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Volunteer Spotlight: Kyla Townsend



Kyla leading Tina

Kyla became a Cheff Center volunteer in 2019, when she moved back to her hometown of Paw Paw after attending college in Colorado. She was looking for some new opportunities. About that time, an acquaintance, who was familiar with Cheff from a student service learning experience, suggested Kyla check it out and consider volunteering – which she did!

Kyla grew up on a small dairy farm, where in addition to cows, her family has always had a pony or a horse. She’s had an ongoing interest in being

involved with people with special needs. With this background, Cheff was a good match from the start. In fact, Kyla recalls, while attending her Cheff orientation session last year, she texted a friend: “I’m in heaven!”

Kyla has logged many volunteer hours and sometimes been at Cheff several days a week. She’s worked with a variety of classes, including the Kambly riders group, Silver Saddles (senior clients), and Read & Ride, plus volunteered at Louie’s Annual Gumbo Cookoff, which benefits Cheff. She also serves on the New Volunteer Orientation Team and was part of some of the other special volunteer teams before they were temporarily put on hold due to COVID-19.

Zippy was one of Kyla’s favorite horses at Cheff. Typically, she loves tall horses. But Zippy, a medium-sized Appaloosa, caught her attention. He has since retired from his therapy horse job, after developing numerous fans among clients and volunteers. “A very sweet boy,” says Kyla.

Some of Kyla’s other interests include trying out new restaurants and going to concerts – especially when the virus is not a factor – and hanging out with family and friends. She’s recently moved to Grand Rapids for work and more school, so her schedule is pretty busy, but she plans to continue helping with new volunteer orientations and other Cheff activities as time permits.

What has meant the most to Kyla about volunteering at Cheff? Talk to her about this for just a few

minutes and it's clear she has a big spot in her heart and thoughts for the clients. "You realize we have more in common with our clients than you might expect," she says, "and you learn more from them than vice versa."

She loves getting to watch a client gain strength and skills, whether emotionally, cognitively or physically. "You get to share in their accomplishments and the joy that comes with it," Kyla says. "I am very thankful for Cheff and will always appreciate it."

Thank you, Kyla, for your dedication to the Cheff Center and all your support for clients, horses and fellow volunteers. Please come on back whenever you can!



November Fun Fact

When horses look like they're laughing, they're actually engaging in a special nose-enhancing technique known as "flehmen," to determine whether a smell is good or bad.



November Birthdays



Coleton B
Joanne C
Jackie D
Cesar D
Wendi F
Corbin F
Lauren G
Michaela K
Ann L
Shane L
Rachael T
Jayden W
Dale W



Horse of the Month: TESS



WAIT... Tess JUMPS?

Tess is a pretty cut and dry type of horse, and not much upsets her...EXCEPT maybe the sound of duct tape being pulled off the arena wall!

Tess also stands out with her 'crinkle' ear, we are unsure what happened to cause it but it's definitely a distinguishing feature!

BIG is beautiful! And Cheff's 16 year old Clydesdale mare, Tess (a.k.a. Tessabelle) is **BIG!** At 16.1 hands and 1750 lbs., Tess is currently our only purebred draft horse in the barn and weighs the most by far!

Tess was purchased by Cheff in late March of 2017 to fill the need for big-boned horses. Tess came from a family who had only owned her for about a year and a half. They weren't able to devote any time to her and she was all alone so they wanted to find her a new home ASAP. Tess had been ridden under saddle, jumped a little and even did some light pulling/driving.



Tess loves all kinds of treats like carrots and apples, but if given a choice, it's granola bars, please.

Poor Tessabelle really struggles with skin and fly issues in the summer. To help her stay comfortable, she's wishing for Immune Support supplements as well as Antimicrobial Shampoo. As you can see, she also loves to be bathed and pampered!



Tess, post spa treatment

November Dates to Remember

- *Nov 2-6 - Cheff on break between sessions*
- *Nov 4-7 - Instructor workshop/certification*
- *Nov 9 through Dec 18 - Session 8*
- *Nov 23-27 - Cheff on break for Thanksgiving*

Happy Thanksgiving!



Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Many of us have witnessed an “unruly” child in the supermarket or restaurant—a child who is constantly having to be redirected by their parent or caretaker, or who is being yelled at in frustration to “stop it!” Is the child behaving badly intentionally or to manipulate the adult, or is it something else?

Often it might be what used to be known as ADD—Attention Deficit Disorder. Over the years, the diagnosis of ADD has changed to ADHD. Although not all people with ADHD have the Hyperactivity component, ADD was not truly a diagnosis, it was a type of ADHD.

ADHD is a condition marked by a pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that interferes with functioning or development.

The 3 main components of ADHD are:

Inattention--not being able to stay on task or focused, being disorganized, and lacking persistence. (This is not due to defiance or lack of comprehension). Overlooking or missing details in work or other activities, failure to follow through on instructions, losing things for necessary tasks, being easily distracted by unrelated thoughts or stimuli, and being forgetful.

Hyperactivity—needing to move about constantly even when not appropriate, excessively fidgeting, tapping or talking. Inability to play quietly, having trouble waiting for their turn.

Impulsivity—making hasty decisions and actions that may result in harm without first thinking about them.

Having a desire for immediate gratification and being unable to delay gratification. Impulsive people may be socially intrusive and excessively interrupt others, and they may make important decisions without considering the long-term consequences.

(The listings above are not comprehensive, but rather are examples of symptoms people with ADHD may experience).

Researchers are not exactly sure what causes ADHD, but there are several risk factors they have noted:

1. Genetics—Many children who are diagnosed with ADHD have one parent who also has it
2. Cigarette smoking, alcohol and/or drug use during pregnancy
3. Exposure to environmental toxins during pregnancy
4. Exposure to environmental toxins, such as lead, at a young age
5. Low birth weight
6. Brain injuries

Boys are 3 times more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than girls. Because their symptoms are manifested differently it is believed now that many girls who have ADHD may have not been diagnosed. For instance, a boy who is hyperactive and struggles with self-control, blurts things out in class, or shoves the child next to him is harder for a teacher to ignore than a girl who may just be “squirmy”, “overly chatty”, or “immature”. Girls are diagnosed with ADHD an average of 5 years later than boys, and it is believed that 75% of girls with ADHD are never diagnosed.

Many **children with ADHD** also suffer from at least one other condition. Approximately 52% of the children with ADHD have behavioral problems. Roughly the same percentage may have a learning disorder of some type. Approximately 30% have issues with anxiety, and 14% have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Depression affects about 17% of children with ADHD. Also, children with ADHD are 12 times more likely to have Loss of Control Eating Syndrome (LOC-ES), an eating disorder similar to binge eating in adults.

Teens with ADHD are more likely to be in traffic accidents and engage in risky driving behaviors. They tend to clash with their parents more often than those without ADHD, and may end up abusing substances. Teen boys are more likely to experience problems with school attendance, GPA, homework, and failing classes. Teenage girls, although they tend to fare better in school than boys, are more likely to suffer with social difficulties and have a poor self-concept.

Adults with ADHD are more likely to face difficulty gaining and maintaining employment, especially if they did not receive treatment in childhood. They are more likely to experience difficulties in relationships of all types, and may experience anxiety, mood disorders, addiction, impaired driving safety, and premature death from accidents.

How is ADHD treated?

Although there is no cure for ADHD, there are treatments that help to reduce symptoms and improve functioning. Medications, psychotherapy, education and/or training, or a combination of these is often effective in the treatment of ADHD.

Medications can reduce hyperactivity and impulsivity and improve the ability to focus, work and learn. Medications can vary, and doctors may often try several different medications and dosages to find the one that works for each individual client. Medications typically fall into two categories:

Stimulants may seem counter productive—giving someone a stimulant who experiences hyperactivity to help them focus? Stimulants work by increasing the brain chemicals dopamine and norepinephrine, which play essential roles in thinking and attention. There can be side effects to these medications, so they need to be carefully monitored by a physician.

Non-stimulants are given to those who may not tolerate stimulants well or may be used in combination with a stimulant. Antidepressants may help with the symptoms of ADHD as well as other conditions such as anxiety disorders, depression, or other mood disorders.

Different types of therapies may be implemented to help the patient manage their symptoms and improve daily functioning. Types of therapies that may help ADHD patients are:

1. Psychotherapy
2. Behavioral therapy
3. Cognitive behavioral therapy
4. Family and marital therapy
5. Therapeutic riding
6. Parenting skills training
7. Behavioral classroom management interventions

8. Stress management techniques
9. Support groups

How does our program help people with ADHD?

The sequential nature of getting the horse ready to ride by grooming and tacking helps to increase focus and organization, as well as creating a calm atmosphere for both rider and horse.

Because a horse's movement is similar to the human gait, it helps the client think and learn new skills in a new way. Not having to focus on movement allows the brain to think about other things like eye contact, speech and language, focus and attention. Instructors may use activity on horseback to teach attention, relationship skills and communication skills. Because it is also fun, it doesn't seem like they are working on their skills when they are. (We've seen this first hand, haven't we?)

Therapeutic riding is becoming more and more widely known as a very effective form of therapy, and therefore insurances may cover some of the costs. This is true not only for ADHD, but for many other issues our clients face.

To learn more about ADHD, you may find the following websites interesting and informative:

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/index.shtml>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/>

www.additudemag.com (This has TONS of information and interesting articles!)



Ride-a-Thon 2020

Our annual Ride-A-Thon fundraiser took place on October 3, and there were just over 100 riders and horses who participated. The weather was a bit nippy in the morning but it turned out to be a beautiful fall day. It couldn't have been better weather for a trail ride!

We want to thank everyone who donated food, snacks and drinks for participants—we are so thankful to have such wonderful people invested in what we do. To those who rode and raised money through getting pledges for the event—we cannot thank you enough.

As you may or may not know, each entrance fee for a rider pays for one 45-minute riding session for a client, so 100 riders paid for 100 clients to ride in a class. What an amazing gift!

New Apparel in the Lobby!

We are happy to announce that we have loads of new sweatshirts, hoodies and long-sleeved t-shirts in the lobby store. They make great gifts and are nice and warm for working in the barn or cozying up at home. Prices range from \$18-30 and we accept cash, check or credit card. If Judy (the receptionist) isn't at her desk, most of the other staff can assist you.

The main entrance is still closed, so please feel free to enter lobby from the hallway door by Sara Putney-Smith's office to check out the new apparel.



Amazon Smile

So many people order online from **Amazon.com**, but did you know that the Cheff Center can receive benefits when you do? Go to smile.amazon.com and register—we are one of the 1000's of Charities that you can choose from, and we will get 0.5% of your qualified purchases!

To find out more, visit:

<https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about>

And if you really want to help, ask your friends and family to do the same!!!! We thank you in advance, as every penny counts for us!

Harding's

For those of you who shop at Harding's, if you join their Community Rewards program and select the Cheff Center as your organization of choice, we will receive a rebate based on your purchase amounts. For more information, click on the link below.

<https://www.hardings.com/savings-and-rewards/community-rewards/>

Again, we thank you in advance, and please let your friends and family know—every little bit helps!!!

Questions/comments? Please contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator,
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If you have suggestions for future newsletters, or are interested in submitting articles, please contact Sara Putney-Smith.

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