

THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Purpose: To facilitate service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develop emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.

THE ALBERT
SCHWEITZER
FELLOWSHIP®
*Addressing Health Disparities
by Developing Leaders in Service*

Riding to New Heights

Improving Outcomes in Therapeutic Horseback Riding at Dreams on Horseback

Background

- Most childhood physical disabilities are lifelong disabilities
- Maintaining physical fitness can be a challenge in this population
- Engagement in clinical therapies, such as Physical, Occupational, and Speech therapy can also be a challenge for pediatric patients
- Therapeutic horseback riding is a recreational activity that has the potential to serve as an adjunct to clinical therapies.



Project

I implemented volunteer and instructor training at a therapeutic horseback riding facility in order to increase volunteer and instructor knowledge of various developmental and physical disabilities.

Goal: To improve volunteer-rider and instructor-rider interactions and overall rider experience.

Objectives:

1. Increase staff and volunteer understanding of riders' physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges in daily life.
2. Help volunteers and staff build a toolkit of activities to engage and challenge riders physically and cognitively.
3. Advise Dreams on Horseback on equipment and facility updates to better serve riders with physical challenges.
4. Develop the framework for a hippotherapy program at Dreams on Horseback

Impact

- I created 10 instructional videos shared on YouTube to improve volunteer interactions with riders.
- We were able to send these videos out weekly to ~200 volunteers. Figure 1 displays the percentage of volunteers who opened the email and viewed the YouTube video.
- Dreams on Horseback will launch a Hippotherapy Program in Fall 2020.

"I thought the videos really took us to the next level on professionalism... My favorite part was that they truly explained to every member of the team what the goal was."
-Nancy Bullock, Dreams on Horseback Barn Manager

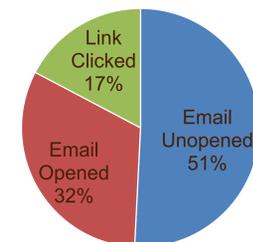


Figure 1. Instructional Video Views by Volunteers



"These video reminders gave me a specific skill to focus on with my riders each week, and I appreciated that they fostered a common spirit of learning and excellence among volunteers." – **Ashley Logsdon, Volunteer**

Partners

Dreams on Horseback is a Premier Therapeutic Equine Facility accredited by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International. Dreams on Horseback offers therapeutic horseback riding and a variety of horse-partnered learning experiences to individuals with physical and developmental disabilities and veterans.



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**Julia
Mazzarella**

Health and Rehabilitation Science PhD, Class of 2022



2019-2020 Albert Schweitzer Fellow

"Start early to instill in your students awareness that they are on this earth to help and serve others; that is as important to pass on to them as knowledge."

—Albert Schweitzer, PhD, MD