



Dear Friend,

I invite your organization to participate in a unique event called **Saddle Up for SIRE** that helps improve the lives of people with special needs through therapeutic horsemanship programs.

It's easy to get involved. While horse owners throughout Texas are gearing up to ride in our 26<sup>th</sup> annual Saddle Up for SIRE benefit trail ride, we are encouraging local companies to create Virtual Trail ride teams by encouraging employees to participate in our online fundraising activities. The companies who participate will be included among our many Saddle Up for SIRE sponsors for 2018.

To get started, a company or group can create a team page on our Saddle Up for SIRE fundraising platform, and then employees or group members can create their own individual pages to share information about SIRE and the amazing things SIRE accomplishes when we pair certified equine therapeutic riding instructors and specially trained horses with riders with special needs who are seeking ways to improve the quality of their daily lives.

Last year, 98 percent of our riders reported physical improvements, 98 percent reported psychological benefits, 91 percent had improved social interactions, 81 improved their communication skills and 81 percent experienced improved cognitive function – all thanks to the healing power of our horses.

All contributions to SIRE are fully tax-deductible.

SIRE is the oldest and largest therapeutic horsemanship program in Southeast Texas. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (EIN 74-2168515) that helps participants overcome a variety of physical, emotional and cognitive challenges.

First words, first steps, first taste of unbridled joy are just some of the miracles our riders experience.

- SIRE serves children and adults with varying diagnoses, including:
  - Autism, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, brain injury and stroke
  - 306 riders received 11,446 hours of instruction in 2017
- Riders come from nine counties around Houston, including:
  - Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller and Colorado
- SIRE is a Premier Accredited Center by Path International:
  - Undergoes regular operational and financial audits
  - Adheres to rigid standards of safety and excellence in the therapeutic riding industry
  - Provided 1,560 hours of professional continuing educational training in 2017
- SIRE is gold-rated by GuideStar and is accredited by the Houston BBB
- The work of SIRE's staff is supplemented by the work of volunteers:
  - In 2017, SIRE saw 31,306 volunteer hours completed, worth \$755,726.84

SIRE now has riding centers in Hockley, Spring and Richmond. Our program gains added visibility because we annually host this area's Special Olympics equestrian events as well as numerous educational events to train and certify therapeutic riding instructors and volunteers from similar programs across the state and around the country. Our riders participate in the numerous competitions including the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the All-SIRE Horse Show.

**This year's Saddle Up for SIRE benefit trail ride on Oct. 20, 2018, at 7iL Ranch just west of Houston** will draw hundreds of riders, volunteers and donors from all over Central and Southeast Texas. Event tickets are available online for any fundraisers who wish to attend and see for themselves the successes our riders achieve.

Please contact me if you have any questions about how to get started.

Sincerely,

K Leonard  
2018 Saddle Up for SIRE Chairman  
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