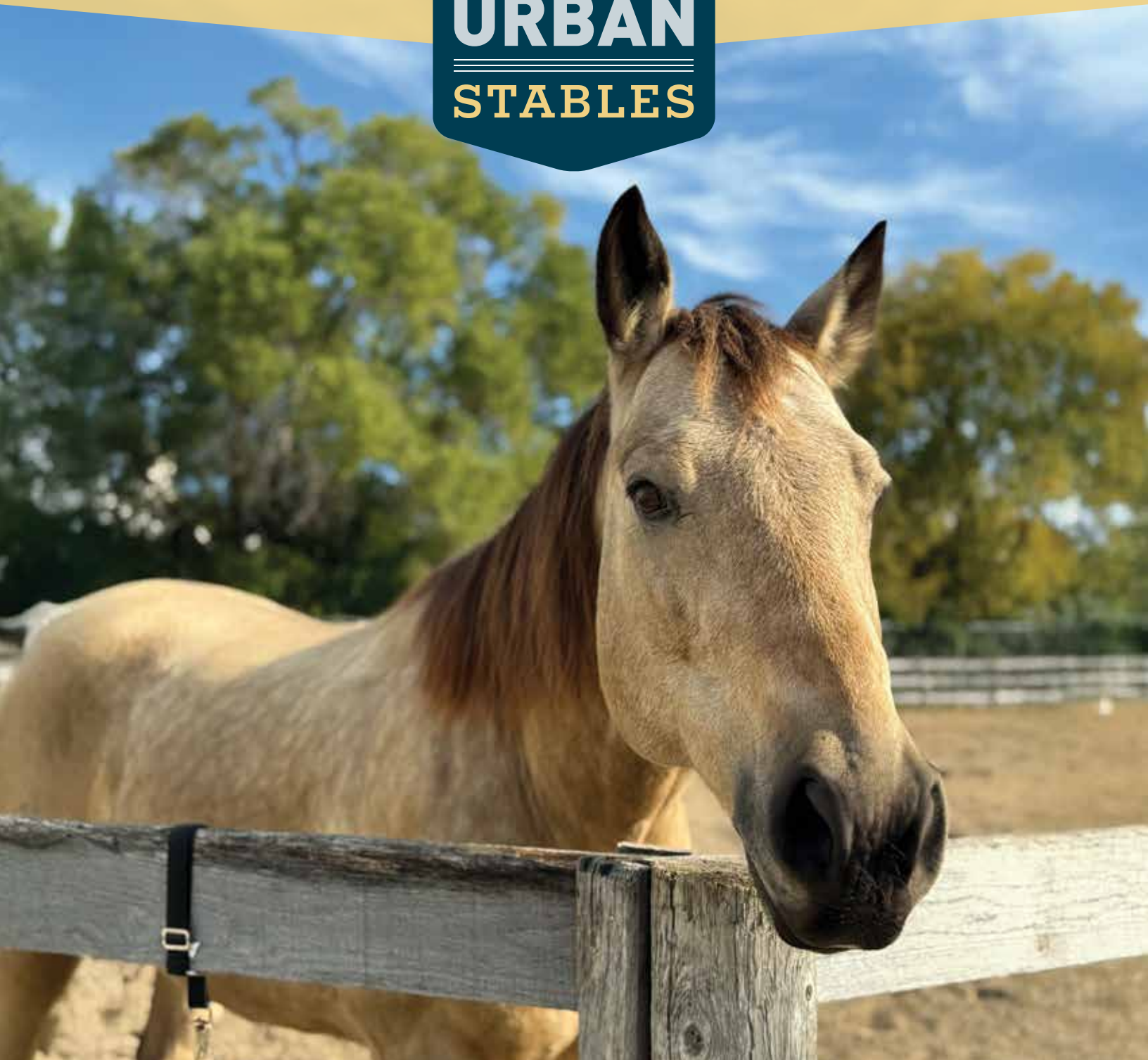




2025 Annual Report

DEAR FRIENDS,

Some of the most meaningful moments at MKE Urban Stables are the quiet ones. A child who hasn't spoken much during a session suddenly begins talking while brushing a horse. A Veteran who carries visible weight on their shoulders exhales—deeply—for what feels like the first time. A young person who arrived unsure and guarded leaves standing a little taller. These moments don't make headlines. But they are everything.

When we first imagined bringing equine-assisted mental wellness into the heart of Milwaukee, we believed horses could help people heal in ways that traditional environments sometimes cannot. What we have witnessed confirms that belief again and again. Horses meet people without judgment. They respond to authenticity. They mirror emotion. And in doing so, they create space for trust, confidence, and connection to grow.

In 2025, we continued serving more than 1,500 individuals annually—children, Veterans, individuals with disabilities, adults with mental health and/or substance abuse, seniors, and first responders. We strengthened our trauma-informed programs and deepened our partnership with the Milwaukee Police Department Mounted Patrol, creating opportunities for positive engagement and relationship-building between youth and officers. This year also marked an important milestone as we launched a new partnership with Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Services through the Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program. But numbers only tell part of the story.

What truly defines this year is the courage of those who walk through our gates. Healing is not linear. It takes patience. It takes trust. It takes safe spaces and steady support. Every person who enters our arena carries something unseen—and every day, our staff, volunteers, and horses show up ready to meet them with care.

We are profoundly grateful to our donors, board members, community partners, and volunteers. Your belief in this mission allows us to offer hope where it is needed most. You are part of every breakthrough moment. You are part of every small step forward.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to growing thoughtfully, protecting the well-being of our horses, and ensuring that this sanctuary of healing continues to serve Milwaukee for years to come.

Thank you for standing with us. Thank you for believing that healing can begin with a single hoofbeat.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Mary McIntosh
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A handwritten signature of Mary McIntosh in blue ink.



Edward Krishok
BOARD PRESIDENT

A handwritten signature of Edward Krishok in blue ink.

Our Mission

Connecting people with horses and with each other
to build community through service, care, and healing.

SPECIAL THANKS

1895 Bancorp of Wisconsin
Community Foundation, Inc.

AES Foundation

ANON Charitable Trust

Bader Philanthropies, Inc

Charles E. Kubly Foundation

Elizabeth J. Tellier Foundation

Forest County Potawatomi
Foundation

Greater Milwaukee Association
of Realtors Youth Foundation

Green Bay Packers Foundation

Gustav and Gladys Kindt
Foundation

Harri Hoffmann Family
Foundation, Inc.

Harry J. Heeb Foundation

Joseph R. Pabst Fund

The Lynde & Harry
Bradley Foundation

Non Profit Management Fund

Peck Foundation

WaterStone Bank Foundation

WE Energies Foundation

Weiss Family Foundation

Wisconsin Department
of Veterans Affairs

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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RETIRED ATTORNEY

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ATTORNEY, GODFREY & KAHN SC

OUR PROGRAMS

MKE Urban Stables utilizes the incredible connection that exists between humans and horses to help our clients improve their mental health and wellness, reduce stress, find a sense of peace, increase their hope, and heal. Horses are a transformative addition to mental health and wellness programs as they can connect with people of all abilities, engage people who may be hesitant to participate, offer a safe and comforting presence, and help people build trust.

Our programs are divided into two primary models: equine-assisted mental wellness and equine-assisted therapy. Both models use 100% ground-based activities rather than horseback riding, our facility is ADA accessible, and we have implemented accessibility solutions which make our programs fully accessible to all clients of all physical abilities.

Equine-assisted mental wellness programs use experiential horsemanship-based activities and the horse-human bond to help clients understand and engage critically with concepts including communication, emotions, and interpersonal relationships.

Equine-assisted therapy is a modality of psychotherapy that promotes healing and supports individuals with mental health disorders including anxiety, PTSD, depression, and more. During therapy, horses act as a 'mirror' for the client's emotions, helping them recognize their emotions and work through them in a healthy way.

IN 2025, MKE URBAN STABLES SERVED 1,828 PEOPLE THROUGH EQUINE-ASSISTED MENTAL WELLNESS AND THERAPY PROGRAMS THAT:



57 AT-RISK CHILDREN
AND VETERANS
received Equine-Assisted
Mental Health Therapy

578 COMMUNITY
MEMBERS
served through
community outreach

871 EQUINE-ASSISTED
MENTAL WELLNESS
PROGRAM CLIENTS
learned how Mounted Patrol
Officers help keep us safe

1,193 at-risk children, Veterans, people with disabilities, seniors, and other vulnerable
community members participated in the Equine-Assisted Mental Wellness Program





OUR CLIENTS

- At-risk Children
- Veterans
- People with Disabilities
- Seniors
- First Responders
- Adults Diagnosed with Mental Health and/or Substance Abuse Disorders

We serve these populations because they have documented and researched mental health and wellness related challenges and often face barriers to accessing mental health support services.

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Bay View High School
World of Work Program

Belong Wisconsin

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Bridge to Brighter

Centers for Independence

Children's Hospital of
Wisconsin Project Ujima

City on a Hill

Frederick Gaenslen School

Goodwill

Harbor District

Milwaukee County
Behavioral Health Services

Milwaukee Police
Department

Milwaukee Public Schools

Milwaukee Recreation

Milwaukee Royal Family
Kids Club

MSOE School of Nursing

Osher Go Explore

Notre Dame School
of Milwaukee

Rawhide Youth Services

Riley Dual Language
Montessori

Sixteenth Street Community
Health Centers

Southeastern Wisconsin
Veteran Suicide Prevention
Task Force

St. Augustine Preparatory
Academy

St. Charles Youth
& Family Services

United Community Center

Wisconsin Department
of Veteran Affairs

Wise Pathway

Wraparound Milwaukee

Young Marines

Zablocki VA Medical Center

Stable Stories

MKE URBAN STABLES JOINS THE COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Helping Our Most Vulnerable Neighbors Heal Through Horses

In 2025, MKE Urban Stables expanded the reach of our Equine-assisted Mental Wellness Programs by joining the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Services Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program as an approved ancillary provider. As a member of the CCS Network, MKE Urban Stables can now provide Equine-Assisted Learning sessions to adults experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges as part of their individualized recovery plans.

CCS is designed to provide person-centered, community-based psychosocial rehabilitation services. Our Equine-Assisted Learning model aligns directly with the goals of CCS and engages clients through experiential activities that use the horse-human connection to break down barriers to healing. The program is led by Lisa Olson, an EGALA-Certified Equine Specialist with more than 20 years of experience helping clients set and achieve personal goals during her career as an occupational therapist. Sessions are coordinated within the CCS framework to ensure alignment with each participant's recovery goals and broader care team objectives.

For adults managing anxiety, depression, trauma histories, or substance use recovery, Equine-Assisted Learning sessions can:

- Reinforce coping strategies
- Strengthen emotional self-regulation
- Increase frustration tolerance
- Improve interpersonal skills
- Build confidence
- Help participants feel in control of their lives and their healing journey.

This partnership represents an important step in integrating innovative, trauma-informed, experiential equine-assisted modalities into Milwaukee County's public behavioral health continuum. By expanding access to MKE Urban Stables's Equine-Assisted Mental Wellness Programs we are helping vulnerable adults in our community build practical skills that support stability, recovery, and long-term resilience.





MKE URBAN STABLES INTRODUCES THE HOPE SCALE

Measuring Real Impact in Our Equine-Assisted Mental Wellness Programs

Every day at the stables, horses help people of all ages build confidence, improve communication, develop trust, and strengthen emotional resilience through hands-on engaging interactions. Whether a child is working to overcome the mental health impacts of a broken home or a Veteran is learning to build trust again after leaving their military team behind, our gentle herd of equines has an incredible ability to create powerful lasting change. The impact our programs have on clients is obvious when we see the smiles on their faces when they form a bond with a horse, learn how to work with their peers to overcome a challenge, or achieve a personal goal. Unfortunately, it has been hard to measure the true impact of MKE Urban Stables's programs on our most vulnerable neighbors, until now.

Thanks to Bader Philanthropies, MKE Urban Stables will begin using the Hope Scale (developed by psychologist Dr. C.R. Snyder) to evaluate and strengthen the effectiveness of our Equine-Assisted Mental Wellness Programs for both adults and children. The Hope Scale is a well-established, research-backed, and evidence-based tool that measures hope as future oriented goal motivation. It focuses on two core elements: agency which is the ability to sustain mental focus and effort towards pursuing goals, and pathways which is the ability to generate practical routes to reach those goals and overcome challenges along the way. Separate Hope Scale surveys exist for adults and for children making it perfectly suited to the wide range of participants we serve.

By adding pre- and post-program Hope Scale surveys to our Equine-Assisted Mental Wellness Programs we can now:

- Quantify the growth participants experience.
- Identify which activities create the biggest positive shifts in Hope.
- Continuously refine our Equine-Assisted Learning sessions to deliver even greater results.
- Share clear, evidence-based stories of impact with supporters, funders, and partners.

“Hope: The belief that your future will be better than today, and you have the power to make it so.”

Horses have an incredible way of reflecting our emotions so we can recognize them and learn from them all while encouraging us to move forward. The Hope Scale gives MKE Urban Stables a reliable way to show, in black and white, just how much hope and possibility these programs are building – one hoofbeat at a time. We have started tracking these outcomes and will keep you updated on the inspiring results!

WE'VE GOT YOUR SIX

MKE Urban Stables Serves the Mental Health Needs of Veterans

In his first two years as a resident at the Community Living Centers at the Milwaukee VA, John never said a word to anyone; John's caregivers believed he was almost completely nonverbal due to the progression of his dementia. That changed when he met our therapy horse Arion for the first time.

That day, no one knew if John even wanted to attend equine-assisted recreational therapy, but since he hadn't expressed interest in any other activities they thought it was worth a try. During our new Equine-Assisted Recreational Therapy Program for Veterans John looked up at Arion, placed his hand on his soft velvety nose, and told him he was pretty.

The connection John built with Arion that day helped open up his entire world. He found his voice and started to communicate and talk to his caregivers and fellow Veterans when he went back home to the VA.

Many of the Veterans we serve tell us they feel like no one has had their six, or in other words had their back, since they left the military. Our equine-assisted wellness and therapy programs for Veterans work to change that.

The healing power of horses is absolutely incredible; horses are able to touch our hearts and make connections with people who struggle to connect with anyone else. This is particularly true for the Veterans we serve. So many have a hard time opening up, letting themselves trust someone else, and building new relationships. Our therapy horses (and donkeys) offer a good first new friend for many Veterans. They provide a calm, kind, and patient heart to open up to and help Veterans learn they can trust someone to have their six again.





A BLOSSOMING PROGRAM

New Community Partnership Supports Veteran Mental Wellness Now and In the Future

"Being around horses is so calming. The work these animals do, using their senses to help people, is just incredible," said a Milwaukee School of Engineering Population Health nursing student, after participating in a new clinical learning opportunity developed through an exciting new partnership between MKE Urban Stables and MSOE.

Every Wednesday, a VA Recreational Therapist brings Veteran residents of the Milwaukee VA Community Living Center to MKE Urban Stables for an hour of Equine-Assisted recreational therapy. MSOE shares MKE Urban Stables's passion for serving Veterans in our community; this partnership presented a perfect opportunity for the nursing students to learn about equine-assisted learning and therapy programs and engage with Veterans with disabilities for a mutually beneficial experience.

The new clinical learning opportunity has been a wonderful success! During the program, nursing students learn about the horse's role as a therapy partner and how recreational therapy can help improve mood, provide a sense of calm,

and enhance social connections as humans share their experiences with the horses. Nursing students then participate in equine-assisted activities with Veterans



to learn first-hand how horses help Veterans strengthen fine motor skills, promote independence, build confidence, and reduce social isolation. We look forward to building our partnership with MSOE to ensure future nurses understand the importance of mental wellness and the ways horses can help Veterans heal and thrive!

Meet the Herd



OUR ANIMALS

PJ | Age: 8 | Breed: Miniature Donkey | Likes: Tito, nose kisses, dogs, standing on the bridge during programs, bananas. | Dislikes: Baths, the vet.

Franny | Age: 25 | Breed: Miniature Horse | Likes: Hawkeye, tall dark and handsome geldings, cucumbers. | Dislikes: Baths, fly spray, Hawkeye when he won't let her hang out with other guys.

Hawkeye | Age: 24 | Breed: Miniature Horse | Likes: Franny, pretending he's tall, playing in the indoor arena. | Dislikes: Other horses looking at Franny.

Tito | Age: 12 | Breed: Miniature Donkey | Likes: acting like an uncle and teaching manners, his best friend Little Joe. | Dislikes: Pollen (it bothers his seasonal allergies), waiting for breakfast, PJ.

Hippiie | Age: 11 | Breed: Quarter Horse | Likes: Bananas, peppermints, playing soccer, playing in the snow. | Dislikes: Wearing all 4 fly boots at once, not being the first one out of the barn.

Little Joe | Age: 13 | Breed: Quarter Horse | Likes: Bonanza and Little House on the Prairie, his new best friend Tito. | Dislikes: Apples and carrots, people calling him short because he's technically a pony... he's 1 inch away from being a horse!

Arion | Age: 13 | Breed: Off-track Thoroughbred | Likes: Peppermints, the police horse mares, showing off his smile. | Dislikes: Tarps, curry combs, standing in the wash rack.

Snickers & Oreo | Breed: Guinea Pig | Likes: Hay, carrots, apples, saying hi to volunteers and clients and begging for treats! | Dislikes: Having their nails trimmed.

OUR PEOPLE



Mary McIntosh

Role: Executive Director

Likes: Hiking with my dogs, milk chocolate w/ PB, Pasta Arrabiata, summer sunshine, being in the water, and seeing the herd eating their breakfast in the morning.

Dislikes: Seafood, being late, cranky people, cooking.



Hannah Offermann

Role: Development Director

Likes: Writing grants, picking hooves, knitting, kissing PJ's nose.

Dislikes: Getting up early, olives, jigsaw and word search puzzles.



Tiffany Pettengill

Role: Volunteer Coordinator

Likes: Photography, dancing, hockey, meeting new people, and hanging with our herd.

Dislikes: Cooking, mushrooms, laundry.



Nancy Ryan

Role: Equine-Assisted Learning Program Coordinator/Facilitator

Likes: Cooking and cookbooks, movie soundtracks, bird songs, butterflies and bees, horses and donkeys checking out the books I'm reading.

Dislikes: Car trouble, laundry, okra, having to rush.



Gwen Spangler

Role: Barn Hand Lead

Likes: Online shopping, cooking, all animals but mainly horses, being a mom and grandma, Eagle River, family vacations.

Dislikes: Doing dishes, Amazon bills, not seeing more of my family.



Lisa Olson

Role: Equine-Assisted Learning Facilitator

Likes: Braiding manes and tails, spending time with my family and my horse Clifford, coffee.

Dislikes: Milk, when it's not sunny, cold weather.



Maxwell Davidson

Role: Barn Manager & Equine Specialist

Likes: Training horses, listening to music, being by the lake, hiking.

Dislikes: Brussel sprouts, fireworks, traffic, dirty paddocks.



Margaret Desch

Role: Barn Hand Lead

Likes: Working with the equines, volunteers and staff at MKE Urban Stables, spending time with family, walks with my dog, yoga.

Dislikes: The sound of my alarm waking me up at 5 am for my AM chore shift, cleaning the drains in the barn.



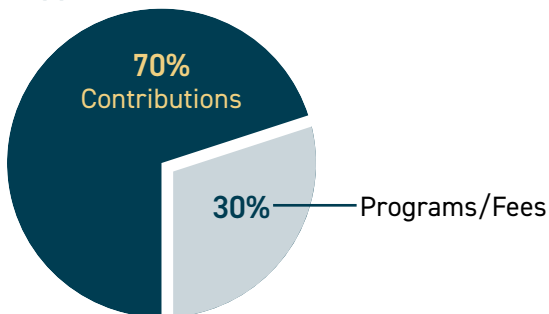
MANE ENDOWMENT BENEFITS MKE URBAN STABLES MISSION

MKE Urban Stables is excited and honored to announce that we now have an endowment! Thanks to generous donations from Gerald and Barbara Mainman, the Mane Endowment was created and launched in December of 2023 and continues to grow to support our mission. The Mane Endowment will provide sustainable financial support for the MKE Urban Stables mission for many years to come.

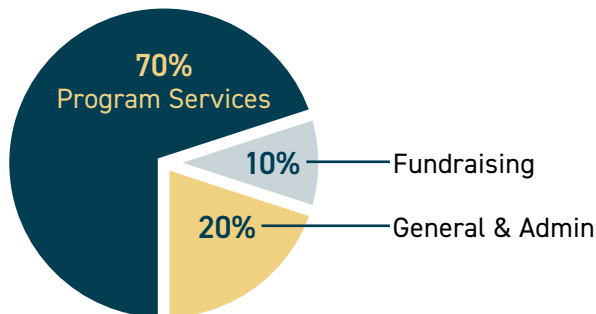
Earnings from the Mane Endowment can be used to increase access to our equine-assisted programs for at-risk youth by providing program scholarships to non-profit organizations in the community that lack the funding to cover the nominal cost to participate. The Mane Endowment allows our donors to go beyond their annual giving to leave a legacy and provides the vehicle for a bequest to the Mane Endowment in their will.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION*

Support & Revenue



Functional Expenses



*Please contact MKE Urban Stables if you would like a copy of our full financial statements.

MAKE A GIFT TODAY AND FOR THE FUTURE OF MKE URBAN STABLES

Are you already making annual gifts to help support the MKE Urban Stables mission? Consider adding a planned gift to your donations this year. Increase the impact of your giving, receive greater tax savings, preserve wealth for you and your family, and help us continue our mission in the future.

Mary McIntosh, Executive Director, would be happy to discuss this wonderful new opportunity to leave a legacy. Please contact her at 414-526-0460 or by email at McIntosh@mkeurbanstables.org.

5,967 HOURS SERVED
BY VOLUNTEERS
IN 2025

Our volunteers support our mission through selfless service, caring for our herd 365 days a year—rain, shine, or snow.

2026 IMPORTANT DATES

Veteran Meet & Greet

Sponsored by WI Department of Veteran Affairs

April 7, 2026, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Volunteer Kentucky Derby Party

May 2, 2026

Veteran Meet & Greet

Sponsored by WI Department of Veteran Affairs

June 2, 2026, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Veteran Meet & Greet

Sponsored by WI Department of Veteran Affairs

August 4, 2026, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Harbor Fest

600 E. Greenfield Ave, Milwaukee

September 27, 2026

Veteran Meet & Greet

Sponsored by WI Department of Veteran Affairs

October 6, 2026, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

5th Annual Appreciation Event

October 2026 - TBD

Veteran's Fall Fest

November 2026 – TBD

Veteran Meet & Greet

Sponsored by WI Department of Veteran Affairs

December 1, 2026, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Volunteer Holiday Party

December 2026 – TBD

HOW YOU CAN HELP IN 2026

Sponsorship

Our hard-working therapy horses (and donkeys!), the heart of our organization, incur many expenses. These include veterinary costs, farrier and dental fees, feed, shavings, and equipment. A \$6,000 sponsorship not only supports these expenses but directly contributes to the well-being and care of our horses, making a significant impact throughout the year.

A Gift of Any Size

MKE Urban Stables is a 501 (c) (3) organization that relies on the generosity of our community. General undesignated offerings are welcome year-round to assist with daily operations and the special care of our horses. Your donation, a testament to your support, is not only impactful but also tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law, providing you with a financial benefit. You can donate on our website, www.mkeurbanstables.org, on a one-time or recurring monthly basis.



Stay up-to-date on MKE Urban Stables news, events, and our herd by following us on social media [@MKEUrbanStables](https://www.instagram.com/MKEUrbanStables).