

Forever In Our Hearts: Cherry Starr

May 3, 1934 - February 27, 2024

With a heart for helping those in need, Cherry's unwavering dedication to everyone around her was infectious. She always treated people with dignity and respect and was always willing to express her love, kindness, and friendship to others.

As we mourn the loss of Cherry, we are reminded of her generosity and devotion to Rawhide. As one of Rawhide's co-founders, Cherry gave her life to serving others, including her family, her Green Bay Packers team, Rawhide youth, and her community.

Thank you, Cherry, for your endless love and support for everyone around you and the youth at Rawhide. You will remain forever in our hearts.

"To whom much is given, much will be required."
(Luke 12:48)

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Dear Family & Friends,

As I write this year's message, I am reminded of my dear friend Cherry Starr. Her vision to love all young people unconditionally and create spaces for healing has been key to Rawhide's growth. For nearly 60 years, she poured herself into this organization, the youth we serve, and the teams that serve them. It's an understatement to say if she and Bart had not dedicated themselves to Rawhide, our organization may not be here today. Her spirit lives among us as we continue to help Wisconsin youth heal. Cherry's love and compassion are at the heart of all we do, and our 2023 accomplishments are a testament to her legacy at Rawhide.

This past year, collaboration continued to be a cornerstone of our success. Through strategic partnerships, we built bridges that connect at-risk youth to a network of support. Together, we continue to help create communities where compassion, understanding, love, and empathy serve as pillars of healing.

Our commitment to providing trauma-informed principles in our mental and behavioral health services remains unwavering. With advocacy and awareness, we embrace the journey to take our youth from surviving to thriving. We continue to address the mental healthcare challenges we face across the state and country, including inadequate funding and insufficient number of therapists, and to do everything we can to make it more sustainable for our youth and families.

To our dedicated team, compassionate partners, and generous supporters, thank you for being an integral part of the Rawhide story, for believing in the transformative power of love and compassion, and for joining us on our journey to provide mental and behavioral health services to at-risk youth. Your support has been crucial in making a positive impact on countless lives.

As we celebrate the milestones achieved, we also recognize the profound responsibility that lies ahead. With your continued support, we will navigate our journey together, lighting the way for countless youth searching for hope and healing.

Alan B. Loux

President and CEO, Rawhide Youth Services

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2023 ANNUAL REPORT





Who Is Rawhide?

FOUNDED ON COMPASSION. FUELED BY FAITH. A MISSION TO SAVE YOUNG LIVES.

Since 1965, our mission has been one of faith—faith in the potential of the youth we serve and our staff who guide them. Rawhide Youth Services is built on hope and compassion, instilled within us that we pass on to our youth every day for a second chance at life and a successful future.

The youth we serve have experienced unimaginable difficulties and many struggle with anger, anxiety, depression, abuse, trauma, suicidal thoughts, and more. Seeing them lose hope is heartbreaking, but we are determined to create a path to hope for these survivors. Even if there are setbacks, we are always there for them as they continue moving forward to a brighter future.

Our approach focuses on a variety of evidence-based approaches to address the whole person: emotional, physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, vocational, and environmental. With love, support, and resources, our team works hard to help every youth reach their true potential and demonstrate the courage needed to create real change within themselves.

Residential Services

Court-appointed young men and women come to live at Rawhide's residential campuses during some of the lowest points of their lives—when they're endangered, abused, or have made poor choices. At Rawhide, they don't find judgment. Instead, they find the love, compassion, and hope they've been missing. Through relationship-based residential treatment, education, therapy, and life skills development, they are given the tools and support to make lasting change.

Youth Counseling

Rawhide's community-based youth counseling provides a safe space for young men and women to talk about their feelings in a comfortable, judgment-free setting. All of our professional therapists have earned master's degrees and are licensed, or in training to become licensed, to best support struggling youth.

Rawhide continues to be a leading mental and behavioral health organization. Our therapists are embedded in over 40 schools and we are the largest provider of equine-assisted therapy in the state. We have 10 counseling clinics for youth and family sessions, as well as offer our services through telehealth and in-home settings.

Our counseling services include:

- Traditional Talk Therapy
 Group Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- School-Based Therapy
- CHAPS Equine-Assisted Therapy

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Ways to Support

As a leading mental and behavioral health organization for traumatized youth, we shine a light on a path to hope and healing—and need your help. When you donate to Rawhide, you are helping change the lives of countless youth in our schools, communities, and residential programs throughout Wisconsin. At the end of the day, our goal is for youth to become confident in their abilities and have the tools and resources necessary to live healthy, successful lives in their communities.

We couldn't do the lifesaving work we do without the following sources of support from donors in our community:

- Monetary Donations
- Vehicle Donations
- Planned Giving/Estate Donations

RAWHIDE.ORG/GIVE-TO-RAWHIDE



Job Training

Rawhide's Behavioral Job Training Program supports both our residential youth and young adults in local high schools and communities. Our program is designed for those who suffered trauma and are discovering their strengths to break through employment barriers in the future. Through these opportunities, youth gain practical, marketable skills and have an opportunity to receive industry certificates of completion, while also earning academic credit.

Our program opportunities include:

- Career Development
- Culinary Arts

• Automotive

Welding



Career EXCELerate Wisconsin

Career EXCELerate is a career training and placement program designed for individuals who experience trauma or are battling mental or behavioral health challenges.

Rawhide Youth Services, Goodwill NCW, and Fox Valley Technical College help community members develop in-demand job skills and discover a fulfilling career. This job training program is offered at no cost and upon completion, individuals are supported in their job search.

Throughout the program, students are supported by Rawhide navigators, Goodwill case managers, and FVTC academic advisors to ensure students succeed every step of the way—staying with them through their first year of employment.

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Behavioral Job Training Program

Launched in 2021, Rawhide's Behavioral Job Training Program provides career training through curriculum-based education. This program is offered to residential youth and New London and Shiocton High School students to earn industry certificates of completion and academic credit.

Job training options include a specialty-designed career development class, practical automotive technology instruction, hands-on learning experiences in culinary arts, and now an off-campus welding course—a new addition in 2023 through a partnership with Titan Industries and Miller Electric. These classes are designed with a trauma-informed lens to help youth who have faced especially tough childhoods and need extra support. After completing these courses, residents become qualified to work on campus through our work experience program (WEP), earning money that they can take with them once they leave Rawhide.

The certifications earned in our job training program are industry-recognized. Early this summer, a former residential youth, Kenny, used his automotive certifications to help get a job at a local auto shop in his hometown. According to Kenny,

the shop owner was impressed with his knowledge of auto mechanics, and his five months of employment through our WEP.

Residential program youth enrolled in the programs complete 48 hours of training over six weeks with four youth per cohort per program, earning 0.25 academic credits. Unlike the residential programs, New London and Shiocton students complete 180 hours of training during a traditional high school semester, earning one academic credit at the high school level. Culinary arts students also receive an additional three dual credits through Fox Valley Technical College at the post-secondary level.

In a post-class survey, one student wrote:

"When I say, 'thank you for having me this semester', I mean to say thank you for much more than the class. It was here that I made some of my closest friends. It was here that I was allowed to be myself. It was here that, in a world of crushing darkness, I finally found an eternal light. I found another person here to tell me that I'm not a loser. My dreams aren't impossible. I know this class might not mean that much to everyone else, but it came at a time when I really needed some reassurance."

We're WELDING!

Welding has become a successful addition to our Behavioral Job Training Program. Currently offered exclusively to residential youth, two cohorts have completed the welding course thus far.

Titan Industries has graciously helped build welding equipment and a specific area in their shop for students. In addition, Miller Electric donated welding machinery and materials to help our students thrive and gain lifelong experience.

As we continue this new opportunity, we hope to instill even more confidence in our students and provide skill sets that will impact their lives forever.

Students who completed these courses received certificates of course completion from the respective association, as well as S/P2 (Safety and Pollution Prevention) certificates.



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Job Training Impact

Behavioral Job Training Program History

- Summer 2021 Piloted the career class, serving 20 youth
- May 2022 Added the culinary and automotive vocational training program to residential youth
- September 2022 New London High School joined as a partner
- Summer 2023 Added the welding program with Titan Industries to residential youth
- August 2023 Shiocton High School joined as a partner

Program Launch to Date

- 222 Total Student Enrollments
- 35 Community Youth (31 New London, 4 Shiocton)
- 187 Residential Youth

Program Results

- 92% of Rawhide students would recommend the classes they took to a friend
- The average competency-based scores increased from 38% to 82% (culinary), 39% to 98% (automotive), and 44% to 95% (welding)

Students Who Completed the Career Course:

- 97% prepared a professional resume (compared to 13% pre-course)
- 95% identified and researched careers that are a good match for them (compared to 76% pre-course)

Partnerships

- Career class curriculum Goodwill NCW and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Culinary curriculum National Restaurant Association
- Auto curriculum Wisconsin Auto and Truck Dealer's Association
- Welding curriculum American Welding Society



Building Hope CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

By raising over ^s6 million through our Building Hope Capital Campaign, we continue to make exceptional progress as we expand and enhance Rawhide's life-changing services for youth and their families. So far, the campaign has allowed Rawhide to build and remodel facilities such as the Starr Youth Home and the Welcome Center. Capital campaign-funded projects include:

Bart and Cherry Starr Museum: Cherry wished the museum to be on Rawhide's grounds to share their character, values, and life story with staff, donors, and youth. We aim to showcase the essence of their life journey, providing inspiration and guidance to all who experience its carefully curated exhibits. Working closely with Cherry and the Starr family, the Green Bay Packers, and the NFL, we take great honor in showing the Starr's legacy and connection to the Rawhide mission. The museum is planned to open early summer of 2024.

Resource & Training Center: Within our remodeled Welcome Center, Rawhide has enhanced its resource and training space to impact staff, youth, and the community. Our first-class facilities offer meetings, trainings, seminars, or social gatherings and opportunities for youth and families in the community who need help and resources—including space for Rawhide's Behavioral Job Training Program for classroom opportunities.

Corporate Retreat Program: Rawhide has developed a corporate retreat program where we can share our facilities with companies and businesses, community resources, and school districts.

Alumni Services: Youth who have completed Rawhide's residential or community programs are eligible for alumni services, which include continued support in education, environment, and other basic needs. Our goal is to support all our youth until they successfully transition into adulthood.

We are grateful for our capital campaign supporters' help in laying the foundation we need to continue transforming lives for generations to come.





The number of Wisconsin youth suffering from mental and behavioral health challenges continues to have a significant impact on schools throughout the state. While the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results are finalizing, the 2021 survey reported that over one-third of all Wisconsin students feel sad or hopeless almost every day for more than two weeks—a 5.2% increase since 2019. Even more alarming is that 18% of all Wisconsin students have seriously considered attempting suicide—the highest rate since 2003.

As a leading mental and behavioral health organization, Wisconsin school districts are reaching out to Rawhide to address the critical need for counseling services in their schools. The number of therapists is simply not where it needs to be. More than three-quarters of Wisconsin high school students with anxiety or depression reported not getting the help they need. As a result, the burden falls on parents, family members, teachers, and other school staff who don't have the necessary time, resources, or expertise.

School mental health partnerships can make it easier for districts to tackle the ongoing shortage. With school-based mental health, students can have the critical care they need without leaving their school. The more mental health services are embedded in schools, the lower the threshold for access and the better the student outcomes.

Rawhide is committed to helping at-risk youth become stronger, healthier versions of themselves by providing therapy services in their schools. Rawhide embeds licensed therapists in over 40 schools across Northeast and Southeastern Wisconsin, providing a level of expertise many schools do not have. Our therapists meet youth in their schools to help them improve their mental health. Rawhide's school-based therapists build trust and establish meaningful relationships—eliminating many barriers parents face with traditional outpatient counseling and making it easier to start the healing process with compassion.

As we prioritize giving youth the mental health services they desperately need, Rawhide partners with school districts and community partners to support students and bring counseling services to them. With an increase of 11 schools Rawhide served across Wisconsin in 2023, we are proud to now include the Stevens Point School District. This would have been impossible without our strong partnership with the school district and funding from community partners like Sentry Insurance.

Hear about the success of Rawhide's school-based therapy in local communities:

"Families do not need to take off work to drive their students to outside counseling sessions as the Rawhide staff meets with students on-site during their school day ... we cannot thank Rawhide enough for the care they provide to our school community."

-Kandi Martin, New London School District

"Our connection with Rawhide not only allows our students to receive therapy support in their school buildings but also allows access to high quality, local equine therapy services—a great addition to one-on-one therapy."

-Melissa Schepp, Fond du Lac School District

"Through Rawhide working directly in our schools, we have been able to get our students with the highest level of mental health needs access to high-quality mental health services without barriers. Providing a mental health therapist in the school setting allows our students to have another trusted adult in the school building which increases their school connection."

-Brooke Watzka, Social Worker - West De Pere School District



Rawhide Offers Youth Justice Diversion Program

After identifying a need for preventative mental and behavioral health resources geared toward a younger demographic, Rawhide partnered with Brown County and received a grant to offer the Youth Justice Diversion Program (YJDP).

Through therapy and education, this program allows Rawhide to help youth ages 11-16 overcome their struggles with habitual truancy, in-school suspensions, alcohol and drug abuse, or mental health and behavioral concerns so families can heal and engage in healthy ways. Utilizing the Nurturing Parenting® curriculum, a family-centered trauma-informed initiative focused on building alternative parenting and child-rearing practices, Rawhide served 44 students and families in 2023.

Green Bay school social workers identify students who may benefit from these services and connect with the students and parents about this program. Each youth works with one therapist, school counselor, case manager, and other community providers as needed. From individual and family sessions to meeting with youth weekly, YJDP helps build relationships, communication, and foundational skills to function as a family.

Currently offered at John Dewey Academy of Learning,
Northeast Wisconsin School of Innovation, and
Washington Middle School, YJDP is different because
Rawhide goes directly to the youth. With this program, we
strive to strengthen family relationships, provide mental
health and AODA intervention and support, and ultimately
reduce the number of interactions with the justice system.



THE LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT OF Career EXCELerate

In 2023, Career EXCELerate Wisconsin celebrated two completion ceremonies, one in May and one in December, featuring 78 students who earned educational certificates through the collaborative new program operated in partnership with Goodwill of North Central Wisconsin, Fox Valley Technical College, and Rawhide Youth Services. The program began with support from a Workforce Innovation Grant from the state of Wisconsin in the summer of 2022.

Career EXCELerate is a career training and placement program designed for individuals who experience trauma or are battling mental or behavioral health challenges. Students are guided through career exploration and aligned with one of eight in-demand career pathway trainings. Throughout the program, they are surrounded by support from Rawhide navigators, Goodwill case managers and FVTC academic advisors.



Wisconsin Certificate earners see an annual increase of \$13,000 - \$18,000 in pay.

In addition, a Rawhide navigator participates side-by-side in class to ensure students stay engaged and succeed every step of the way, staying with them through their first year of employment. It's our effort to creatively address the staffing challenges of industries across Northeast Wisconsin.

"Rawhide couldn't be prouder of the students finishing their courses and who are about to enter the workforce—many for the very first time in a new career," said Alan Loux, President and CEO at Rawhide Youth Services. "From the beginning, we knew Career EXCELerate had the potential to change hundreds of lives in our community." As a result of this program, Rawhide, Goodwill NCW, and Fox Valley Technical College were honored to win Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance's Community Partnership Award, celebrating industry and education partnerships in the region.

"We are helping students that most likely would not get into a program because they've been neglected or underserved. This program gives free education and supports them in finding a job in their field of study. The wraparound resources are so unique that it helps them stay in the program," said Alan.

Career EXCELerate is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP0135 awarded to Goodwill via the Wisconsin Workforce Innovation Grant Program by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Learn more at Career EXCELerate WI.org.



STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Over 10 years ago, Courtney tried to earn her Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate but struggled. Career EXCELerate has given her another chance. "I saw the opportunity and went for it. Honestly, they are a huge support, not just within school but also outside of school. People are there for you."

"Career EXCELerate has meant a lot to me. It enabled me to have the courage to quit my job and switch to a career that is going to elevate me and give me a better chance in life." –Damon Thanks to Career EXCELerate, Korie completed her Early Childhood Teacher Aide certificate to launch her career. Korie dreams of being a teacher in a four-year-old kindergarten classroom, but her mental health and finances were big hurdles. "It has given me the confidence to know that I can go back to school and do well. It's given me a refresher on a lot of vital skills ... the support has been amazing."

"I will forever be grateful to Rawhide, Goodwill, and Fox Valley Technical College for the opportunity to get my Commercial Driver's License. I now have the skillset and confidence to start a new and exciting career in transportation!" – Eric





The 2023 Cherry Starr Award was given to Ryan Van Maanen, recognizing a staff member for his or her outstanding commitment to Rawhide's youth. The award's namesake, Cherry Starr, was an incredible person who stood by Rawhide for over 50 years and was instrumental in helping us continue our mission. Cherry was a kind, loving, and selfless woman who cared so deeply about making a positive impact on people's lives. The inscription on the award reads, "For outstanding commitment to saving lives through fierce love and unwavering dedication."

After dinner, attendees took part in an exhilarating live auction, hosted by Bill Jartz from WBAY, with the opportunity to bid on vacation packages, unique Packers experiences, and a classic Mediterranean heritage scooter.

Thank you to Emily Deem of WLUK for emceeing the fun evening and our generous sponsors and donors for helping us raise much-needed funds to support critical mental and behavioral health programs for youth—giving them hope for a brighter future.





Dreams. Possibilities. Hope.

These are words that every youth should experience throughout their childhood. The unfortunate reality is, too many youth in our communities have experienced horrific trauma, abuse and neglect, leading to a lack of hope for the future, denying them these beautiful moments. At Rawhide, we recognize their pain, provide support, and most importantly, give youth the love and purpose they need.



Lucy's Openness Ledtohealing

As a high school student, Lucy found she was always comparing herself to her friends—academically and socially. Eventually, this caused her to start putting unrealistic expectations on herself—and then continuously let herself down. "Not all of my experiences matched my friends' exactly. I felt like I was doing something wrong because I wasn't 'teenagering' correctly," Lucy shared.

Unfortunately, she began to experience negative thoughts and sadness and punished herself with self-harm. "I didn't have a good release ... I felt like I always needed to serve my friends and could never say no because it was selfish," said Lucy. "We want to pretend that the emotions aren't there, but that doesn't make them go away."

After confiding in a close friend about her pain, Lucy knew she must tell her mom and talk to someone. And her mom knew exactly where to turn for additional support.



"It's hard to be a teenager, no matter the stressors," shared

Lucy's mom. "Having established a personal relationship with Rawhide in the past, it was such a relief to know that they were there. And when I reached out to them as a concerned parent, I felt heard and validated. I remember feeling like there was a way through."

When Lucy started therapy in early 2023, she feared the unknown. "At first, I was trying to share only what I identified as problems," she said. "When I started viewing Sarah as an older sister, I shared more. My therapist made a comfortable space by not creating expectations, especially because that's where all the negativity started ... it felt freeing."

She's taking what she's learned in therapy and applying it back home and in her everyday life. "I find myself using metaphors that Sarah shares and thinking patterns without putting effort into it," said Lucy. "I've learned the difference between something being selfish and being aware that you need to advocate for yourself."

As Lucy continues to create more healthy coping mechanisms, her mom couldn't be prouder. "With Lucy's younger siblings, our conversation around going to talk to a therapist has been nothing but positive, and the message in our home now reflects the importance of having the option to do so at any time. I would wish that for everyone who's raising teenagers, that they would know there is support out there," said Lucy's mom.

Lucy is 16 years old and enjoys spending time with her supportive family and friends.





Navarius is an athletic 14-year-old from Southeast Wisconsin. He spent most of his childhood with his dad's side of the family, mainly his aunts, but began splitting time between his mom and her brother over the past two years.

"I came to Rawhide because I was hanging out with the wrong crowd and doing things I shouldn't have been doing," said Navarius. "My first few weeks I felt like I didn't belong, and it wasn't a good fit for me, but things changed. I started to feel welcomed and comfortable."

Navarius experienced therapy for the first time at Rawhide and hopes to continue seeing a therapist at home. Most of the work in therapy was around his relationship with his mom, forming a strong bond and connection, so he could stay home and out of trouble.

Navarius credited the staff and his therapist for all he's learned at Rawhide. "I learned patience, and how to cope with things better, rather than running off," said Navarius. "Instead, now I talk with someone, be straight up, and get more details on the situation before I get mad."

Navarius' case manager described him as a natural leader and a good role model for others, which makes his interest in becoming a pastor and motivational speaker a great fit. "I learned I'm a social butterfly and a very caring person," said Navarius. "I love to be around people and talk."

Now that he has returned home, Navarius plans to join his high school's football and basketball teams and graduate from high school. After that, he hopes to move out of his home city and play basketball at a Division 1 school.



Jordan's Commitment TO BREAK THE CYCLE

A 16-year-old from south-central Wisconsin, Jordan has spent most of his life in 6 foster care after his dad went to prison and his mom struggled with drug abuse.

"I was a really negative person and didn't follow any rules," said Jordan. "I lived in foster care with my sister before going to respite, and we did whatever we wanted. She got kicked out and I was there for another year. I kept getting in trouble and they said enough was enough and sent me to respite, then shelter care, and now Rawhide."

Jordan first lived in one of our residential homes but has worked hard to improve his behavior and make better choices—with the help of staff and peers. He now lives in the Lodge Group Home, which affords him the most freedom, and transitioned from Starr Academy to New London High School.

"The staff and therapists have really helped me; their personalities, sense of humor, and overall kindness," said Jordan. "I learned how to control my anger and better cope with my anxiety. Having more control over my emotions has helped me feel more in control of my life."

Jordan has participated in nearly every on- and off-campus event and activity during his nearly two years at Rawhide. In his free time, he likes to be active, shoot hoops, and play video games.

His goals include being the first in his family to graduate from high school with a diploma and working alongside his dad in the construction field.

GROUP HOMES

Based on a family-living environment, youth ages 13 to 17 live together in New London (an all-male home) and Peshtigo (a co-ed home) while focusing on independent living skills, personal strengths, and identifying behavioral and emotional goals. Youth in our group homes experience a safe, loving environment and healthy routine that helps build confidence and enable the healing process. They also practice independent living skills by attending local high schools, pursuing employment, and/or practicing prosocial activities in the community.

These experiences help youth overcome a troubled past and prepare to use their strengths as they launch into young adulthood.



Wission MOMENTS

During his program, Lucas has gained more outlets and opportunities for him to express his emotions and process his feelings.

"There's been a spike in my mental growth. My abandonment issues have improved, I've received help with my PTSD, I can regulate my emotions ... I'm on a path to becoming an amazing young man."

Lucas Finds Strength INTHERAPY AND MUSIC

Born and raised in Southern Wisconsin, 15-year-old Lucas has experienced unimaginable difficulties throughout his life—specifically, early on. "My mom had a lot of drug problems back then; when I was three months old, I almost died. My grandma and grandpa took me in, and I've grown up with them and consider them my mom and dad," he said.

After previously being in detention and making poor choices, Lucas arrived at Rawhide. As he reflects on his past, he knows that change needs to happen. "I can't be the same person in the future because I wouldn't be able to live on my own," Lucas shared. "I'm discovering who I want to be as an adult and who I am inside."

He attributes a lot of his hard work and accomplishments to the staff at Rawhide, one that has influenced him greatly. "I couldn't do this without Mr. Ryan," said Lucas. "He has been a good mental goal coach, during my lowest lows and highest highs, he's helped me be a better person and grow my spiritual self. He helps kids no matter how they treat him." In addition, therapy has also helped. "With Ms. Hannah, we've had ups and downs, disagreements, and differences, but she's been there for me and I'm thankful for that," said Lucas.

Listening to emo rap music has always helped Lucas be able to connect and relate to others.

"It helps me understand that other people were experiencing the same thing that I was experiencing," he shared. "I want to be an artist one day to make music for kids like me and be that voice for them."

After Rawhide, Lucas looks forward to playing football, getting his driver's license, and living life the best way possible—being a kid.

Katie Discovers HER GROWTH AND POTENTIAL

Throughout her childhood, something that Katie lacked the most was stability and protection from her family. For most of Katie's life, she and her younger sister lived with their grandparents. Unfortunately, due to their mother's absence and father's drug use, their living situation never remained consistent. Katie and her sister constantly moved and at one point were sent to live with one of their father's unsupportive ex-girlfriends—leaving 13-year-old Katie to solely take care of her sister, six-month-old twins, and a three-year-old.

"I did it because I loved them," shared Katie. "They were like my siblings." Her care for these children led her to worry about their safety, especially when it came to food. "It was hard because my father's ex-girlfriend didn't have much food. I always made sure the kids ate before I did because they were younger. They're still developing a lot more than I was. So, most of the time I would eat what they didn't eat."

Never having time for herself—and struggling with self-harm and suicidal ideation since she was nine—Katie followed in her father's footsteps and became heavily involved with drugs. "I thought 'maybe I could get closer to him if I do the same thing he's doing", said Katie. She became a runaway, and the police found her 16 days later, placing her at Rawhide's Peshtigo Group home.

When she first arrived at the group home, she felt a bit of relief. "I didn't have to worry about where I was going to sleep at night," Katie said. "The staff was very supportive. They made sure I had what I needed. They told me if I needed to talk about anything, come to them." Much like most adolescents, Katie was hesitant to open up. "I've had people come in my life and leave. Opening up is something that is built when trust is built as well," said Katie.

After being at the Peshtigo Group Home for three and a half years, Katie has learned so much about herself, including her passion for helping those around her. "When a new kid comes in, I'm always the first one to welcome them. I'm always willing to give them some of my things if they don't have everything they need because I know what it's like to not have anything."

She also recognized her growth and potential, thanks to the help of the staff at Rawhide. "They pushed me to move forward and without them pushing me, I don't know where I would be," said Katie. "I'm going to therapy to get the help I need and have grown close relationships with all the staff."

As Katie prepares for what lies ahead, she sets goals that she plans to achieve. "I want to be the first person to graduate from high school on my dad's side and the first person to complete college on my mom's side," Katie said. "I want to go into social work and show kids that they're not alone. People have gone through similar experiences and there are people to help and many different resources and options to make it through."

Katie's advice to her future self is to not be afraid of asking for help.



Lacey Triumphs with unconditional Love

Two and a half years ago, Lacey was experiencing impulsivity of self-harm and suicidal ideation while enrolled in an outpatient program. After years of struggling with her mental health and doubting her purpose in life, Lacey attempted suicide on December 28, 2021.

"I didn't feel like anyone could love someone like me or that anyone cared. I felt this way my entire life, I've been let down a lot."

Fortunately, Lacey always has a reliable and caring person in her corner: her mom, Valerie. "Even though we clash heads a lot, in the end, I love her to death. She does everything for me and nobody else in my life has stayed by me," said Lacey.

Without losing hope, Valerie searched for a variety of options to help her daughter and knew that Lacey needed something different. Lacey's passion for animals naturally led her to Rawhide with our equine-assisted therapy.

"Animals help me so much to the point where at times I'm more comfortable with them than humans. When I have a panic attack,

having an animal there calms me down," said Lacey. "I have a great connection with Bracken—he nodded his head when I was talking to him, and he reacted to what I was saying."

Lacey's therapist Samantha has also been a positive influence. At first, Lacey was closed off and tried protecting herself by not speaking up. Now, Lacey and Sam have formed an unbreakable bond. "Sam showed me kindness and patience that no one ever showed me. I feel safe around her and she completely understands my boundaries," shared Lacey.

"I'm so proud of her resiliency and how she challenges herself," said Sam. "Lacey needed to find her voice and someone to listen and hold that awkward silence for her to think and process what she needed. She's going to do amazing things in life."

When asked about her daughter's progress, Valerie couldn't hold back her tears. "Without Sam, I don't know if Lacey would be where she is now. Lacey can verbalize her feelings and emotions. She's more willing to communicate on her bad days, uses strategies she's learned in therapy—and has taught me as well. She knows her boundaries and reaches out to me when she's ready."

Valerie shared important advice for other parents with struggling children. "Be patient. It's so hard but you must be

CHAPS EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPY

Our CHAPS Equine-Assisted Therapy program creates a safe, judgment-free zone and builds a strong, unique network of trust between the youth, horse, equine specialist, and therapist.

Horses are highly intuitive, with the ability to read and react to human body language. They are also sociable and have unique personalities. All these qualities make horses excellent therapeutic partners for

youth who might have difficulty talking to people about their emotions.

For some youth, bonding with a horse can help break down barriers, allowing them to work through trauma and overcome behavioral and mental health challenges. Equine-assisted therapy can be used to treat anxiety, depression, trauma, ADHD, and suicidal thoughts, among others.

This therapy modality is offered on the New London residential campus and at our counseling centers in Fond du Lac, Greater Milwaukee, Neenah, and Shiocton. Rawhide partners with BEAMING, Inc. in Neenah and MKE Urban Stables in Milwaukee to offer equine-assisted therapy in their facilities—all to serve even more struggling youth, adults, and families in Wisconsin.

patient and take the time to understand," she said. "You must be their advocate through the hardest times, even when they are shutting down. Do not give up on your child; they might be hurting so much, and you don't know it."

Because of her experiences and growth, Lacey wanted to become a person to lean on when others need it most. "If people in her life are struggling, she is their rock. She's able to advocate for other people. She has the biggest heart that was a heart of stone and now it's warm and beating again," shared Valerie.

"Mental health is health, and it plays a huge part in everyone's life. I now know that I am loved and cared for. I know that I have a more purposeful life," said Lacey. "Even though people let me down, I know that I have other people. My mom is my forever home. It's not a house that makes a home, it's people. It's the memories. It's love."

15-year-old Lacey is currently a sophomore in high school and enjoys history class.





Schneider Foundation

It all started over a decade ago when Schneider National associates asked if they could raise awareness and gather gifts for Rawhide residential youth over the holiday season. Throughout the years, the annual campaign grew exponentially; now over a hundred associates donate gifts to Rawhide youth.

Supported by the Schneider Foundation's Orange Outreach program, Molly Shier and Kayla Johnson, team captains for the annual Holiday Giving Program, ensure gift donations for the holidays come to fruition. These dedicated captains coordinate giving teams, manage the internal drop-off, and organize the pick-up so the gifts can be delivered to Rawhide.

"It's an opportunity for our associates to give back to the community where they live and work," says Molly. "We have outstanding, generous associates, and it's nice to let others see our culture of giving for themselves!"

Through their collaboration with Rawhide, the Schneider Foundation contributes to a cause that resonates deeply with their organization's mission. It allows Schneider to extend their reach beyond immediate business operations and put their core values—respect, excellence, integrity, and safety—into action. Their support of Rawhide is about being part of a larger community effort to bring about positive change. It's a testament to their belief that by giving back, we all move ahead.

"Our employees have consistently expressed a strong interest in supporting Rawhide," said Colleen Steier, Schneider Foundation Chair. "This alignment of our corporate values with the personal values of our associates leads to a stronger sense of team unity and engagement."

Rawhide is incredibly thankful for the generosity of the Schneider Foundation and its ongoing support for at-risk youth. Because of the Schneider Foundation, residential youth get to experience an unforgettable holiday season, experience the magic of the Christmas spirit, create lasting memories, and feel loved by their community.

"Having the opportunity
to provide a sense of Christmas
magic is indescribable," Kayla adds.
"Our associates are providing gifts for
young people who aren't home with
their families for the holidays, and
we know that some of them may
never have received a Christmas
present before. We're overjoyed that
we can help fill that gap."





SCHNEIDER



RICHARD DISCOVERS

Remi's Love for Youth

As frequent visitors to Rawhide's residential youth, Richard Lowe and his golden retriever Remi have brightened countless days and mended broken hearts with their generosity.

Throughout his life, Richard has had a variety of dogs. When his family brought Remi home three years ago, he knew there was something different and special about him. "To watch how Remi responds to children and becomes everyone's friend, it humanizes things."

With his own experience of a hard upbringing and everyday struggles, Richard relates to our residential youth. "I have a large amount of empathy for these boys; they are so talented but never had the opportunity by choice or circumstance," shared Richard. "Rawhide educates them, guides them, gives them purpose, motivates them, and gives them a better environment than what they may have come from." And once Richard discovered Remi's love for youth, he knew he had to bridge the connection.

When Remi became a therapy dog, Richard was eager to take him to Rawhide to show his talents. "He has a natural liking for people and hangs out with people more than other dogs," said Richard. During their first visit, Richard witnessed a youth lying on the floor, laughing with Remi. This specific youth commonly experienced a tremendous amount of anger. "I saw him become almost like a different kid ... Remi helps a number of these boys with their self-esteem and release their inner anxieties."

In addition, Richard has donated fishing equipment to Starr Academy, a brand-new fishing pole for one of the young boys, and piano books for a youth who lived in our Lodge Group Home. "You see some of these kids show up here with nothing ... I'm always rooting for the underdogs." He and Remi also spend time at their local sheriff's department supporting youth through difficult interviews—ultimately helping solve investigations.

Richard and Remi live in southern Wisconsin with plans to continue visiting Rawhide's residential boys and supporting at-risk youth.



Since the early 80's, Richard has supported Rawhide and wants to help our mission continue.

"To see the reward of these children and young boys developing, it's worth it," said Richard.

"Rawhide helps create better people which makes a better society."

Norma's Vehicle Donations Changed Lives

After 48 years of teaching English and music in Milwaukee, Norma Mortimer has always been very active in her community with so much passion for those around her.

When she first saw Bart Starr's television commercials, she resonated with the mission immediately. "Being a teacher and having a child that suffered from mental illness, I recognize that mental health has become a serious issue for youth," said Norma. "I always knew that someday, if I'm able, I want to support that organization."

Norma's late husband, Gerry, collected vehicles and had a passion for Ford. Each vehicle they owned had a purpose, which explains why their 2002 Ford Windstar XL had only 2,400 miles. "It was purchased to help transport our child to and from college," Norma shared. "It was rarely driven as we had other everyday vehicles and I walked to work."

Once Norma was able to give back and help support youth with mental health issues, she decided to donate the Windstar to Rawhide in August of 2023. "After learning the Windstar sold for \$12,500, I was overjoyed! I couldn't believe it," Norma said.

After seeing the success of the Windstar, Norma then donated their 2005 Ford Taurus SE—with only 174 miles. "My husband purchased the car thinking it would be a sought-after future collector car as the Taurus was going to be discontinued. For this reason, he put it in his garage and never drove it," Norma shared. When they bought the Taurus, the title was in their child's name to help establish credit. After Gerry passed away, they agreed to donate it to Rawhide.

The Taurus was auctioned just before the end of 2023 and sold for \$12,500, making Norma a \$25,000 donor. "With the majority of money going back into the youth programs, everyone should absolutely consider donating a vehicle to Rawhide," said Norma. "Helping at-risk kids get a chance to lead fulfilling and healthy lives means everything to me."

At Rawhide, our vehicle program has continued to make a positive impact on the lives of at-risk youth and their families throughout Wisconsin. We sincerely thank all our vehicle donors for their generous support and for being part of Rawhide's legacy.



2023 MACC

LIVES IMPACTED

Total: 1,555 Increase of

41%

40 Counties Served in 2023

> MALE/FEMALE **CLIENTS:**

Female 54% Other 2%

ETHNICITY OF RESIDENTIAL YOUTH

White: 53%

Native American: 5%

Black: 36%

Bi/Multi-Racial: 4%

YOUTH DISCHARGED:

75% Successfully Reunited with their Families

88% Did Not Re-Enter the Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice System

> 191 days Average Length of Stay

CHAPS EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPY **SESSIONS:**

1,868

COMMUNITY-BASED THERAPY SESSIONS:

16,079







Rawhide's

#15 LEAGUE

Thank you to all of our donors for their kind hearts

PLANNED GIVING

Leave a legacy by becoming a member of Rawhide's #15 League. The #15 League, named in honor of Green Bay Packers legend Bart Starr and his wife Cherry, was created to recognize and thank loyal supporters who chose to remember Rawhide with a planned gift. Included is a list of individuals who have named Rawhide as a beneficiary in their will, living trust, life insurance policy, retirement account, charitable trust, donor-advised fund, or charitable gift annuity.

We are grateful to all our generous members whose support will ensure that Rawhide can continue to carry out its mission to transform the lives of at-risk youth for years to come.

For more information about becoming a member of the #15 League, please contact the Development team at (920) 982-6100 or development@rawhide.org.

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#15 LEAGUE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Constance Danforth

Constance "Connie" Danforth has been gracious toward Rawhide for over 20 years.

Living in Indiana, Connie and her companion Mike were unaware of a place that helped young people in their home state. After learning that her nephew was offered a position at Rawhide in 2002, she and Mike wanted to know everything about it. When they discovered our history and mission, they were even more pleased, especially with our CHAPS Equine-Assisted Therapy program.

"I had ponies and horses ever since I was old enough to not fall off them. I know what they can mean to someone," Connie said. "When I got a scolding, I always went to my horse and talked about it."

Knowing Rawhide's impact on youth and families across Wisconsin, Connie knew she had to become part of it too. "I love seeing Rawhide evolve and continue to change," she said.

"Not many days go by that I don't think about Rawhide and how grateful I am to be able to support them. I'm honored to help the horses stay healthy so they can do their job and be there for youth."

Connie has visited Rawhide's New London campus and shown her support in a multitude of ways. We couldn't be more thankful for Connie and her dedication to Rawhide.

During one of her visits, Connie shared, "We were waiting to go upstairs to have lunch with Alan and one of the young boys came up to Alan and had a conversation with him. For me, that tells me everything that I wanted to know about Rawhide. A lot of other places say they are there to help, but they never get close to the audiences that they serve. There's no doubt in my mind that Rawhide is successful."



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*Gift is part of a multiyear pledge.

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We're Stronger, Together.

GUIDING YOUTH ON THEIR PATH TO HOPE

To make life-changing impact a reality, Rawhide team members dedicate their lives to helping hurting and at-risk youth discover the hope of a healthy and fulfilling life. And we couldn't accomplish what we do without them. Thank you to every person who has committed to providing love, guidance, and faith to youth throughout Wisconsin.



Gabby Gore Therapist

"My genuine relationships and compassion for the youth drive my commitment. I find joy in witnessing their growth and positive transformations—a privilege that reinforces my dedication to their betterment every day."



"My fulfillment comes from identifying exceptional candidates who are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of our youth. It's not merely a job; it's a commitment to bringing the best individuals who share our dedication to supporting and empowering the young people we serve."





Stephanie Derouin Living Unit Coordinator

"What I love most is witnessing youth thrive, acquire new skills, and become successful, serving as a source of hope and motivation. The support from Rawhide team members enhances my passion for the important work we do, knowing that together, we can make a life-long impact in the lives of those we serve."

Tara Heindl Leadership Giving Manager

"As I learned more about Rawhide, I realized that the entire team truly cares about every individual youth's story and what will have the most impact on them in the long run. To me, that's what it truly means to change someone's life."





Michelle McNichols
Academic Instructor

"I feel like I am making a difference and I know the boys on campus rely on my support. Many boys arrive with immense potential but struggle to envision what their future holds. My role is to guide them, helping them recognize the possibilities ahead of them, so when the time comes, they leave Rawhide with a sense of purpose and determination."



"I believe in finding the strengths in others, helping people find joy in pain, providing unconditional and consistent support— and so does Rawhide. Rawhide values me as a therapist, as a mom, and as a person. My mental health matters and my supervisors allow me to care for myself so that I can show up as the best version of myself while helping others."





Nolan Pynenberg
Alternative Education Instructor

"I have always known that I wanted to teach but thought it would be in a public school in physical education. While it may be challenging, serving the residents at Rawhide is the most rewarding job experience of my life. Getting goosebumps when I see progress with the guys is what keeps me coming back every day. These kids are resilient and have been through so much. They have so much to offer this world and with healing, they can reach their full potential—they teach me while I teach them."





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LOCATIONS

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Appleton +

Westhill Professional Park 446 Westhill Boulevard, Suite A Appleton, WI 54914

Fond du Lac*+

N5682 County Road K Fond du Lac, WI 54937

Glendale

5555 N. Port Washington Road Suite 207 Glendale, WI 53217

Green Bay

Boys & Girls Club 1451 University Avenue Green Bay, WI 54302

Milwaukee*

143 E. Lincoln Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53207

De Pere

301 N. Broadway, Suite 303 De Pere, WI 54115

Neenah*

2692 County Road GG Neenah, WI 54956

Oshkosh

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N. 2981 Schacht Road Peshtigo, WI 54157

Shiocton*

N5367 Mayflower Road Shiocton, WI 54170

*These locations also offer CHAPS Equine-Assisted Therapy services.

+These locations also offer occupational therapy.



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