**Overview:** DEFHR’s mission is not only to rescue and rehabilitate suffering horses, but to prevent abuse and neglect through education and community outreach. DEFHR offers a wide variety of educational programs and internships, providing opportunities for experiential learning. DEFHR also provides online resources for learning about equine welfare, rescue, rehabilitation, and training.

Nicky Wetzelberger, DEFHR’s Community Outreach Director, talks about opportunities to learn and join in activities happening at the farm every day.

[00;17;05] DEFHR’s really unique because we welcome all people to the farm. So, we have people coming to the farm, it’s there first time working with horses. They’re brand new to the horse world. And we also have opportunities for people that have grown up with horses, have more advanced horse-handling skills, to also come out to the farm and help in any way that they can.

[00;36;00] When people first come to the farm they have an orientation, they receive a tour, and they get to learn about our mission and the work we’re doing and the horses that we’re currently housing and helping. After their orientation, they have two trainings that they attend: one is a horse-handling training, and another is a barn chore training. Just to help make them more comfortable when they’re in the barn. Give them the opportunity to meet people at the farm and kind of connect, and make friendships.

[01;06;08] Days End has hundreds of people come to visit our farm every year. They attend classes, clinics, they just come to take tours. And we really want people to leave here and talk about their experience. We want to offer them a unique experience. Let them see our horses, learn about them, get up close with them, meet them, hear their stories, and know why we’re important in the community.

[01;26;00] We want people to leave here, go home, and talk about the experience they had. And maybe, through their experience, they now understand what to do if they see a horse that’s being neglected, who they can call, where they can reach out to people....

[01;44;24] So, the more people we educate about horses, in turn the more horses we’re helping. We’re teaching people about the horse-human connection and the rare bond that humans and horses can share. When people leave our farm, they’re telling people about the experience they had. What they saw, what they felt, the sounds, sights, smells of the farm. And hopefully, when they go home if they see a horse that is abused or being neglected, they now know the resources they can reach out to and who they can call.

[02;52;20] That horse is getting a second chance at life. And how many people and how many animals wish they could have a second chance at life. And the horses that are here get that. Because of our supporters, our donors, our volunteers, we are able to provide a second chance for these horses and give them the care that they deserve. So, really, when you see them come off and you just know they’re in the best care, they’re in the best hands, they’ve got experts in all their fields working with them.... just to watch them shine and grow....

[3;31;06] It’s incredible the trust these horses have in humans. Most of the horses that have come here have never had safety, they’ve never felt compassion from a human. Yet they come here and they allow our staff, our volunteers, our supporters, our donors to help them. They trust, they try, and they allow us to help them heal.

[04;02;24] DEFHR could not do what we do, and help so many horses without the help of our volunteers. We have volunteers that are assisting in the barn every single day, with the basic, everyday health of the horses, helping groom them, feed them, and taking them in and out of fields. But we also have volunteers that are behind the scenes that are helping with writing grants, helping govern our organization on the board, helping in the office, is so important for the organization to continue growing.

[04;35;04] One way to prevent neglect and abuse is to continue educating people. So, when people come to the farm we’re teaching them about the horse-human connection. They’re learning about horse psychology, why horses do the things they do, why they act the way they do, and, in turn, people are learning a sense of compassion toward these animals.

[05;17;02] DEFHR has a range of people that come to volunteer and attend our education classes. We invite animal welfare professionals on site. And they attend our equine cruelty investigation classes, where they’re learning how they can be more effective in the field when they see abuse and neglect with equines and they know what to do and help them be better at their jobs.

[05;43;18] We also offer opportunities for internships. So, our internship program provides the rare opportunity to offer recent graduates or current college students the opportunity to come and live on a working farm, at a horse rescue, three to six months, and they really get a rare glimpse into a horse rescue and how it operates.

[06;06;02] Our intern program allows the interns to work alongside staff providing this life-saving care for these equines and they really, really walk away with an extremely unique experience that they wouldn’t find at many farms.

[06;26;10] Our volunteer program welcomes youth the age of five all the way up to adults. Any age from five and up can come and really benefit from volunteering at the farm. In youth, it really teaches a sense of responsibility and compassion for other living things.

[06;56;09] Because they are taking care of these horses. They are helping feed them. They are cleaning up after them. They are in charge of the basic care of these animals.

[07;28;00] We give people the opportunity to learn and heal from these horses. We have people that come to us through all walks of life. They’re all going through their own things at home, and when they come to Days End there’s a sense of family, friendship, of being accepted. And the horses help people heal and get through their daily struggles in life, or whatever may be going on.

[07;56;11] So, when people come to Days End, they can expect to gain a sense of community, and friends along the way. Everyone here is working towards something so much bigger than ourselves. We’re helping horses in need.

[08;32;10] The horses that come to us don’t have a voice. So, we’re able to give them a platform to stand on with thousands of people behind them.

[09;17;09] There’s so much that people and horses can gain from each other.

[09;58;00] Whether it’s a child and their coming out to the farm and it’s their first time grooming a horse, and learning about caring for horses. Or it’s an adult, that grew up with horses and hasn’t been around horses in 20 years and we’re now giving them the opportunity to help us care for our horses every day. There’s special moments that are happening every day.

[10;42;20] The sense of community, and the amount of people that get behind our horses and help them. And it really takes so many people to help the horses at our farm.

[11;20;08] DEFHR is so much bigger than any of us, and what we’re doing here is incredible.

[11;29;20] When people invest in DEFHR, they’re really investing in the future of the community. They’re investing in the future of Maryland, and horses, because we are able to reach so many people.

[12;08;05] When people come to the farm, they can expect to work with a wide range of horses. We’re an all-breed rescue. So, volunteers, interns, staff are getting on the end of a lead rope with a very diverse herd. They all have different backgrounds, from little miniature ponies, to off-the-track thoroughbreds. People are learning through experience here, and they’re getting to learn from a large herd of horses that all have different backgrounds and came from different places to us.

[13;00;00] (Shot of a horse rolling after a bath, volunteers laughing....)

[13;50;00] So, when horses come to DEFHR, we’re trying to provide them with a natural environment to live in. And, we like to think that Days End is just a temporary place for them. A temporary stop as they continue on in trying to find their forever home. And our volunteers are a huge reason in why we can make that happen. Because they support us from the everyday care, to farm inspections, so we can ensure that that horse is never going to be abused or neglected again.