

# Volunteer Voice

Winter 2018



PEGASUS



## Session Volunteer Awards

Each spring at our Pegasus Horse Show, we award special trophies to two outstanding volunteers. Choosing only two honorees from among our many deserving volunteers is always a huge challenge. This past summer, we began recognizing an outstanding volunteer at the end of each program session. Congratulations to our first two session volunteer award recipients: **Gaia Bernardini** (summer 2017) and **Donna Ferreira** (fall 2017)! Thank you, Gaia and Donna, for all you do for us!

## Volunteer U on February 19

The 2018 edition of our popular Volunteer U workshop series will kick off on Monday, February 19. We are planning an exciting day



in the classroom and the ring. Our very special guest presenter will be U.S. Dressage Paralympian **Sydney Collier** (pictured here with Pegasus horse Buttercup). Sydney has an amazing, inspirational story to tell.

Space is limited and RSVP is required. Visit [pegasustr.org/volunteeru219](http://pegasustr.org/volunteeru219) for details or email Director of Volunteer Services Lynn Peters at [lpeters@pegasustr.org](mailto:lpeters@pegasustr.org).

## Our Newest Instructors Were Volunteers First!



Like many other staff members, **Emily DeLuca** first joined Pegasus as a volunteer. Upon completion of her college and graduate programs, Emily set her sights on becoming a certified therapeutic riding instructor. She reached her goal last spring and has been teaching at Pegasus ever since. Head Instructor Liz Fortes, who served as Emily's mentor during the long and challenging certification process, tells us "Emily volunteered with me all through high school. Having the opportunity to mentor her for her PATH certification was a very rewarding experience, as she has come full circle from volunteer to instructor. Emily brings to her teaching the same enthusiasm and passion that she brought to the participants she worked with all those years ago as a volunteer. It has been a pleasure and privilege to be a part of her journey." Congratulations, Emily!

**Jeff Hopkins** also began his time at Pegasus as a volunteer, after retiring from many years in the restaurant business. He happened to have a chance meeting with longtime Pegasus friends Tory and Nicole Russo, at which he heard about our mission. Jeff attended a volunteer orientation and became a program volunteer, and the rest, as they say, is history. He passed his PATH instructor certification last November and, like Emily, hit the ground running. You'll find him in the ring not only at Pegasus Farm but at Kelsey Farm as well. His mentor, Liz Fortes, says this about Jeff: "I will never forget meeting Jeff in volunteer orientation not even two years ago. From the moment Jeff began volunteering at Pegasus, he gave not only his time but his heart and soul as well. He worked tirelessly and diligently to become a PATH instructor, and he has been an inspiration to me. His generosity of spirit and incredible energy are contagious. I feel very lucky to have been Jeff's mentor through the certification process and believe that Jeff taught me as much as I taught him—perhaps more." Congratulations, Jeff!



## Ring Masters: Dasha and Susha Fiebach

Twins Susha and Dasha Fiebach have been volunteering with us at Pegasus Farm for the past two years. Eager learners and exceptionally hardworking, Dasha and Susha have gone from novices to experts in countless ways while helping in program and the barn, baking for special events, and creating arts and crafts projects for our participants. We are very lucky to have these two special young ladies on our team! Thank you, Susha and Dasha!

### **Q: Why did you decide to do volunteer work, and why did you choose Pegasus? Did you have any specific goals or objectives?**

**DASHA:** I first heard about Pegasus from my mother, who had been searching for places for my sister and me to do volunteering. When she first told me about Pegasus, I absolutely couldn't wait to go check it out. I knew I wanted to volunteer at Pegasus because it incorporated my two favorite things: horses and helping others. I set a goal for myself to become less shy and learn to talk to people with confidence.

**SUSHA:** I decided to volunteer at Pegasus for a few different reasons. Ever since I was little, I have always been around horses and loved working with them. Also, I am a very social person and love people. I thought volunteering at Pegasus would expose me to knowledgeable and caring people like the Pegasus staff. From watching the videos on the Pegasus website, I knew I would be able to work with wonderful, unique participants. Finally, I wanted a rewarding and fun way to spend my Saturdays.

### **Q: Has your experience volunteering met or exceeded your goals, and if yes, how so?**

**DASHA:** Volunteering at Pegasus has greatly exceeded my goals. After a while volunteering, I started to notice that I was more confident when talking to people. I didn't look down at the ground when I was talking or listening. I needed to look at the staff, other volunteers and participants to understand all the information, not just hearing all the words.

**SUSHA:** Volunteering at Pegasus has exceeded my goals and objectives from the first day I started volunteering! I have learned so much from the Pegasus staff and other volunteers about horses and working with others. These are lessons I will use in college and everyday life. Also, I was looking forward to working in the barn because I like hands-on manual labor. Everyone in the barn is a joy to work with, and there is never a dull moment. Volunteering at Pegasus has been a great experience, and it is hard to imagine my life now without it.

### **Q: What impact has the experience had on your life?**

**DASHA:** Volunteering at Pegasus is like nothing else. The feeling of helping others and being helped by others is rewarding for me. The constant learning is a major impact for me. Every time I am at Pegasus, whether I'm in the barn or in program, I learn something new and have amazing experiences.

**SUSHA:** Volunteering at Pegasus has impacted me tremendously. I have become much more confident in myself. My new sense of confidence helps me through every day, especially in school.

### **Q: What is a particularly memorable experience that you will take with you?**

**DASHA:** One of the memorable experiences I will never forget happened while working with a participant after a few months of volunteering at Pegasus. The participant was a very capable rider but was afraid of doing that day's exercise (trotting over ground poles while in a half seat) and didn't want to do it. However, after watching other riders complete the exercise, she decided to give it a try. I remember the look on her face after she completed the exercise. It was a look of sheer joy. Her look of sheer joy and accomplishment will stay with me forever. Remembering this moment helps me overcome my own challenges.

**SUSHA:** Pegasus is such a memorable place, and I have had so many memorable experiences that picking just one is hard. Thinking of all my experiences brings me lots of joy. One particularly memorable experience that will always be with me is the time a young participant and I had a wonderful conversation about how they wanted to be an opera singer when they grew up. I have never heard a young child speak with so much enthusiasm. I totally envision this child becoming an opera singer, and this memory always warms my heart.



*Dasha (l.) and Susha (r.) team up with Keisha and Mr. Blue.*

## Clinically Speaking: ADHD

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are three types of ADHD. They are defined according to which symptoms are predominant.

- Predominantly Inattentive

The person finds it very difficult to organize or finish a task. They have difficulty paying attention to details and following instructions or conversations.

- Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive

The person finds it hard to keep still. They fidget and talk a lot. A smaller child may be continually jumping, running or climbing. They are restless and impulsive— interrupting others, grabbing things and speaking at inappropriate times. They have difficulty waiting their turn and find it hard to listen to directions. A person with this type of ADHD will have more injuries and accidents than others.

- Combined Type

This person presents all of the above symptoms in equal predominance.

Survey results published by the CDC estimate that, as of 2011, approximately 6.4 million U.S. children aged 4 to 17 were diagnosed with ADHD by a healthcare professional. This represents 11% of U.S. children in that age group, and it is an increase from 7.8% in 2003 (CDC data).

The same survey reported that boys (13.2%) were more likely than girls (5.6%) to have received an ADHD diagnosis.

The equine-assisted activities and therapies offered at Pegasus provide several benefits to students diagnosed with ADHD. Horses have a calming presence, which transfers to those around them. Horses can be motivators to reinforce positive behaviors, and they can encourage self-regulation as they respond to the energy around them.

## Meet Our Farm Friends Volunteers!



We often get requests from our amazing participants asking for an opportunity to give back to Pegasus in the form of volunteering. Those requests led to the start of our Farm Friends volunteer program in the summer of 2017.

Farm Friends is not a therapeutic activity like our riding and unmounted programs. It is a volunteering opportunity for Pegasus participants ages 16 and over who are

able to work one-on-one with a staff member to complete a variety of tasks around the farm.

We were pleased this past summer to have **Chris** (above) volunteer each week alongside Pegasus instructor Suzy Angier. Accompanied by her job coach Judee, **Dasha** (right) worked

with Ellen Powers, our administrative/barn assistant this past fall.

This winter session, **Charlie** (left) has been volunteering with Ellen as well.



Chris, Dasha and Charlie worked extremely hard each week and completed every task with a smile. Their Pegasus partners raved about their dedication and joy in a job well done. Congratulations, all, and thank you for your help!

## Our PATH Premier Center Reaccreditation

Every five years, Pegasus undergoes an evaluation by our accrediting organization, PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship). The weekend of October 29-30, PATH evaluators visited Pegasus Farm and our chapters at Kelsey Farm and Ox Ridge Hunt Club. Pegasus passed each of our site visits and was once again granted Premier Accredited Center status.

Many thanks to the amazing volunteers who came out to assist in the process. On Sunday, which was an absolutely brutal day weather-wise, **Gaia Bernardini, Jo-Ann Delfino, Michele Mira, and Doreen Salerno** pitched in at Pegasus Farm. At Kelsey Farm, **Bob Feingold** and **Trish White** braved the elements and helped us with our site visit. Monday's weather was much improved, and the flood waters generally receded. We held our final site visit at Ox Ridge, with the assistance of volunteers **Cindy Hurvitz, Candice Krist, Sue McGraw** and **Lora Pensiero**. Thank you, all—we could not have done it without you!

## Volunteer Appreciation Week 2017: Thank You for All You Do!

What do you get when you mix one part generosity, one part dedication, one part enthusiasm, and one part inspiration? You get our amazing Pegasus volunteers!

We celebrated our 2017 Volunteer Appreciation Week from November 13-18 with words of heartfelt thanks for the people who make our programs possible.

It takes hundreds of committed volunteers to help us provide our equine-assisted services, and we are grateful for each and every one of you at Pegasus Farm (top l.), Kelsey Farm (bottom l.) and Ox Ridge (r.)!



## Go, Special Events Committee!



Congratulations to Pegasus Special Events Committee members **Mary Ann Fiebach, Trish White, Michele Mira, Rose Aglieco, and Missy McDonnell** on a very successful first event! They helped us plan and host our inaugural Pegasus

Flea Market and Bake Sale at Pegasus Farm this past October. Vendors set up their booths and displayed antiques, handmade crafts and treasures from their attics. Parents and volunteers graciously donated delicious (and beautifully decorated) cookies, cakes and pies to the bake sale. No one walked out empty-handed. The event was such a hit, we're doing it again this coming October. Stay tuned for details!

## It's Time to Think Spring!

Spring program will get underway the second week of March (start date TBD based on this unpredictable weather). We'd be thrilled to have you join us again!

If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Director of Volunteer Services Lynn Peters at [lpeters@pegasustr.org](mailto:lpeters@pegasustr.org) or 845-669-8235 x109.

If you know a friend who might like to volunteer, we have new volunteer orientations on March 10, March 28 and April 21. See our website for additional details: [pegasustr.org/events](http://pegasustr.org/events).

## Spring Barn Volunteer Orientations

Looking to spend time in the barn volunteering? We have two upcoming barn volunteer orientations scheduled, and you are warmly invited to attend!

Barn Volunteer Coordinator Elizabeth Wharton will host orientations on Friday, February 16, from 12-2pm and Saturday, March 3, from 11am-1pm. Contact Lizzie at [ewharton@pegasustr.org](mailto:ewharton@pegasustr.org) or at 845-669-8235 x106 for details or to register for orientation.

It's fun, and it's a great way to spend quality time with our wonderful Pegasus horses!



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