

Several Volunteers' Stories On Dream Riders Place In Their Lives.

"Dream Riders accommodates two passions that I have in life, the love of horses and the love for helping people. I have been involved in this program since 1998 and every experience is challenging in many different ways. I have met many new friends and hope to make more. This program has helped many people in their lives including myself. It is as much therapeutic for the volunteers as it is for the riders. I had to stop this program for a couple of years due to life's little hurdles. I felt something was missing in my life at the time. Being back at Dream Riders, I now know what was missing.

Thanks to the Dyers for this wonderful program and making dreams come true. Below is my story as it happened to me.

There was a little girl (about 3 yrs old) that came to the program about a year after I started. Lenise could not walk at the time. Her goal was to be able to walk. We worked with her every week to strengthen her muscles to accomplish this goal. One day, she and her mother pulled up and I went to help her out of the car. Her mother made me stop and wait about 100 yards from the car. Lenise got out of the car with all smiles as usual and proceeded to walk towards me. So many emotions came over me at the time. It was the greatest feeling in the world. Later that year her family moved and she was not able to continue with the program. Last year, I was at the market with a friend and a lady came up to me and asked if I volunteered at Dream Riders. Over nine years had passed and I met up with this precious young lady again in life. She was as tall as me with the same beautiful smile. The same feelings came back to me as though I was seeing her walk for the first time again. It was amazing." **Patrice**

"The thing that keeps me coming back to volunteer is the children's laughter and smiles. I love to see the happy connection that takes place between the horses and the riders. And, the 3 girls (Kasey, Marlo and Sophia) at the Thursday lesson are just amazing at what they have accomplished with their riding skills. Last, but not least, I love to work with Corky and Jennifer who are incredible with working with the children and providing such incredible role models for us." **Nancy Bischofberger**

"I can't tell you how much the experience of working with you has meant to me. It has been completely different in perspective needs and focus from anything I have done before. I am so lucky to be a part of your team!" **Dr. Keelin Redman, Avoca Equine, LLC, veterinary & chiropractic services.**

"I am fortunate to have grown up with horses in my backyard, was on my college equestrian team, and have a mom who loved doing hunter paces with me (some of my favorite family time memories). After graduating college and moving out of state my ability to ride transitioned to helping others ride. I started volunteering at different NARHA centers when I live in CT and was working as a marine mammal trainer. Through the years as my career took me to different states I always looked up the nearest NARHA center to start volunteering so now I have been doing this for 15 years. I was thrilled when I moved to SC eight years ago. However, Dream Riders is not like all the rest I had spent time with. The family of Dream Riders has also become like another family to me. Now that I've started my own program to help people with disabilities I am often asked why I struggle to make it out to Dream Riders with so many other demands. The truth, part of me is selfish. It's my therapy too! To see young kids and special adults who I've now know for 5 or more years start as terrified riders to confident young adults is transforming for my soul. To be even the smallest part of it is an absolute gift! Some riders are there for one season and I may never know again, but they have a lasting impact on my heart. Others I take joy in seeing year after year. And on days when I think life is too much to handle I go to the farm and realize how much inspiration can be found in a small pair of boots and an older horse!

Thanks for letting me be a part of it!" **Jen**

