



CHESAPEAKE THERAPEUTIC RIDING

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

ctrchanginglives.org :::: P.O. Box 475, Abingdon, MD 21009 :::: 443.528.7793

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In the past, our strategic plan has mostly been, “Doing Things”. With enormous gratitude to our Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee, I am proud to share with you a strategic plan that encompasses a well thought out roadmap to achieve what we hold dear, connecting people with horses.

This strategic plan is a bold statement of our values and commitment to creating safe and nonjudgmental resources for people with differing abilities, at-risk youth, and veterans struggling with physical and mental health issues. CTR is uniquely leveraging the autonomy afforded by owning an equestrian facility staffed with the best and the brightest.

We are poised to make an impact on the community in ways greater than before the pandemic. There are many new opportunities to explore including a walking trail, which is under construction from the Harford County Agricultural Center and the soon-to-be-relocated Darlington branch of the Harford County Public Library, both adjacent to our farm.

I thank CTR’s staff for their openness for reflection, flexibility to change, and boundless creativity as we navigated through the pandemic and beyond. Our greatest strength is the compassion for our clients and their varied needs in seeking adaptive recreation and farm-based education using horses. Because of that commitment, we emerge in a position of stability and preparedness into the next phase of our plan.

CTR Changing Lives. Changing lives for generations to come.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

CTR launched its preliminary strategic planning process in 2018 with the completion of a SWOT analysis by the Board of Directors. Because of the information garnered from this experience, the baseline of data and resources needed to formulate a plan were identified. The Board and staff met in retreat in 2019 to identify priority areas and the Executive Director and Board President followed up by taking the initial steps necessary to begin plan development. The process began with the identification of a new Vision and Mission. Subsequently the Board of Directors expanded the dialogue to formulate organizational priorities that would raise CTR to a higher level of operations. More specifically, programming, sustainability, and partnerships would be established as priority areas necessary to expand and enrich the work of CTR.

Due to the pandemic in 2020, the development of a comprehensive strategic plan was put on temporary hold. In 2021, the Board of Directors met again in retreat to review and reestablish the previous work completed on the plan and to review priority areas. They recommitted to the established priorities and assigned a workgroup to complete the strategic plan by close of 2021. The workgroup met regularly and sought input from the Board of Directors, staff and Advisory Council. Using the identified priorities as the overarching framework, the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan was drafted. The plan gives considerable attention to expanding the presence of CTR throughout the region. The Board of Directors reviewed the strategic plan draft on November 10, 2021 and provided some feedback for consideration. The plan was revised and resubmitted to the Board of Directors for approval on December 8, 2021. The Board of Directors approved the plan for implementation January 1, 2022.

FOREWORD

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding, Inc. (CTR) was founded in 2003 to assist individuals to heal by bringing people and horses together in guided equine interactions. Through this unique bond, CTR strives to create a sense of independence for those we serve. Since that time, more than 3,000 individuals have participated in a variety of programs approved by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH). During this same time, CTR increased the size of its herd to 10, trained and maintained a dedicated group of approximately 70 volunteers, became actively engaged in community outreach, and purchased a permanent farm/location that will allow the organization to expand participation, outreach, and resources.

CTR is located in Harford County, Maryland and operates as a non-profit organization to connect people with horses in a safe and nonjudgmental environment. The complement of programs is focused on providing adaptive recreation and farm-based education by building basic riding skills and horsemanship knowledge to facilitate and enhance the well-being of these individuals. Specific programs are adapted to the needs of each population to achieve the optimal level of engagement for each individual.

- Therapeutic (Adaptive) Riding – Mounted activities focuses the physical and cognitive abilities of people with differing abilities in learning to ride. Participants can range from children on the autism spectrum to veterans suffering with PTSD.
- Hippotherapy – The term hippotherapy refers to how occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech-language pathology professionals use evidence-based practice and clinical reasoning in the purposeful manipulation of equine movement as a therapy tool to engage sensory, neuromotor and cognitive systems to promote functional outcomes. Best practice dictates that occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech-language pathology professionals integrate hippotherapy into the patient’s plan of care, along with other therapy tools and/or strategies.
- Equine Assisted Learning – Experiential workshops focused on self-exploration and self-awareness through interactions with horses in ground-based activities. Customized workshops are offered to empower women, to provide bereavement assistance, to create interactive programming for at-risk youth, and to conduct professional development for corporations and nonprofit organizations.
- Equine Experiences – Field trip activities providing a wide range of equine connections for community groups at the farm.
- Horse Powered Learning– Equine interactions focused on achieving targeted learning outcomes for school-age children.
- Pony Express – Equine community outreach offered at senior centers, libraries, and nursing homes used to expand CTR’s reach to individuals with limited ability to make farm visits. Off-site visits are made with assistance of selected herd members that interact with participants.
- Horse Discovery Center – Activities that are open to the public with the expressed purpose to help individuals learn about horses in a welcoming and inclusive, educational environment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CTR is proud of the success that has been achieved since 2003. As we look to the future, CTR establishes a vision and mission that is consistent with the essential work completed each day to utilize equine assistance to enable holistic healing. The 2022-2027 Strategic Plan commits to expand CTR's presence throughout the region allowing an ever-increasing number of individuals to benefit from the programs that provide a unique connection to horses. This work will be advanced by honoring the core values that guide our interactions, priorities, and programming. CTR is resolute to expand our impact in the upcoming years. Inasmuch, three strategic priorities have been identified that will position the organization to address the emerging needs of participants, supporters, and the community-at-large.

VISION

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding will be the premier equine-based therapeutic healing and learning center in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

MISSION

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding delivers healing and learning to individuals and groups whose minds, bodies and spirits will benefit from the transformative connection between people and horses.

VALUES

- Inclusion: CTR creates a culture of acceptance and belonging for all who interact through programming, services, staff, and volunteers.
- Stewardship: CTR conscientiously demonstrates responsibility for the livestock, property, and fiscal resources in our care.
- Integrity: CTR operates with the highest level of ethical practices and professionalism in all we do.
- Excellence: CTR promotes standards of excellence in our people, programs, and participants.
- Collaboration: CTR consistently works cooperatively with county government, community partners, and individual members to enhance the quality of life in our community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding 2022-2027 Strategic Plan is the overarching framework to drive tactical planning that will insure CTR's priorities are met. The goals and objectives reflect the bold achievements that will be accomplished in the next five years. This plan considers organizational capacity, participant needs, and continuing community support. Each of these factors are critical considerations in the development of priorities, goals, and objectives. Strong partnerships among staff, stakeholders, and volunteers will be required for the goals and objectives to be advanced at an operational level. The following priorities are integral to achieving the Vision and advancing the Mission for CTR.

Strategic Priority One: Continue to expand and enrich the quality and scope of ***programming that generates increased participation rates and maximizes community impact.***

Strategic Priority Two: Secure long-term ***sustainability through strong stewardship*** of CTR resources: financial, people and herd.

Strategic Priority Three: Leverage ***new and existing partnerships*** as a mechanism to expand awareness and resources available to CTR and secure funding resources.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE

Continue to expand and enrich the quality and scope of *programming that generates increased participation rates and maximizes community impact.*

OVERVIEW

CTR has been active since 2003. During that time, more than 3,000 individuals have been served through the many programs offered at the center and off-site locations. Although CTR has served an increasingly larger number of individuals annually, it is critical that an emphasis be placed on sustaining this pattern of growth in the upcoming years. Additionally, CTR has taken great pride in identifying unmet needs and providing programs that accommodate diversified populations while meeting those needs.

The programming offered by CTR offers participants a unique approach to transformation through equine assisted services both in-person and via virtual technologies. The non-judgmental nature of horses allows riders and participants to be present and build trust so they are able to engage in exercises that facilitate their physical and emotional growth. The need for programs and services, as well as the divergent populations that can benefit, is continuously growing. It is essential that CTR sustain its position as a leader in this area, while being mindful of the emerging needs and populations that would benefit through participation in equine-based programs and services.

GOALS

Goal 1: Increase organizational impact by 50%, over the next five years as measured by the number of clients and participants served.

Goal 2: Foster a commitment to community input, assess community need, identify unmet needs and provide programs that accommodate diversified populations.

Goal 3: Utilize technology to identify, explore and expand opportunities for virtual farm and equine-based experiences for individuals who cannot participate in person and/or situations where on-site participation is not feasible.

Goal 4: Leverage CTR's designation as a Horse Discovery Center by offering free/affordable awareness and educational programs to the community at-large.

Goal 5: Utilize best practices in all CTR programming and administration/operations and pursue becoming a PATH Premier Accredited Center.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO

Secure long-term *sustainability through strong stewardship* of CTR financial resources, people, and herd.

OVERVIEW

CTR has maintained a fiscally conservative approach to finances since its inception. This has allowed the operation to support growth by taking measured risks to support populations with the greatest need. This pattern of fiscal responsibility has afforded CTR the opportunity to consistently grow each year of operation. As CTR enters a new era with a permanent facility, broader community awareness, and growing demand for a wider scope of services, it will be necessary to develop innovative approaches to fund development to keep pace with new populations, emerging needs and societal challenges. CTR will commit to explore every resource on behalf of those who can benefit from their services and continue to maintain fiscal stability.

Not unlike many non-profit organizations, CTR is consistently challenged to optimize the use of every resource. It is evident that need and demand far exceeds the resources available to provide CTR programs and services. Recognizing this challenge, CTR possesses strong resolve to exercise stewardship of the staff, volunteers, herd, farm, and resources that are so essential to assure that life changing benefits continue to be available to clients and the community.

GOALS

Goal 1: Demonstrate fiscal sustainability that will provide adequate resources needed to support the increasing programming needs of a growing and diverse population.

Goal 2: Develop a fund development and management plan that includes new revenue streams and continuously monitor and revise such in order to quickly and effectively respond to changes in CTR's financial position.

Goal 3: Assess, secure and/or upgrade the ability to track, analyze and report data integral to effective program, staff, client, volunteer and donor management.

Goal 4: Create a Board Development Plan to foster the growth and development of the CTR Board of Directors and Advisory Council members through focused emphasis on recruitment, development, retention and recognition, and through consistent communications regarding CTR programming, operations, and partnerships.

Goal 5: Develop succession planning strategies for the Executive Director, staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors.

Goal 6: Ensure resources are available to maintain a healthy and diverse herd.

Goal 7: Develop a Staff and Volunteer Management Plan that includes recruitment, professional development, retention, and recognition strategies to insure effective CTR programs and operations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE

Leverage *new and existing partnerships* as a mechanism to expand awareness of CTR programs and services and secure funding resources.

OVERVIEW

CTR has actively aligned with many partners over the years to expand awareness, share resources, seek new participants, and simply to be recognized as an active member of the community. The significance of community partnerships has never been greater. As post-pandemic economic implications continue to develop, funding streams narrow and the tax benefit of personal giving has lessened, it is imperative that CTR leverage every opportunity to advance its mission and broaden awareness by forming collaborations and partnerships with organizations, groups and agencies throughout the region.

GOALS

Goal 1: Fully and proactively leverage existing partnerships with special emphasis on those partnerships that align with the agricultural community and/or those that can be enriched and expanded given the partner's physical proximity to the CTR farm.

Goal 2: Increase public awareness of CTR by effectively leveraging social media, networking, and opportunities to develop partnerships via contacts made at community events and off-site programs.

Goal 3: Intentionally develop new partnerships as a mechanism to expand awareness, build collaborative initiatives and explore opportunities for sharing resources, serving underserved communities and targeted populations, and meeting identified needs.

Goal 4: Collaborate with other non-profit organizations, agencies, groups and others to utilize both in-person and virtual programming to best meet community needs at little or no cost.

Goal 5: Maximize impact by developing new and creative partnership options to strengthen the connection CTR has to the agricultural community.