



Photo: Kelli Uldall

Equine Nonprofit Expands to Meet the Moment

BY RENEE BRINCKS

Lori Tuttle with Tommy, who previously worked as an eventing horse and a police horse. Tommy now works with Tuttle in Equine Assisted Learning.

After leading equine-assisted learning programs for more than 20 years—including 13 as founder of Hope, Horses & Kids—Lori Tuttle knows how working with horses helps people grow. She's watched individuals gain confidence, solve problems, learn boundary-setting skills, and build physical strength, whether they're living with autism, social anxiety or other challenges.

When the pandemic closed schools, Tuttle's River Road nonprofit expanded its focus from special-needs children to a wider audience.

"Our mission is to make horses accessible to kids and adults of all abilities," she says, citing summer camps and school-year programs that cover everything from grooming, groundwork

and riding to games, crafts and academics. "We teach connection and relationships and horsemanship skills and life skills."

This fall, Hope, Horses & Kids is launching new vocational and therapeutic programs at Rancho Cielo Youth Campus, along with a horse-powered reading program that will be open to the public. The organization also offers one-on-one sessions customized to specific needs.

"Horses meet you where you are, and what you see in a horse is what you get. A lot of clients and kids don't get that from the people around them," Tuttle says. "I just want to bring the magic of horses into people's lives."

For more information or to donate, please visit www.hopehorseskids.org or call 831/596-6693.