

Strides Therapeutic Horsemanship Center

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Horse Leader - Lessons Volunteer

As a **Horse Leader volunteer** at Strides, you play a crucial role in guiding and supporting both the horse and participant during lessons. Your responsibilities include leading the horse, ensuring safety, and providing encouragement to create a positive experience for the rider.

Commitment to a full 4-week session is essential, as participants build trust and confidence through consistency. The bond formed between the rider, horse, and leader enhances learning, emotional connection, and overall progress. Your dedication helps create a stable and supportive environment, making a meaningful impact on each participant's journey.

Position: Horse Leader

Organization: Strides

Location: On Site

Commitment: Commit to a 4 week session shift, plus make up week after (**5 week commitment**) same day, same times, same horse and rider combo each week.

Position Overview:

The Horse Leader plays a vital role in ensuring the safety and success of therapeutic riding sessions by leading and handling the horse throughout the lesson. This position requires individuals with prior horse experience who can maintain control of the horse while supporting the needs of the rider. The Horse Leader works closely with the instructor, side walkers, and riders to create a positive and therapeutic environment.

Key Responsibilities:

- Lead the horse during therapeutic riding sessions, maintaining control and ensuring safety.
- Follow instructions from the riding instructor regarding pace, direction, and rider needs.
- Groom and tack up horses before lessons and untack/care for them afterward.
- Assist in leading horses to and from pens or pastures as needed.
- Monitor the horse's behavior and well-being throughout the session.
- Communicate effectively with side walkers, instructors, and riders to promote a smooth and enjoyable experience.
- Assist with general chores and horse care as needed.
- Follow all safety protocols and procedures to ensure the well-being of riders and horses.

Qualifications & Requirements:

- Prior experience handling and leading horses is required.
- Ability to walk for extended periods, jog short distances, and work in an outdoor environment.
- Comfortable working with individuals with disabilities in a respectful and patient manner.
- Strong communication and teamwork skills.
- Ability to follow directions and adapt to changing situations.
- Must be at least 15, younger depending on maturity and height.
- Completion of volunteer training and safety orientation.

Time Commitment:

- Minimum commitment of 4 week session, same day, time, and horse and rider combinations.
- Availability during scheduled lesson times: Varies per season, mornings, afternoons and evening available.
- Attendance at periodic training sessions and meetings as required.

Benefits of Volunteering:

- Gain hands-on experience working with horses in a therapeutic setting.
- Make a meaningful impact in the lives of individuals with disabilities.
- Be part of a supportive and compassionate team.
- Develop leadership and communication skills.
- Enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding volunteer experience.

If you are passionate about horses and helping others, we would love to have you as part of our team! To apply or learn more, please contact Lesley at volunteer@stridestc.org or fill out an application on our website stridestc.org under the volunteer portal tab.