

Milwaukee Urban Stables

Community Programming

Strengthening Community through Service, Care & Healing

Program Concept

Community programming at the Stables will flow from what makes the Stables a unique community space: The Stables provides a home in the City of Milwaukee for two dozen horses in service to our community – police horses supporting local police work and therapy horses supporting curative work for fellow community members in need.

At the Stables, community members and police will come together to care for the horses, to care for the stable facility, to care for fellow community members, and to share that experience. As a place of service and healing, the Stables will also be a safe space for community members and police to learn how to better care for themselves and each other. The Stables will be a focal point for the Milwaukee Police Department's community relations and outreach efforts.

Working from the Stables' distinguishing feature (it will be home to two dozen police and therapy horses) community programs will include: community building through care for the horses, community building through care for the Stables facility, community healing through care for veterans and special needs children, and community healing through meeting, learning and dialogue.

Program Framework

Community building through shared work. Engage members of the community to work with MPD officers in caring for the horses and the stable facility and grounds. Partner initially with Hamilton High School for student participants. The VA may also help identify some participants initially. Eventually recruit participants from other community groups as well (e.g. Running Rebels). This will be an opportunity for a group of community members to work side-by-side with police to care for a community asset. The effort contributes to the creation of a caring atmosphere that includes police officers, and a safe place for meeting, learning and dialogue.

Community healing through common care for others. Develop equine assisted therapy as a community effort endorsed by the MPD Mounted Patrol. Engage community participants and volunteers from MPD in supporting equine assisted therapy work at the Stables. Partner initially with Hamilton High School for student participants. The VA may also help identify some participants initially. Eventually recruit participants from other community groups as well (e.g. Running Rebels).

This will be an opportunity for a group of community members to work side-by-side with police to share in an act of care for other community members. As is the case with caring for the horses and the facility, the effort contributes to the creation of a caring atmosphere that includes police and a safe space for meeting, learning and dialogue.

Community healing through meeting, learning and dialogue. Offer meeting, learning and dialogue opportunities at the Stables. These can be programs organized by the Stables, or programs organized by other community groups and hosted at the Stable. For example: School field trips to meet MPD Mounted Patrol Officers and learn about the MPD Mounted Patrol, and school science class visits to learn about horses, would be meeting and learning opportunities for the students and police. The Strategies for Youth *Juvenile Jeopardy* program would be a learning opportunity for high school students. Safe & Sound's *Youth/Police Dialogue Sessions* would be a dialogue opportunity for youth and police.

The meeting, learning and dialogue programs will allow participants to learn about each other, and themselves, and promote healing at different levels of intensity and depth depending on the program. Offering these programs at the Stables will also introduce a wider community audience to the Stables and help build a larger group of participants in the shared work and common care elements of the programming.

Program Realization

Partnerships. The launch of programming at the Stables will be facilitated by key partnerships. **MPD** is committed to house its Mounted Patrol Unit at the Stables and to use the Stables as a focal point for police/community relations and outreach. **The VA** is interested in using equine assisted therapy capacity at the Stables for veterans in its care, and is also interested in connecting veterans with volunteer opportunities at the Stables. **Hamilton High School** is interested in the *Juvenile Jeopardy* program for its students and using equine assisted therapy capacity for its special needs students. Hamilton High is also interested in volunteer opportunities at the Stables for its JROTC and Advanced Placement students.

Community Guidance. Community members with experience in police/community relations and with experience with horses and equine assisted therapy will help ensure the relevance, and gauge the effectiveness of programming at the Stables. An advisory committee with representation from MPD, Safe & Sound, Running Rebels, the VA, Hamilton High School, and the equestrian and equine assisted therapy community will meet regularly to develop recommendations regarding program definition, planning, budgeting and implementation for consideration by the Stables Steering Committee.

* * *