DO NOT** pet the horses on their heads or faces, this is a personal space for them and can make them crabby.
7. Please only use HETRA tack and equipment and always return it to its appropriate place.
8. Only HETRA instructors are allowed to put bridles on the HETRA horses.
9. Please **DO NOT FEED** any horses treats. HETRA horses are on special diets and treats can be detrimental to their health. Treating horses tends to promote biting. Please do not allow horses to lick your hands as this also encourages biting.





10. When approaching a horse, always consider the horse's limited field of vision. Horses cannot see directly behind or in front of them without moving their head. Always approach a horse at the shoulder, speak to them as you approach, and then extend your hand and pat them on the neck or shoulder. When moving around a horse, placing a hand on their hip as you move around them allows them to know where you are.
11. Avoid sudden movements when around the horse. This includes removing coats, raising arms suddenly, running, jumping, climbing, etc. Horses can spook easily, please keep this in mind at all times when around horses.
12. **NEVER** sit, kneel, or lay on the ground near a horse.
13. Please arrive no earlier 30 minutes before your scheduled shift. There must be a HETRA staff member or barn leader on site when volunteers, participants, or guests arrive. For insurance purposes there cannot be visitors at the HETRA facility when there is not a staff member on site.
14. **DO NOT** enter any other buildings on the property unless directed by a HETRA staff member.
15. Please do not bring dogs or any other animals to the barn (If you have a service animal please notify HETRA Staff).
16. The cats are cute and fun, but please remember that they can bite and scratch. Playing with cats is done at your own risk. Please monitor any children during their interaction with the cats. Please **DO NOT FEED** treats to the cats.
17. All children under the age of 12 must be **DIRECTLY** monitored by an adult at all times while on the property.
18. If you are not directly involved with a session, please keep all activities and conversations to the designated waiting areas or check with the barn leader for additional tasks that need to be done. It is important to keep noise and conversation to a minimum when sessions are being conducted as it can be very distracting for the participants and horses.
19. All phones must be turned to silent or vibrate when in the barn and set to silent/no vibrate if in the arena specifically.
20. Always clean up after yourself and any horse you are working with (sweep up any hair, manure, etc.) and throw away any trash.
21. All participants during a HETRA riding session are required to wear approved safety helmets (this includes instructors).
22. The session instructor is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the session from the time the first horse is taken out until the last horse is put away. Please listen and follow all directions given by the session instructor. Please be aware of all

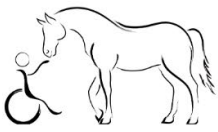


situations around you and report any unsafe situations to the session instructor or barn leader immediately.

### **HETRA Volunteer & Guest Dismissal Policy**

HETRA reserves the right to dismiss a guest or volunteer from the facility and from the program if their behavior is putting themselves, a participant, staff, other volunteers or the horse's mental or physical health in jeopardy, or there is failure to follow HETRA policies. The HETRA instructor/staff member in charge at the time of the incident will review the behavior with the volunteer and determine the level of intervention necessary. The level of intervention could include a verbal or written warning or immediate dismissal from the HETRA facility and program. Physical, emotional, mental or sexual abuse by a person at the HETRA facility will not be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal from the HETRA facility. Any incidents that occur which violate state or federal laws will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Nebraska Equine Liability Law: Under Nebraska Law, an equine professional is not liable for an injury to or the death of a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, pursuant to sections 25-21,249 to 25-21,253.



# Media Policies



## Where to find HETRA:

Facebook	TeamHETRA
Twitter	@HETRA
Instagram	team_HETRA
YouTube	HETRANebraska
LinkedIn	HETRA

## HETRA Volunteer Social Media Policy

Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy (HETRA) embraces social media and relies on our staff and volunteers to increase our online presence and build our brand. It is one of the most powerful platforms we have to share our mission, create positive awareness for our organization, and engage with our community on a daily basis. We highly encourage our staff and volunteers to engage with HETRA's social platforms by liking, commenting, and sharing our posts.

## HETRA Videos and Photography

Due to the sensitive and personal nature of our participants and the services we offer, we must exercise every precaution when engaging with social media platforms. **ONLY DESIGNATED STAFF, (CEO, COO, Equine Operations Manager, Program Manager) MAY APPROVE TAKING AND POSTING ANY PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEO OF A HETRA PARTICIPANT, VOLUNTEER, HETRA FACILITY, HORSE OR EMPLOYEE.** Once approval is given to take a photo, one of the staff members above must approve the final photo for posting on social media or other uses. Approval will be given on a case by case basis.



## **ALWAYS:**

- Help HETRA spread the good word - share, retweet, and regram HETRA posts on your own social platforms.
- Follow the HETRA confidentiality policy
- Refer to HETRA horses in a positive manner and forward inquiries about HETRA horses to a staff member
- Think twice before posting. If you have any doubt, please do not post.

## **NEVER:**

- Claim to be an official representative of HETRA
- Share confidential information about a participant, volunteer, employee or the organization
- Take photographs or video of a HETRA participant, volunteer, horse or employee unless specifically requested to by a designated staff member
- Use language that is profane, harassing, racial, political, religious, or that is considered biased or slurred when posting about HETRA.
- Refer to a HETRA horse or the HETRA barn environment negatively.

## **Violation of Social Media Policy**

If a social media post is discovered that is in violation of this policy, you will be asked by a staff member to remove the post. Failure to remove a post could result in verbal or written warning or immediate dismissal from the HETRA facility and program.

The rules are in place for everyone's safety. Please follow these rules at all times while at the facility. Anyone not following these rules will be asked to leave the facility.



# Volunteer Frequently Asked Questions

## ***1. What type of time commitment do I need to make to HETRA?***

In order to maximize the benefit to the participants for each session, HETRA strives to create a consistent care team for each participant. It is very important to the progress of the participant that this team stay as consistent as possible. Ideally, we ask that you commit to at least one 2-4 hour time slot per week and we encourage you to continue to volunteer on an ongoing basis.

## ***2. What if I can't make a weekly commitment?***

If you are unable to make a weekly commitment, but would still like to volunteer, please indicate so on your New Volunteer Paperwork. We always need substitute volunteers to cover volunteer schedule gaps and regular volunteer cancellations. Substitute volunteers can commit to individual substitute shifts in advance via our online signup or accept substitute requests from the Volunteer Coordinator phone.

## ***3. What if I can't make it to my scheduled volunteer session?***

If you are unable to attend your scheduled volunteer session, please fill out the Volunteer Absence Form located on the HETRA website under the Volunteer Resources tab. This form link is also located in shift reminder emails as well as in our monthly volunteer communications. Please notify us as soon as you know you will be absent! If you need to cancel within 48 hours of your shift, please file a Volunteer Absence Form and call or text the volunteer coordinator phone. The more notice we have for cancellations the more time we have to find a substitute for you.

**As a volunteer, you are essential to HETRA and to our participants. If a volunteer fails to show up for a scheduled time, and has not communicated that they will be absent, a HETRA participant may not be able to ride and will therefore miss out on their valuable session. PLEASE notify us if you are unable to attend your scheduled volunteer time!**



#### **4. *What if HETRA cancels sessions?***

HETRA occasionally cancels sessions due to poor road conditions, extreme cold/heat advisory, or inclement weather. Volunteers will be individually notified via text message in the case of any cancellation, weather-related or otherwise. Please respond to this text as soon as possible! All holiday cancellations will be posted on the HETRA website calendar, as well as emailed to all volunteers.

#### **5. *What should I wear to the barn?***

Keep in mind that you will be around horses and walking/jogging in deep sand so please wear comfortable shoes. Footwear must be solid-surface, with a closed-toe and heel. Examples of appropriate footwear are tennis shoes, hiking boots, boots with flat heels. Examples of inappropriate footwear are crocs, sandals, wedged boots, high heels, clogs, etc.

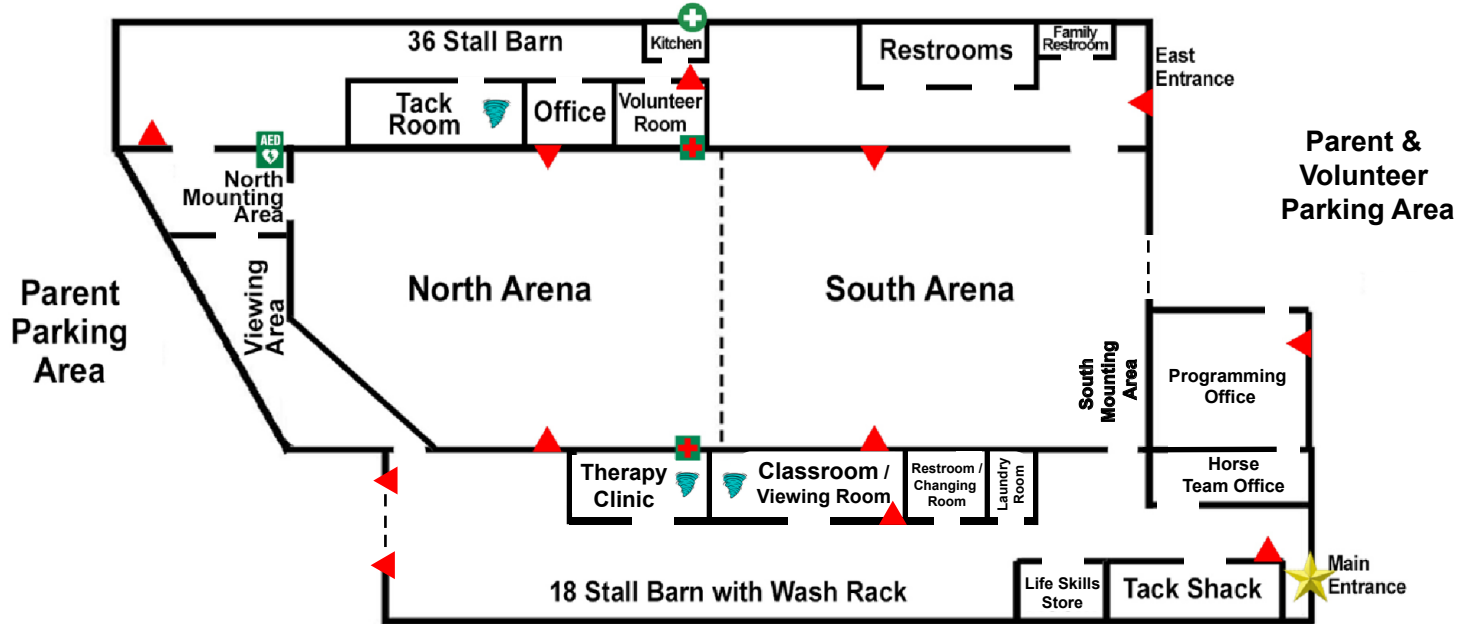
Please avoid dangling jewelry, such long earrings and bracelets, etc. Please avoid wearing loose clothing that could get caught on a participant or saddle, or clothing that would make a lot of noise such as a wind breaker. Please avoid excessive perfume or cologne

Please dress in a manner that is appropriate to a family-oriented public place and demonstrates a good image for HETRA. If you have any questions about something you intend to wear, please ask and we are happy to clarify for you.

# Future Parking Lot

## Robert A. Falk Farm - Home of HETRA

Machine Shed

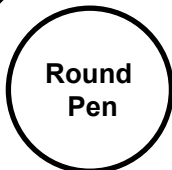
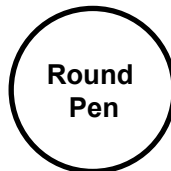
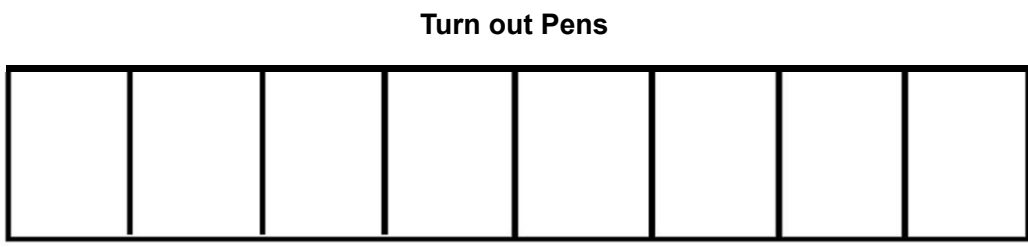
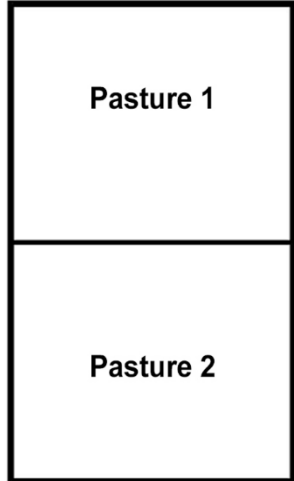


House & Administrative Offices

Parent & Volunteer Parking Area

Parent Parking Area

Hay & Equipment Building



-  - AED Unit
-  - Tornado Shelter
-  - Fire Extinguisher
-  - First Aid Kit
-  - Horse First Aid Kit

Hay Fields



# When You Arrive At The Barn

**Parking:** When you arrive at the barn, please leave the concrete parking area in front of the building for our participants. Volunteers may park anywhere along the posts/chain parking areas, and if necessary, along the east side of the barn, on the gravel at the base of the hill. Please not block any of the entrances.

**Barn Entry:** Please enter through the Main Entrance on the west side of the barn, through the walk-in door, and pick up your name tag. Proceed to the east side of the barn to the schedule board, watching for horse traffic that may be heading to the arenas or into stalls. Horses and participants have the right of way.

## **Before The First Participant Session Of The Day:**

- Find your name tag in the correct drawer near the check-in table.
- Assist with general cleaning as directed by the barn leader and/or session instructors.
- Pick out the arena, if needed, and assist with putting the arena divider up.
- Set up the arena as directed by the session instructors.
- Barn leader and horse leaders bring in all horses needed for the session.
- Barn leader, instructors, and appropriate horse leaders lunge horses.
- Horse leaders, groomers and tackers groom horses.
- Barn leaders, horse leaders, and tackers have horses tacked 15 minutes before each session.
- Horse Leaders take horses to the arena for warm-ups 15 minutes prior to each session.





## **During and Between Participant Sessions:**

- Assist with setting out tack for upcoming sessions, as directed by the barn leader.
- Assist with tacking horses in time for the next session. (if you are a trained tacker)
- Keep the arena free of any manure during sessions.
- Clean tack and toys, as directed by instructors and barn leader. (if time allows)
- Pick out stalls as needed. (only trained volunteers and only if there is no horse in the stall)
- Sweep only as directed by barn leader or session instructors.
- Be available to assist instructors as needed.

## **After Last Participant Session:**

- Pick up all toys and equipment and put in proper places.
- Take down the arena divider.
- Make sure all tack has been returned to its correct place.
- Be sure all grooming supplies are back in the correct place.
- Final sweep of the barn, as directed by barn leader or instructors.
- Take out trash and neaten Volunteer Room as needed.
- Barn leader, instructors, and horse leaders – make sure all horses are returned to their stalls/pens.
- Ask barn leader or instructors what else needs to be done.
- Check in with barn leader before leaving.



# What to Expect During Sessions

## **Mounting:**

The horse leader will lead the horse up to the mounting block when the instructor indicates they are ready. Sidewalkers are responsible for assisting the instructor in the mounting process. The right hand sidewalker (opposite side of the horse leader) will help during the mount by assisting the participant's leg over the hind end of the horse, ensuring it does not make contact with the horse, and placing the participant's foot in the stirrup (as directed by the instructor). The instructor will always be the one to mount and dismount the participant, and provide guidance as to the assistance they need. The left hand sidewalker (located behind the horse leader) will take over for the instructor after the mount has been completed. Note: This may vary as directed by the instructor.

## **The Session:**

Once the mount is completed, the horse leader will lead the horse away from the mounting block and wait for directions from the instructor. The horse leader needs to remain focused on leading the horse at the proper pace, maintaining correct spacing from other horses, and listening for instructions from the instructor. Instructor assistants will assist in the arena for many of the games and activities that the participants engage in.

**\*\*Sidewalkers are often asked and encouraged to interact with the participant during games and activities. Please speak one at a time so as not to overwhelm the participant. Please remember that the instructor is the one who should be instructing the participant and that you are providing assistance to the participant as directed. Both sidewalkers are responsible for assisting the participant with balance and follow-through on exercises. It is very important that participants are allowed to do as much for themselves as possible, so please only assist them when asked to do so by the instructor.**



**\*\*As a Sidewalker, you have an up-close view of the participant throughout the riding session. Please notify the instructor regarding any horse tack issues, or health/behavioral problems the participant may experience. Sidewalkers must be capable of walking and jogging with one or both arms at or above shoulder level to assist with support of the participant. Sidewalkers should be capable of keeping up with the speed of the horse and walking and jogging in sand. If, at any time, you do not feel comfortable doing this, please notify an instructor.**

### **Dismounting:**

The horse leader will listen to instructions from the instructor as to where to go for the dismount. This may be at a mounting block or at a designated spot in the arena. If dismounting at a mounting block, typically the left hand sidewalker (behind the horse leader) will drop off when the instructor takes over and the right hand sidewalker will assist with the dismount by removing the participant's foot from the stirrup and assisting the participant's leg over the hind end of the horse, again ensuring it successfully clears the horse without touching it. Note: This may vary as directed by the Instructor.

### **Emergency Dismount:**

Though rare, emergencies can happen when dealing with horses and participants. In an emergency situation it is most important for everyone to stay calm and follow the guidance of the session instructor. Any yelling or sudden movements can make the situation worse. The right hand sidewalker will remove the participant's right foot from the stirrup as directed, and the instructor will remove the participant's left foot from the stirrup and assist the participant to the ground. If an emergency dismount is necessary, the left hand sidewalker will complete an emergency dismount only if the instructor cannot get to the participant in time.

### **Emergency Situations:**

If there is another type of emergency, such as fire or tornado warning, the instructor will refer to HETRA's emergency action plan and direct volunteers as necessary. Fire extinguishers are in marked locations in the arena and in both barn aisles. Tornado shelter rooms are in the barn (tack room and classroom) and in the main HETRA office. The AED is in a marked location near the north mounting block. First aid kits are located in the volunteer room (human kit) and in the horse kitchen (horse kit).



# When You Meet a HETRA Participant

A person with disabilities wants to be treated like everyone else. Each person has his or her own learning rate, style of learning, unique personality, and temperament. HETRA strives to provide an enriched experience and a favorable environment in which our participants can learn and grow. As a HETRA volunteer, you are an essential part of their care team!

HETRA serves a variety of participants including children and adults with a variety of developmental and physical disabilities. Here is how you can help make their time with HETRA a wonderful experience!

- Be yourself when you meet a person with a disability. Talk about the same things you would with anyone else; i.e. work, school, special interests, hobbies, etc.
- Help the participant **ONLY** when they request it or the Instructor asks you to. It is important that they are as independent as possible for their confidence level as well as to receive the most out of their therapy time.
- Be patient. Let the participant set his or her own pace of walking, talking, etc.
- Don't be afraid to **LAUGH WITH THE PARTICIPANT!** Please enjoy your time at HETRA!
- Don't stare when you see a person with a disability. They deserve the same respect as any person should receive.
- Don't make judgments before getting to know them. You may be surprised!
- **ENJOY** yourself and your friendship with the participants. Their philosophies and good humor may give you inspiration!
- If you are uncomfortable working with someone with disabilities or a particular participant you may want to assist in other areas that do not have direct contact with the participant. Always feel free to voice any concerns to the instructors or volunteer coordinator team.



HETRA participants benefit from adaptive riding, carriage driving, or therapy services (hippotherapy) in a variety of ways. The rhythmic motion of the horse at the walk helps to relax tight, spastic muscles. Sitting on the horse encourages participants to hold themselves up straight and tall which strengthens neck and trunk muscles. Riding stretches hip and thigh muscles and improves balance. Interaction with the Instructor helps participants follow directions, extend their attention span, and work on concepts such as steering right and left.

Interaction with the horse allows the participant to develop a bond with the animal which improves self-esteem and builds confidence. Most participants ride for approximately 30 minutes one time per week. Many participants are assisted by a horse Leader and one or two sidewalkers throughout their session, as well as their instructor or Occupational or Physical Therapist. The instructors and therapists monitor the progress of each participant throughout their participation in the program. They also assist the participant or participant's family/caregiver with setting goals that they work on achieving during their time at the barn.



# Volunteer Appreciation



Every hour you donate makes a difference in the life of a very special HETRA participant. These are some of the ways we can show you how much we appreciate you!

## **Purchasing HETRA Gear**

HETRA opens their online apparel store several times a year. HETRA-themed apparel may include a variety of T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, totes, etc. Volunteers may purchase items or apply up to 100 hours a year towards purchases. 1 volunteer hour = \$1.00 towards purchase price

## **Volunteer Appreciation Awards**

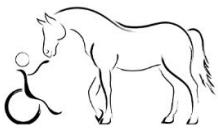
Once a year, HETRA presents Volunteer Awards. This is an opportunity for us to thank our volunteers for their commitment and dedication and to recognize volunteer accomplishments.

## **Volunteer BBQ**

Once a year, HETRA hosts an on-site BBQ for volunteers and their families. Join us for some great food and old-fashioned fun hanging out with your HETRA friends. A few “lucky” staff members will take a pie in the face – you don’t want to miss it!

## **Tack Shack**

Active HETRA volunteers receive 10% off all Tack Shack purchases.



# Other Ways to Help



**Here are a few other ways to help HETRA!!**

## **HETRA and the United Way**

HETRA is considered a qualified nonaffiliated agency with United Way. To designate your contribution you will need to list us on your donation form under Section C. Please include HETRA's name and address below:

Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy  
10130 S. 222nd St  
Gretna NE 68028  
402-359-8830

## **Employer Giving**

Employers often offer grant programs to organizations with whom their employees volunteer their time. Some employers also offer matching donation programs in which they match employee donations. Additionally, some employers offer volunteer hour match programs. Through these programs employers will often donate on your behalf once a set number of volunteer hours have been completed. Lastly, many companies host "casual" or "jeans days" to benefit a nominated organization. If you become aware of programs such as these with your employer and would like for HETRA to become the beneficiary, please contact Kalynn Sortino at [kalynns@hetra.org](mailto:kalynns@hetra.org) or 402.359.8830.



## **Purchasing HETRA Gear**

HETRA offers several HETRA-themed apparel items through their online store, which is open multiple times a year. These items could include a variety of T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, etc., depending on the time of year.

## **Friends of HETRA Monthly Giving Program**

By becoming a Friend of HETRA you are helping to build a sustaining community of individuals willing and able to support HETRA's Programming. Whether you choose to donate to one of our specialized programs, or to support the HETRA Herd, your donation goes a long way towards keeping HETRA affordable to all of our beloved participants. All Friends of HETRA Members are listed on our website, receive quarterly newsletters, as well as a pin designating you as a Friend of HETRA donor for the year. To learn more contact Kalynn at [kalynns@hetra.org](mailto:kalynns@hetra.org) or 402-359-8830.

## **Annual Campaigns**

HETRA has three major fundraising campaigns throughout the year. These campaigns are Blue Jeans and Dreams (BJD), Horse of the Year (HOTY), and Drive to Ride (D2R). Get involved by volunteering your time to any one of the in-person events associated with each campaign, or donating funds by becoming a sponsor or purchasing a ticket to attend! You can even donate an auction item or a basket to our Signature Benefit, Blue Jeans and Dreams. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Kalynn at [kalynns@hetra.org](mailto:kalynns@hetra.org) or 402.359.8830.

## **TAGG**

There are hundreds of businesses around the Omaha and Lincoln area, of all industries, that will donate a portion of your purchase to HETRA through the TAGG app. You can find the app and a current list of all participation businesses easily by going to <https://togetheragreatergood.com/>

**Additional information about any of these programs and many more ways to help, can be found on the HETRA website ([www.hetra.org](http://www.hetra.org)) under "Donate"!**