

December 2023

Dear Friends of TEC:

Horses really do change lives; we see it at TEC every day! When a participant enters the TEC barn, they aren't coming just to ride a horse. It's much more than that. **TEC's horses give our participants the opportunity to explore new skills, to strengthen their mind and body, to connect with others, and to achieve "I Did It!" moments that might not otherwise have been met.** And its support from people like you that make it possible for our participants like Johnny, Alex, and James to make positive changes in their lives.

For Johnny, an adult rider, his time at TEC is about socializing with others, helping our volunteers with barn chores, and riding "his" horse, Nellie. He takes great pride in cleaning the horses' stalls and keeping the barn aisle swept. He has been a participant and volunteer at TEC for 13 years. **Being here allows Johnny to be a part of a community that values and appreciates him.** Johnny's **"I Did It!"** is that he's very proud of how he's learned to ride many of our horses over the course of those years.



For 9-year-old, Alex, his goal is to be able to ride independently without the assistance of a horse leader or sidewalker. To achieve this, he must build up the strength in his core body muscles, right arm, and hand. It's also important for his leg muscles to relax and lengthen around the horse as he rides. He wasn't able to participate in the Fall Riding Session, which led to his mother seeing a difference in his strength and mobility. Alex came back for the Holiday Riding Session with a new determination to meet his goal. **Working on these skills not only helps him to get closer to achieving his "I Did It!" moment of riding independently, but it also provides him with greater strength and improved mobility while using his walker.**

For teenager, James, TEC provides an opportunity to work through challenges and situations that make him anxious. His path to success happened one small step at a time since he began at TEC this past summer. The TEC staff teamed up

with his staff from the Logan Autism Learning Center and his parents to create a lesson model that provided him with an environment that made him feel safe and less anxious, allowing him to achieve his own **"I Did It!"** moments. **In this environment and working with his horse, Winston, he felt comfortable and motivated to work through his fears.** His initial step was to sit in the car while Winston stood nearby. Seeing Winston gave James the courage to get out of the car to give him a hug. In the following weeks, James progressed to longer times out of the car, while grooming and then leading Winston. Fast forward to our Holiday Riding Session that just concluded,





James is riding in the arena cueing Winston to “walk on” and “whoa” independently. He is reading from a list of activities, making choices, and putting Winston through “his paces”. **James’ parents are proud of his progress and that he has achieved success over fear.**

For these riders and all of our participants, they can only achieve **“I Did It!”** moments with your help. In this season of giving, we ask you to consider making a donation to TEC today. **Your generosity will help to make their hopes and dreams a reality.**

To make your tax-deductible gift, complete the form below, scan the QR code with your phone, or visit <https://bit.ly/donatenowtotec> to make your payment online using your debit/credit card or PayPal. **Your donation will assist TEC with our daily expenses so that our staff, horses, and volunteers can continue their life changing work in making “I Did It!” moments for all who come through our doors.**

If you like to visit our facility to see firsthand the impact of your gift, please let us know. Simply call (269) 429-0671 or send us a note at info@tecfarm.org to coordinate a visit.



Gratefully,

Autumn Zick

Autumn Zick, TEC Board President/Instructor

PS: Your donation to TEC will change a life ... THANK YOU!



Yes! I want to support more “I DID IT!” moments at TEC with this *tax-deductible* donation.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ E-mail: _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of: \$ _____ 2023 Year-End Appeal

Check or Money Order (Payable to: Therapeutic Equestrian Center)

Visa MasterCard Discover Account Number: _____

Cardholder Name: _____ Cardholder Signature: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code (3-digit code on back of card): _____

Please apply my donation to: _____

(Unless specified, all donations go to the general fund.)

This donation is made in honor or memory of: _____

Yes, I'd like to become a TEC volunteer. Please contact me at: _____

Mail your donation to: Therapeutic Equestrian Center, PO Box 1250, Niles, MI 49120
Save a stamp! Make your donation online using your debit/credit card or PayPal at www.tecfarm.org/donate.