

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

GETTING BACK TO SPECIAL



SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS  
THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER





# MISSION

To improve the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals with disabilities through the equine experience.

# VALUES



RESPECT



INTEGRITY



EMPATHY



TEAMWORK



JOYFULNESS



# CHAIRMAN'S WORDS



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank our committed staff and volunteers and you - our riders and families, our community, and our donors - for providing your support in 2021. We are grateful for, and never take for granted, your continued support. We want to say a special thank you to our outgoing Executive Director, Mary-jo May, and welcome our new leader, Janice Witt. Their leadership and vision was a key to the success Special Equestrians enjoyed during a challenging time.

Over the past two years, we have all longed for things to return to normal. Thanks to the caring and sharing that is expressed every day in the Special Equestrians community, last year we made tremendous strides in getting back to being the kind of special that initially drew all of us to this organization. We managed to bring back riders in a safe way for them, our staff and volunteers, and we introduced new programs and added new horse experiences.

All of us are excited about doing our part to continue to bring the mission of Special Equestrians to life as we see the tremendous joy expressed on the faces of our riders. We are passionate about reaching new heights in 2022 - our 40th year of providing special experiences to our cherished riders!

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Sincerely,

**Allen Tate**

Board Chair  
Special Equestrians Board of Directors



# GETTING BACK TO SPECIAL

One of our returning riders in 2021 was Miranda, an 8-year-old ray of sunshine who's happiest at her weekly lessons. "It gives me a lot of joy to watch Miranda get ready to go to lessons," says her dad, John. "She always knows that on Tuesdays after school she gets to go to therapeutic riding."

Riders like Miranda are once again able to experience the life-changing benefits of riding while forming a deep bond with their horse - and that is truly special.

Miranda rides Z in her lessons, and really enjoys the different games and experiences in the sensory garden. Her favorite game to play is basketball, but she always makes sure she gets in a round of tic-tac-toe and Minion bowling.



*"Returning to Special Equestrians has meant that Miranda can feel, interpret and regulate her body and emotions in a way that she isn't able to anywhere else," adds John.*





## ABOUT US

At Special Equestrians, we harness the healing power of horses to transform lives. Here, differences are embraced and individuality is celebrated.

Our programs are driven by the awareness that every person learns differently – and careful evaluation determines which activities, horse and instructional style are most likely to bring new competencies to a rider.

We operate year-round and our property features an indoor and outdoor arena, a therapy room, a 24-station Sensory Trail, and an observation lounge and classroom. We also offer off-site visits, and take our horses to schools and senior centers.

21  
STAFF  
MEMBERS

Our staff consists of full-time and part-time people, and they work tirelessly to ensure our barn, horses, and programs are run smoothly and efficiently. Their passion for SE's success is unwavering.

14  
PROGRAM  
HORSES

From miniature to draft, our horses come in every shape, size, and color. Our herd is specially trained to ensure our riders get the most out of their lessons, and we are so fortunate to have them as part of our programs.

285  
STUDENTS  
SERVED

On average, we see over 200 riders in a given year, and each one of them is just as special as the next.



## WHO WE SERVE

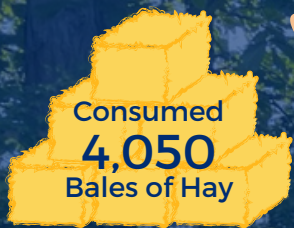
Our riders and students come to us from all walks of life, and we are committed to serving anyone who can benefit from our services.

We offer therapeutic riding lessons for individuals who meet criteria for numerous diagnoses, including autism spectrum disorder, intellectual and development disabilities, ADHD, cerebral palsy, genetic disorders, brain injuries, in addition to cognitive and sensory dysfunction.

Through our group programs, we work with at-risk youth, students with autism and learning disabilities, women in recovery, children in residential foster care, senior living centers and cancer support groups.



# PROGRAMS AND HORSES



Consumed  
**4,050**  
Bales of Hay



Dined On  
**33,000**  
Pounds of Grain



**268 Tons**  
of Bedding Used



**1,280** Loads of Laundry



**2,902** Hours  
of Grooming



**3,148** Turnout  
Hours in the 6  
Winter Months



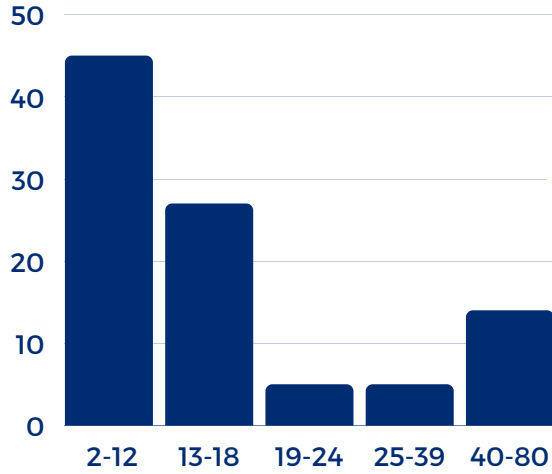
**2,222** Turnout  
Hours in the 6  
Summer Months



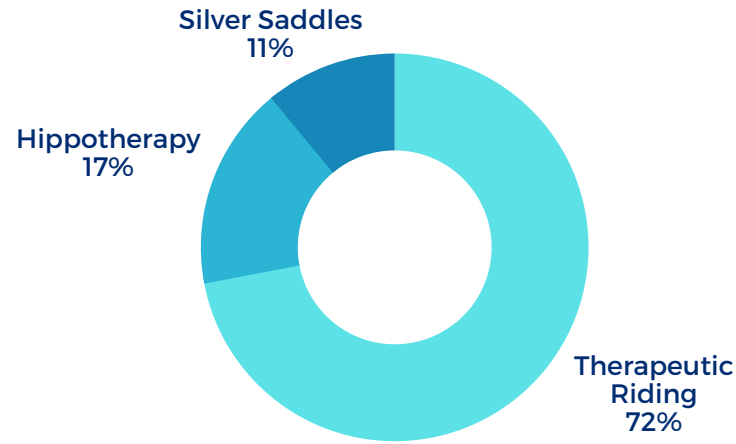


# Program Participation

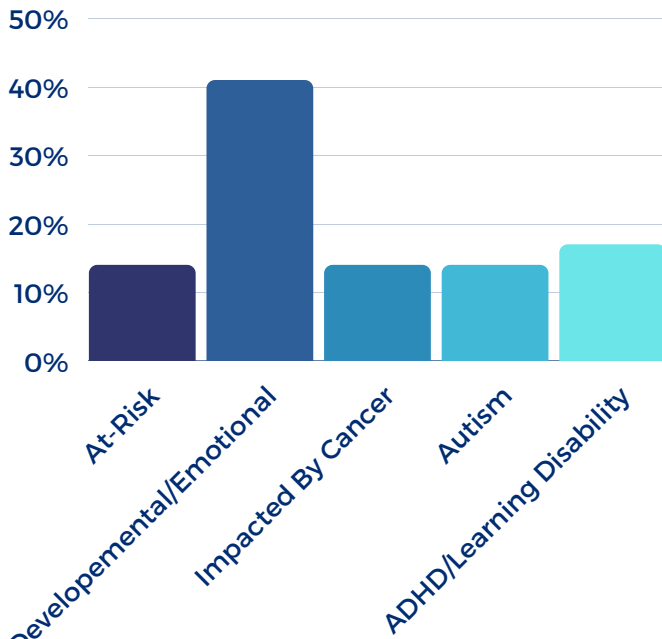
### Ages By Percent



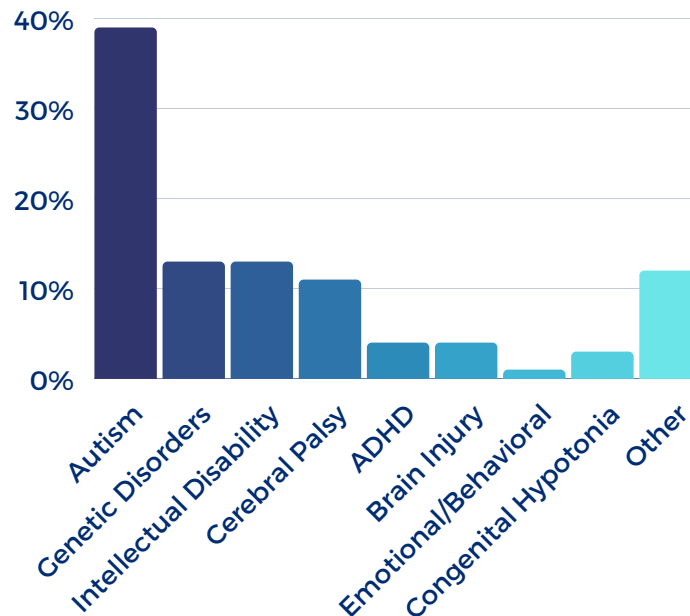
### Lesson Types



### Key Diagnosis for Group Lessons



### Key Diagnosis for Individual Lessons





# Highlights and Accomplishments

## 10 Programs Offered

- Therapeutic Riding
- Silver Saddles
- Hippotherapy
- Summer Camp
- Breast Cancer Clinic
- Senior Living/Visits
- At-Risk Youth
- Learning Differences
- Mental Health
- Life Skills



## New Horses

- Glow
- Fiona
- Harley
- Captain
- Fury



## Trainings and Experiences

- Offered a Sign Language Clinic for staff and volunteers
- Held a Volunteer Training Clinic
- Visited the McMichael School for our first trip to Philadelphia for a ground based program
- Introduced a volunteer riding program to allow volunteers to feel the benefits of riding
- SE staff received a sensory education lecture from OT students
- Launched new SE website



## Awards and Recognition

- Our very own Z was recognized as the The Pennsylvania National Horse Show Foundation 2021 Therapy Horse Of The Year
- We celebrated this honor with the County Commissioners and took Glow along to make new friends

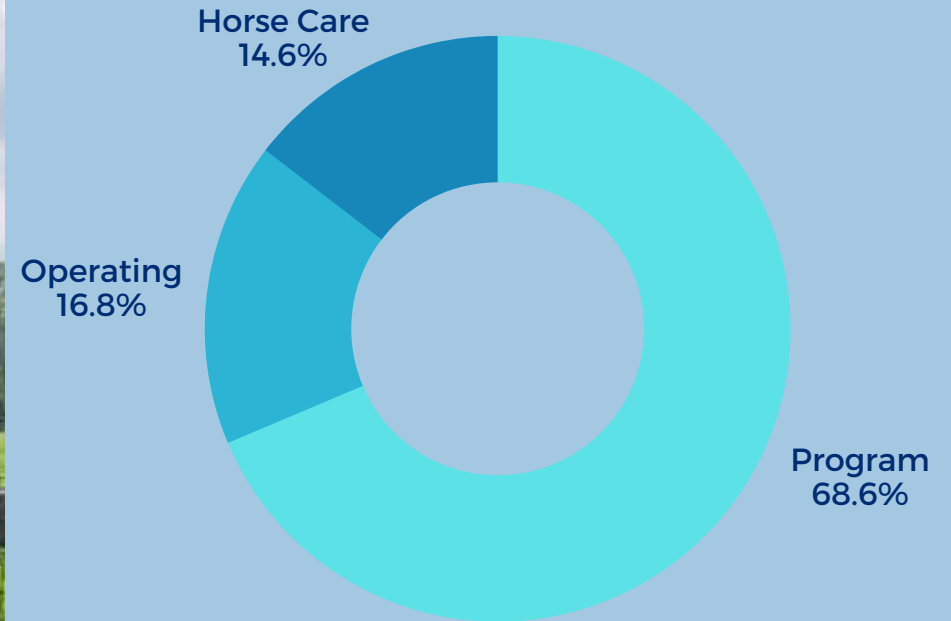




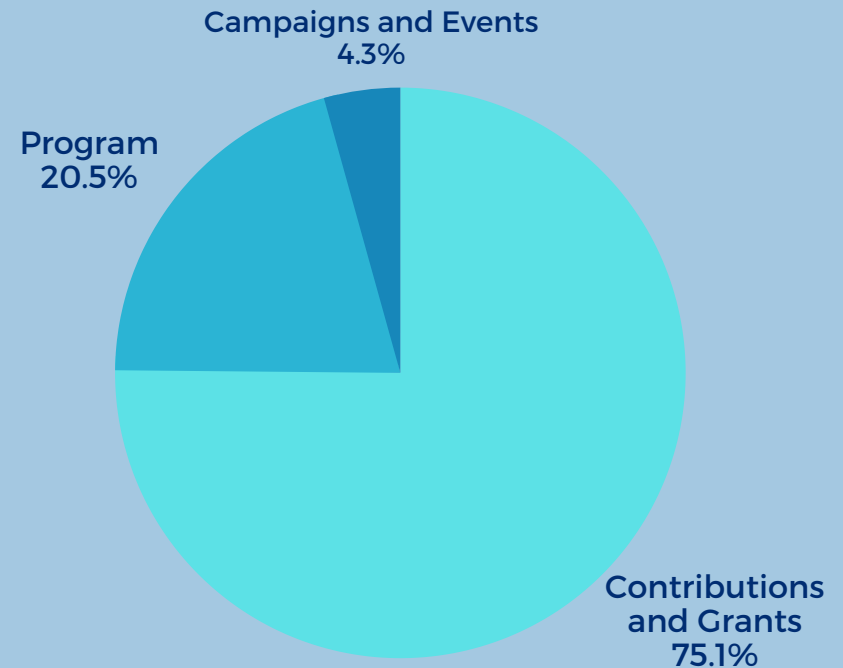
# Financials



## Expenses



## Support and Revenue





# Volunteers

Team work makes the dream work!

Our dedicated team of volunteers works 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Their passion, drive, and hard-work are the backbone of our success and whether it's assisting with students and horses in lessons, working around the barn, helping with special events or providing administrative support - they make every day special!

We've been fortunate enough to have Joan with us as a volunteer since 2019. She really enjoys interacting with the horses, other volunteers and staff, but she especially enjoys watching the progress the students make each week in their lessons.

*"There's a camaraderie in the barn among the volunteers and staff that can't be beat. Everyone cares about the welfare of the horses above all."*



**130**  
Volunteers  

---

**4,824**  
Hours Logged





# Thank You

## Transforming Lives, Making an Impact

The Special Equestrians story is a powerful one: a story of hope...a story of respect...a story of a community of caring people who pull together to make a difference in the lives of people with a variety of differences.

It's because of YOU that we've been able to Get Back to Special. Thanks to your support, we will continue to serve vulnerable populations.

Thank you for believing in the work we do. You make a difference each and every day in the lives of people who are transformed by a deep connection with their horse.

FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR  
HEARTS...

Thank You!







  
**SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS**  
 THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER

Special Equestrians  
 2800 Street Road, P.O. Box 1001  
 Warrington, PA 18976  
 215-918-1001  
[info@specialequestrians.org](mailto:info@specialequestrians.org)  
[www.specialequestrians.org](http://www.specialequestrians.org)

