

## **Volunteering at Saddle Up Riding Club**

Volunteers drive the Saddle Up Riding Club Program, are indispensable at all levels of the organization and need not be equine oriented. Some do bring skills in horsemanship, others bring leadership skills, and others simply bring understanding and acceptance in helping others to seek fuller, more satisfying lives. Volunteers also bring many new ideas and insight to the program and frequently enlist their friends! Ask any Saddle Up volunteer and they will readily state that they gain as much, or more, than they give. As a volunteer, you will learn and achieve, as well!

Saddle Up Riding Club could not operate without dedicated volunteers – they are the backbone of the program. Without the extra sets of hands to help riders sit tall, to groom and care for horses, or to help in the office, it would be difficult to operate the program. Saddle Up Riding Club takes considerable care and effort to find, train and keep excellent and motivated volunteers. Saddle Up offers an ideal volunteer opportunity for adults and young people.

Volunteering provides:

- An outdoor activity
- A service that results in joy and growth for people with disabilities
- ☐ Light physical work and exercise
- ☐☐ Interaction with animals in a farm setting
- An expanded circle of friends
- Rewards in smiles, progress in skill and enthusiasm from everyone involved
- ☐☐ A chance to help others
- Community service hours from some schools
- Service hours for service learning students
- Activities for clubs and professional organizations

At Saddle Up there is a job for everyone. It may come as a surprise to you that not all volunteers are experienced equestrians. Certain tasks require horse experience, but that is not necessary in many other volunteer roles. Many of our volunteers begin with little or no experience, but through Saddle Up's hands-on educational opportunities, have gone on to become fine horse handlers.

Side walker: (must be 14 years old):

The side walker (either 1 or 2) walks to the side of the rider during class. The side walker's primary responsibility is for the safety of the student during class. Side walker tasks include:

- Greeting the student as he/she arrives
- Remaining with the student and get his/her helmet fitted

- Assisting the student in balancing on the horse, utilizing special holds
- Following directions of the instructor during class and assisting the student only when needed to promote independence
- Understanding the special needs of each student
- Mounting and dismounting assists
- Understanding safety and emergency procedures

The horse Leader (must be 14 years old)\*\*\*:

The primary job of the horse leader is to deal with the horse, not the student.  
Horse handler tasks include:

- Grooming and tacking the horse before class
- Maintaining control of the horse
- Tack cleaning
- Understanding horse body language and horse psychology

\*\*\*Horse Leader requires special testing. If you have extensive horse experience and want to be a horse leader, please contact the volunteer manager.

Other Jobs: Because Saddle Up Riding Club is primarily a volunteer program, if you have any special skills, talents, please let us know – you never know what help we might need. Some of these jobs include: Office help, Accounting & Legal support, Fundraising & Computer skills, Facility repairs & maintenance; General Contractor,  Artistic work & Photography, Serving on Advisory Boards or Committees, Musical skills & Entertainment, Public Relations, Social Media skills, and Special Projects from individual staff members

Please fill out the volunteer registration paperwork and turn it in with the following registration dues:

Volunteers ages 14 thru 17 years old: \$10.00 covers cost of t-shirt  
Volunteers ages 18 +: \$20.00 covers cost of background check and t-shirt

Appropriate attire is required. Closed toed sneakers, or boots, long shorts or pants, and sleeved shirts are required.