Community Grants Program
Grant Report

Agency Name:	Kids & Horses

Contact:	Catherine O'Brien	Title:	Program Manager
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Project Name:	Kids & Horses Scholarship Fund
Grant Funding Amount:	$12,322.
Project Completion Date:	February 2023

Describe how the funds were used to serve Douglas County residents.

The funds from Douglas County Community Grants Program were used in the support of the horses in the equine-assisted programs, including feed, equipment, veterinary, and farrier services. These horses are the backbone of our organization and what makes a therapeutic riding center possible. Douglas County children, young adults, and seniors made up a large percentage of clients, thereby providing enhanced services to our special needs and disabled communities.

Describe how the organization measured the success of the program/project. Provide qualitative and quantitative measures.

There are two steps in measuring the success of the program project.

1. The foremost level of success was the overall health of the herd. As our equine partners are semi-retired from other equine disciplines, they require a heightened level of care because of the normal wear and tear on their aging bodies and their minds. The Kids & Horses Standard care includes a consistent source of feed with recommended levels of Total Digestible Nutrients (TDNs) and supplements that help support the horse's age, bone health, and digestive tract. In addition, our equine manager and the rest of the staff closely monitor the subtle signals of distress in the horse that require immediate attention. Sometimes, this added level of care will require additional supplements, a veterinary call, or a farrier service. Since older horses are more prone to age-related problems, these costs are often more than would be experienced for a horse in its prime.
The care level has proven successful as the expenses associated with an aging herd, veterinary, farrier, and supplements decreased for 2022-2023 to date. This is despite the extreme cold and excessive snow they have had to endure this winter.

2. The second measure of success is the progress made by our children with disabilities as they navigate equine-assisted therapy in partnership with the horse herd. During the past fiscal year, the instructors, volunteers, and staff evaluated the growth of each student and discovered that remarkable gains were made. This can be attributed, in part, to the health status of our horse herd, which enabled us to provide consistent services. In 2022 we fully retired a couple of our horses due to age and replaced them

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with younger animals better suited for the program. This also helped maintain the health of the herd.

Provide any changes or challenges to the original project plan and how it affected the project.

New Year's Eve 2022 brought in one of the most challenging winters experienced in the Carson Valley. Additional feed, waterproof blankets, and increased electric bills to keep the water trough heaters operational severely cut into our budget. The grant from Douglas County earlier in the year enabled us to shift monies in the horse care budget and make it possible to cover these added expenses. Thank goodness for the Douglas County Community Grants Program.

The winter also proved challenging due to the reduced days that Kids & Horses was able to provide equine-assisted therapy, which reduced the income from lesson fees. Unfortunately, some of our students regressed during this time. Now that spring is here, we hope that snow, wind, and rain are finally over and we can make up scheduling for our vulnerable populations. One things all Nevadans know – you must be adaptable to weather and unforeseen circumstances.

Thank you, Douglas County Board of Commissioners for awarding this Community Grant to Kids & Horses.

Winter 2023 at the Ranch.