



March 2016

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State of the Organization: Recap of 2015 looking forward in 2016

By TRI's Executive Director, Marleen Milkis

What an awesome year TRI experienced in 2015!! We are very grateful and excited as we look to the year ahead after finishing our third year of growth and community support. The 2015 addition of Michele Green in a full time capacity as Program Director allowed her to pick up where Cindy Redolfi left off and implement new invoicing, new programming, and continue meeting with 19 potential daytime partners. South Community Inc. started in the fall bringing 6 students one day a week in the afternoon.

In addition, donors and grant funders provided such an outpouring of community support that along with our FriendRaiser and Triple Crown Events allowed TRI to end the year at an all-time high. TRI enters 2016 knowing we are headed in the right direction with steady growth for our students and families.

Our future is bright as the board of directors and staff look at the feasibility for TRI to own our own facility by the year 2020. This year brings the realization that we are outgrowing our current facility arrangement. We never dreamed we would max out our evening classes after just 3 years at FineLine, but we have. Daytime programming has begun and has great potential as our avenue of growth for this year, but our small arena limits us from further growth. This year, TRI welcomes Sam Lape from Cincinnati Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship as a full time volunteer coordinator, equine manager and instructor. With over 300 volunteers we are happy to have someone with such tremendous qualifications who can devote her time to engaging our volunteers completely as they are the backbone and life blood of TRI.

These are exciting times for TRI as we serve more students than ever before and provide opportunities within our programming to meet varied needs. Miracles continue to happen within the arena every day. We witness goals

being attained and smiles and family tears as our students ride and overcome individual obstacles. ***That is why we are here***, "to improve the lives and health of children and adults in Southwest Ohio with special physical, cognitive, social, and psychological needs through Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAA/T)"

I am humbled to be a part of such an outstanding group of people who come together as volunteers, donors, staff and families to create TRI programming for our students.

With gratitude,

Marleen Milkis, Executive Director

A Program Update

By TRI's Program Director, Michele Green

Welcome to 2016 lessons! Session I is underway and we are thrilled to have 33 riders participating in our regular classes this session, as well as an additional 6 participating through our partnership with South Community, Inc. With a dynamic team of 6 PATH Intl Certified Instructors and 5 talented horses, we are happy to have lessons back in session!

What's New in 2016?

This year, we have made the transition from 6 week sessions to **8 week sessions**. Our motivation for making this switch was twofold: a parent survey indicating the preference for longer sessions and the knowledge that repetition is critical to learning and retention. Giving riders 2 extra weeks per session should provide the opportunity to retain more of the skills learned each session, as well as solidifying those skills and allowing more new skills to be introduced.

We have also changed the documentation we are using to track student progress from an anecdotal tool to a **quantitative student evaluation**. This new form will allow us to better track student progress, assist instructors in tailoring lessons to student's individual goals, and enable TRI to continue forging ahead at the forefront of the EAA/T industry. As Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies become better known, it has become increasingly important for us to provide quantitative data documenting goal achievement.

As TRI continues to develop our program resources and enhance our current programs, our primary goal in 2016 is to build the foundation for offering mental health services. We are actively pursuing PATH Intl certification for our staff, as well as partnerships with organizations which can provide licensed therapists who would engage in collaborative mental health programming at TRI. Our goal is to have at least 2 Instructors certified through PATH Intl to offer **mental health programming** by 2017, at which time, we will seek additional PATH Intl accreditation for Equine Facilitated Mental Health and Learning. This certification and training will enable us to better serve our Youth-At-Risk and Veterans programs and open doors for innovative community partnerships with an emphasis on daytime programming.

We're preparing for future program growth by **increasing our equine staff from 6-8 horses!** Our goal is to have 8 trained horses on our roster by the end of Session I, and for each of those horses to fill a specific niche within our program. The size, shape and way a horse moves all have a huge impact on the rider's experience, so having a wide variety of horses allows us to better fit horses to riders to help those riders achieve their goals. Having 8 horses available will allow us to increase the number of students we can serve (according to PATH horse use standards) by 33% each day.

Of course, additional programming could not be possible without a dedicated volunteer corps. Christine has worked diligently to build our volunteer base from 125 to 325 in anticipation of our growth and these volunteers have been integral in our ability to serve more students. With these highly valued individuals in mind, **TRI has hired our 4th full time employee** – Sam Lape to take over TRI’s volunteer management. She comes to us from another PATH Intl Premier Facility and is a welcome addition to the TRI team.

The Program Team is looking forward to focusing on the growth and enhancement of our three core programs: Therapeutic Riding, Horses Assisting Heroes and Horses Assisting Youth by building the staff, equines and expertise needed to bring TRI to a new era at our own permanent facility!

2016 promises to be a big year for TRI – thank you for being part of it!

With gratitude,

Michele Green, Program Director

New Horses at TRI!

We currently have three new equine friends in the barn. One, Zoe, is already working in classes, and is doing a superb job. Two others, Faith and Penny, are still in the training program, and make occasional forays into classes to experience lessons without students on board. We are very excited to have all three of these mares in the barn, and hope they stay with us for a very long time!



Zoe

Zoe comes to us from the Coldiron family. We are extremely fortunate in that not only have they allowed us to lease a wonderful horse, Ellie has chosen to become a volunteer (welcome, Ellie!). Zoe is an American Paint Horse – but she forgot to put the paint on her body! She is a lovely chestnut color with a large white blaze on her face. At 12 years old, she is just entering the prime of her life, and we hope she chooses to spend many years with us. Zoe is extremely affectionate, and loves to be cuddled and eat cookies. She usually turns her head to greet each side helper and her rider at the mounting block. While she is very petite, she can out-walk all of the other horses in the arena.



Penny



Faith

Faith and Penny both come from the Rawlings family. Faith is a beautiful chestnut and white pinto Tennessee Walker/Quarter Horse cross. She is extremely friendly, and usually pokes her nose out of her stall to encourage all who walk by to stop and visit for a while. Penny is a chestnut Quarter Horse/Draft cross, and while she is not particularly tall, she is certainly big boned. A bit more shy than Faith, Penny likes to allow people to introduce themselves to her quietly. These mares have been together for ten years, and are very strongly bonded. They are slowly getting used to the games we play, as well as being worked separately. Both are gentle, generous souls, and we hope they continue to progress in their training and can be part of the TRI family for years to come.

The TRI Family is Growing: Meet, Sam Lape, TRI's Newest Employee!

Marleen, Michele and Christine are excited to welcome Sam Lape onto the TRI team as our Volunteer and Equine Coordinator! In addition to coordinating TRI volunteers and care of our equines, she is also a PATH Intl Certified Instructor.

Sam has an extensive background in horses beginning at the young age of 6. Since that time, she has continued with hunt seat riding lessons and participated in local shows. In 2008, Sam was introduced to fellow PATH Intl Premier Accredited Center, Cincinnati Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship (CTRH) and began volunteering as a side walker and horse leader. In 2010, she was hired on as barn staff.



Sam went on to complete her college degree at the University of Kentucky studying Equine Science and Management and participated on their Hunt seat Equestrian Team. She graduated in 2015 with a BA in Equine Science and Management and returned to CTRH as their Barn Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, soon after earning her Instructor Certification. She is now working towards the Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning certification offered through PATH.

Welcome, Sam!

An Ode to TRI Volunteers in Honor of the 2015 Volunteer of the Year, Dave Ball

By TRI's Director of Development & Volunteer Management, Christine Piro

We can't operate without our volunteers – literally, our students wouldn't stay on. As an Instructor, I can attest that we appreciate the full commitment of our volunteers: we see it all (much more than just their not realizing their student has gone 3 circles without their right shoe on ;).

We see their student reach for their hand for the first time. We see the parent talk to them with tears in their eyes. We see their concern when their student has a hard day. We see their dedication when they arrive at the barn on time even after getting a speeding ticket trying to get there. We see their passion in the photos – those unstaged photos at horse shows where the volunteer's smile beams even larger than your student's. We see it all.

At the end of the year, we're tasked with awarding 1 of our 300 volunteers with the coveted title of Volunteer of the Year. This person: has volunteered hours both in and outside the arena far exceeding the norm, is visible at the barn, but also contributes to TRI events, is actively committed to advancing the TRI mission and goes above and beyond to see it thrive.

Deciding on the Awardee is hard!

TRI volunteers served over 5,000 hours in 2015. 7 of them did over 100 hours each! We always get a lot of nominations and this year was no different. With a number of deserving volunteers, we settled on one unanimously.

This individual:

- Is the first to sign up
- The first to show up
- The last to leave and
- The last to give up

His dedication is unwavering and for that we are exceedingly grateful.



Congratulations, Dave Ball – TRI's 2015 Volunteer of the Year

Congrats and THANK YOU – GE Aviation – TRI’s 2015 Corporate Volunteer of the Year

GE has been supporting TRI with at least 4 corporate volunteer groups each year since 2013 and in 2016, expanded their efforts to fundraise on our behalf! Thank you, GE!



The Student Pledge Drive Kicks Off

**All TRI Students are invited to participate in our
2016 Pledge Drive
March 12 – April 23**

The Top 3 Pledge Earners will:

- Be invited to jockey TRI horses for the 2016 Triple Crown
- Be awarded special trophies
- Win special prizes
- **Be awarded a 2017 TRI Scholarship** from the Buddy Triple Crown Memorial Scholarship Fund to cover one 8 week session the year they jockey.

*Pledge Forms can be downloaded at www.TRIOhio.org/ride-a-thon/
All pledges must be turned in by April 23rd to count.*

The Ride-A-Thon – April 23, 2016

Sponsored by Dayton Town & Country

All TRI Students with current physician forms on file are invited to compete in the Ride-A-Thon. Registration forms can be downloaded online at www.TRIOhio.org/ride-a-thon .



The Ride-a-Thon consists of an equitation class and an obstacle challenge.

Registration Fee is \$40. All riders have the opportunity to cover the registration fee by collecting pledges. Registration closes April 8th.

Upcoming Events

March 12 – May 14 – Session I

April 1 – June 3 – TRI's Triple Crown Campaign

Sponsored by Marty & Deb Neal

April 19 – Movie Night for TRI

Seabiscuit at the Plaza Theater - Purchase your tickets [here](#)

Sponsored by Dave Fischer & Robin McCall Fischer

April 23 – Ride-A-Thon – Jockey Showcase at Noon

Sponsored by Dayton Town & Country

May 14 – Bowling for TRI

At Poelking Lanes South (Dayton Mall) 5-7pm

May 24 – Side Helper Training (5:45-8pm)

June 3 – Austin Landing First Friday Event Benefiting TRI

Sponsored by Austin Landing

June 4 – August 5 – Session II

TRI's Bootlegger's Ball

Save the Date: August 13, 2016

Break out your boots for the THERAPEUTIC RIDING INSTITUTE

10th Annual Fundraiser
BOOTLEGGERS BALL

Saturday AUGUST	13	Canopy Creek Farm 600 Benner Road, Miamisburg, OH	6-10 P.M.
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LIVE MUSIC, DANCING, CARD GAMES, AUCTIONS & MUCH, MUCH MORE!

Tickets \$75 or purchase a VIP Table of 10 for \$1,000
VIP TABLES INCLUDE PRIORITY SEATING, SPECIAL RECOGNITION & MORE!
Reserve your spot today by contacting Christine at Development@TRIohio.org or (864) 650-4967

SAVE THE DATE

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MORE INFO AT WWW.TRIOHIO.ORG