Sarasota-Manatee Association For Riding Therapy Inc (SMART)

GuideStar Nonprofit Profile Charting Impact Report * Last Updated on 05.09.2017

This report represents Sarasota-Manatee Association For Riding Therapy Inc (SMART)'s responses to Charting Impact, a joint project of BBB Wise Giving Alliance, GuideStar USA Inc, and Independent Sector. Charting Impact uses five simple yet powerful questions to encourage strategic thinking and help organizations share concise information about their plans and progress toward impact.

Sarasota-Manatee Association For Riding Therapy Inc (SMART)
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34211
www.smartriders.org

Mission:
Enriching the lives of people with special needs through therapeutic horse-related programs. At SMART, we strive to improve the quality of the lives of our SMART Riders and their families through therapeutic horseback riding, carriage driving and equine assisted activities. Through respectful partnerships with our horses, we create an environment that promotes a life of inclusion, respect, growth and independence.
The content of this Charting Impact Report is the sole product and responsibility of Sarasota-Manatee Association For Riding Therapy Inc (SMART). This report does not in any way represent an endorsement from Independent Sector, BBB Wise Giving Alliance, or GuideStar, nor does it represent fulfillment of the BBB Wise Giving Alliance’s Standards for Charity Accountability. For more information on Charting Impact, visit www.guidestar.org/chartingimpact
1. What are we aiming to accomplish?

2017-2018 Goals: 1. Secure funding and support to cover our arena. 2. Continue with the expansion of services and programs to increase revenue streams. 3. Continue with the development of a broad base of financial support. 4. Continue with the development of our Board of Directors. Long Term Goal 1. Secure funding to pay off our mortgage so all annual revenue can go toward providing services.

2. What are our strategies for making this happen?

SMART has a Strategic Plan which includes fundraising plans, board development plans, donor development plans and continued program development plans.

3. What are our organization's capabilities for doing this?

SMART has a beautiful, peaceful 23 acre equestrian facility that is designed to provide the very best in safe and effective equine assisted activities. With 14 therapy horses and a totally accessible facility, SMART can efficiently and safely serve over 1000 individuals with disabilities each year. The staff at SMART is made up of a group of dedicated, caring and well-trained volunteers and 3 employees (Executive Director, Administrative Assistant and Barn Manager.) SMART is a mostly volunteer powered program. All five of the riding instructors are certified by PATH Int'l and are well-versed in working with the special needs of all of the participants. All of the Therapeutic Riding Instructors provide their services to SMART as volunteers and complete 20-30 continuing educations hours each year. All have 10-15 years of experience working with children and adults with disabilities in the Therapeutic Riding setting. The staff ensures that all program volunteers (50-75 weekly) go through a volunteer orientation and training/mentoring program. New volunteers are trained by staff in basic horse handling and horse behavior as well as general guidelines for respectful and effective methods of working with children and adults with special needs. All of the members of the Board of Directors are successful professionals from the business community and come from varied professions (investment advisors, banking, law, marketing, business owners, retired professionals, insurance industry, parents of children with disabilities, equine industry professionals, etc.) All directors are required to contribute financially to SMART as well as become active and committed to making a positive difference in the lives of the SMART participants and their families.

4. How will we know if we're making progress?

SMART served 697 participants and their families from Manatee, Sarasota and surrounding counties in 2016 and we consistently have over 25 individuals on our waiting list. SMART provides the community with a unique and fun place for children and adults with disabilities to be actively engaged in the out-of-doors in a safe, caring, supportive, natural environment. Moreover, in an age where access to health care is severely limited for many, SMART provides a program that improves physical, emotional, cognitive and social functioning in a setting that is enjoyable yet structured -- where goals are set and realized. The nature of SMART as a mostly volunteer powered organization allows it to reach even the most destitute of the population, providing services that would otherwise be out of reach. SMART provides these services to all individuals with disabilities regardless of their financial hardships, thus the need for scholarship funding. Our services are in demand by our community and the impact on those served is profound. The benefits of therapeutic riding and equine assisted activities for individuals with disabilities is well documented. A horse’s three dimensional movement closely resembles the normal gait of a human and can be used to produce specific physical changes in the rider, including normalization of muscle tone, postural and balance improvements and increased strength. The emotional benefits of riding therapy can frequently include the success of overcoming fear and anxiety, and always include an increase in confidence and a sense empowerment. Fun, therapeutic riding activities on top of a beautiful, loving pony provide the participant with the...
motivation to learn new things, which result in cognitive benefits. Independence is promoted and multi-task learning is encouraged, helping each participant to achieve success during the lessons, as well as improve their daily living skills. An increase in social skills is also a benefit of therapeutic riding. Many of the activities in a lesson involve interacting with other participants in the class (tossing a ball to another child, waving to another child when passing, team “horse play” games, etc.) The participants are taught and reminded to express gratitude to their horse, staff and other riders throughout the lesson and an emphasis is placed on creating empathetic relationships. Through the development of individual riding plans, with long term and short term goals specific to each child's needs, the instructors at SMART encourage and support continued growth and goal achievement in every child. With the special needs of our participants in mind, and creative caring on the part of our instructors and volunteers, we use the movement of the horse, the connection to the horse, and the peaceful, natural, country environment, to help heal the body, mind and spirit of every SMART participant.

5. What have and haven't we accomplished so far?
SMART is particularly proud of its many accomplishments in 2016 which include: • Serving 697 individuals in our community in 2016 while still operating as a mostly volunteer powered organization. SMART's committed and hardworking volunteers and volunteer staff logged in nearly 16,000 hours in 2016! Over 4,000 individuals have been served by SMART since 1987. • Maintaining our status as a Premier Accredited Center of the Professional Association for Therapeutic Horsemanship, Intl'. SMART is the only therapeutic riding center in Manatee and Sarasota counties with this accreditation. • Providing SMART's Horse Sense Literacy Program to local school children in grades 3-5. This literacy program has touched the lives of 140 children in 2016 and inspired 301 children (and their family members) since inception in 2010. • Providing our Hope Reins! equine facilitated learning program for women undergoing breast cancer treatments since 2012. • Partnering with Just for Girls Academy and Middle School to provide the SMART GIRLS Program (Girls Inspiring Relationship, Leadership and Service.) This is a hands-on educational program that is designed to promote personal growth and the development of positive social/life skills in a fun and supportive environment. The curriculum, which also includes science and math activities, is set up for at-risk girls in grades K- middle school. In 2016, 57 girls took part in this program and 458 have participated since inception in 2012. • Providing programs for 219 veterans and their families since 2009. In 2014 a partnership was formed with the Recreational Therapists at the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System to provide our Warriors in Transition program, furnishing day workshops for their veterans. Our equine facilitated experiential learning activities focus on leadership, team building , physical and emotional well-being. SMART provided this free program for 74 veterans and their families in 2016 and 180 since 2014. • Partnering with Selah Freedom since 2013 to provide an equine facilitated experiential learning program for women in the process of transitioning out of the human trafficking industry. 16 women participated in 2016 and 27 women have participated since the induction of this program. • Partnering with Beyond the Spectrum Educational Center since 2014 to provide a weekly day program which includes riding therapy and equine facilitated experiential activities to 78 students annually with Autism Spectrum Disorder. • Providing a Hippotherapy pilot program in 2016 for 10 children in the adoption and foster care system. • Providing an annual signature event that is successful! Our 3rd Annual Mint Juleps and Roses Derby Day Event in May 2016 netted $76,000! (the 2014 event netted 40K, the 2015 netted 70K.)