

The D.O.V.E.S Guidance Program

Discovering Our Visions through Equestrian Services Mentor/Instructor Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers (DOVES) are indispensable at all levels of the organization and need not be equine-oriented. Some bring skills in horsemanship, others bring leadership skills, and others simply bring understanding and acceptance in seeking fuller, more satisfying lives for themselves. They bring new ideas and insight to the program and frequently enlist their friends! Most volunteers readily agree that they gain as much, or more, than they give. Volunteers are people who reach out to others and help improve quality of life for all involved.

Would you like to volunteer for The DOVES Guidance Program? Please read the information below to learn more. Our [Volunteer Manual](#) is also an excellent source of information about the procedures and responsibilities of volunteers. All potential volunteers must fill out our [Volunteer Application](#)

Qualifications

In addition to warm smiles and willing hearts, there are a few basic qualifications to be met by volunteers in order for The DOVES Program to meet the objective for a safe, quality program. Volunteers should be available to join a team and function as a team member. Reasoning and sound judgment skills joined with commitment to the rider are characteristics of an indispensable volunteer.

Requirements

Physical requirements are not demanding yet need to be addressed. Good health is important for volunteers working directly with horses and riders because these volunteers work in varying weather conditions and on diverse terrain.

The minimum age requirement for Mentor/instructor is 18. We may make exceptions for younger people with extensive horse experience. Prior approval is necessary.

Appropriate forms must be completed (see below)

All volunteers must complete our volunteer training, which is provided monthly. This training includes horse handling, rider assistance procedures, emergency dismounts of riders, ranch tour, and a visit to a class in progress. Only certified volunteers may participate inside the arena during class. This includes officers, board members, parents/guardians, etc!

To sign up for volunteer training, contact Gayle Oxford.

Responsibilities

When you volunteer to be a “DOVE” it will be your responsibility to make sure all the children under your supervision has a positive and safe experience. These children will look to you for guidance and instruction and reassurance. As a DOVE, it is important that you are on time and adhere to program policies. The volunteers play a crucial role in maintaining safety for riders, staff, and the horse.

We need our volunteers to set a good example for riders in being responsive and caring to the horses at all times. Horse handlers should be kind yet firm with the animals making sure that the horse understands what is being asked of it.

Prepared, caring, and responsive volunteers form an invincible team. We all need to work together to provide the best care and attention to our students. They are the reason we are here!

Commitment of Volunteers

The DOVES Program should be considered a serious commitment, we want the time you give to our program and to the children to be a soul rewarding labor of love. The DOVES Program can not grow if we did not have our volunteers!

Statement of Values:

The program and ranch is not associated with any particular religious congregation. However, D.O.V.E.S. is a faith-based organization. The ranch is founded on the same Judeo-Christian values that our nation was built upon. Faith on the ranch is "lived" not "preached." Because the Founders and Board of Directors believe in God and the saving grace of His Son Jesus Christ, it is our greatest desire to serve God by the demonstration of our faith through action by our love for Him and the support of families. It is our highest honor to serve children and families of all backgrounds.