



New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches

# CORRAL

## The Ranches Alumni

Working on myself has shown me there is another path to take in life, that I was not stuck on one road. There are always tasks to do and more to achieve in life... But what are we working towards? My work is leading me to have a more positive outlook on life and on others.

-Alumni, CV

If your business would like extra print copies of The Corral please contact us at [dev@theranches.org](mailto:dev@theranches.org).

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Rekindling HOPE for At Risk Youth - Since 1944

## Winter 2024 New Year, Better Tools

By Mikela Kull

With any new year, we all get the opportunity for a new beginning and a new opportunity to make the changes that we would like to see in ourselves. As we are entering this new year, all of us who work at The Ranches are looking for more effective skills that we can use to grow and improve in order to offer better opportunities to the youth that we serve.

In many ways, the reminder of a new beginning serves as a reminder of the opportunity that our kids get when they enter our program. In their lives, they have been faced with a variety of challenges and have adapted to those challenges by developing a broad range of skills that served them in those situations. By the time they reach us, both the challenges and their responses to them have also formed both their view of the world and how they are viewed by the world. They come to us having been labeled as difficult, combative, dishonest, and several other adjectives that describe their survival skills rather than who they are.

When they come into our program, we give them the opportunity for a new beginning and a chance to reinvent themselves without any of the previous judgements that may have been placed on them. As is true for any of us, the decision to choose this new beginning is entirely theirs.

As childcare workers, we must constantly remind ourselves that the seemingly ineffective survival skills they bring with them to the Ranch are simply that - meant for surviving some difficult environment they have encountered. Without those skills, they might not have made it through painful and challenging times. Their survival skills should not be judged as bad behavior or inappropriate reactions but understood as a way of letting someone know they are hurting and need assistance in managing their behavior. If we acknowledge their skills as they search for help and then encourage them to add to their skills in more effective ways, we can help them grow and

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# GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Mikela Kull**

President

Since taking this position, I have been overwhelmed by the support and the positive messages of encouragement I have received from so many of you. I feel truly blessed to have taken on the task of running The Ranches and I am optimistic for all that lies ahead for us to be an organization where struggling families can find solace in our abilities to meet the needs of their hurting children. I am forever thankful for the strong foundation that was established long before I arrived and am now able to honor by building on that foundation to utilize that history to drive us towards expanding to help as many kids as we possibly can in the future.

2023 was a whirlwind year for us here at The Ranches. Though there were many ups and downs, through it all, we have remained optimistic, and we are excited for what 2024 will hold for us. There are a few things that I would love to share with you.

We are expecting to open our new Beauty Cottage in the next few months, and this will allow us to house and care for even more kids. This opportunity is exciting for us all and has generated a great deal of buzz on campus as we eagerly await the opportunity to welcome additional children to whom we can offer our services.

Additionally, we will be having our 80th anniversary in August and are excited to invite everyone to celebrate with us. We will be hosting this celebration on August 17, 2024, and are looking forward to visiting with everyone who comes out to join us. This 80-year milestone serves as a humbling reminder to us of all that we have accomplished in the past. There are a multitude of individuals that we have been able to impact during that time and lead them towards a better life.

We were recently blessed to have a former resident visit the Ranch and speak to our current residents about his struggles and eventual early graduation from high school. He is now serving in the military in a specialized position with a very high security clearance. He is designing the equipment needed to carry out his mission in helping keep our country safe. He brought his wife and children and spent more than an hour answering questions and very honestly addressing the things he had to do to change the trajectory of his life. It is visits like this that encourage both the staff and residents in continuing to work toward hope.

I am very excited to see what this year has in store, and I look forward to being able to share this all with you. None of these events would be possible without the kindness and generosity that is consistently shown by you, our donors, and I thank you for the part that you have played in providing a future for the young people we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mikela Kull".

Mikela Kull - President

MikelaKull@theranches.org





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mature into healthier and happier young people.

While we guide them through our program, our goal is to help these kids take this opportunity and put in a tremendous effort in order to cultivate new skills and expand their abilities to face challenges and obstacles that they will face in their lives. This is rarely an easy process and requires many rounds of trial and error because growth is never an easy process.

A key aspect of this undertaking is that we, as staff and adults, are not exempt from the pains of growth. We cannot expect these kids to grow and change if we are not also willing to take a hard look in the mirror and address the skills that we have learned

along the way that may also be less than helpful at times. The goal in all of this is not to discard the skills that we have learned along the way, but to develop new skills and increase our tool-belt so we are better equipped to handle a broader range of difficulties moving forward.

Our hope is that they not only learn a better way to utilize the skills that they have already learned in their lives, but also new skills that are beneficial to them in a variety of situations that they will find themselves in. In other words, enabling them to have a better life.

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## Healing Through Joy

By Travis Yoakum

The Christmas season is one that brings joy to families as they recreate family traditions for their kids and reminisce about memories with each other. The night is covered with twinkling lights, and the air is covered in pine and cinnamon scents. Christmas carols are played in every store you enter. There are stories of the meaning of the season, Christmas plays at local churches, Christmas light shows, and more. For some of our residents, it comes as a reminder of what they never received. Along with a variety of feelings as they watch others enjoy it and feel guilty for not. These young souls are facing challenges that many of them can hardly fathom. The struggles of broken homes, poverty, and the weight of their circumstances seems insurmountable as they look on as a spectator with little control. When we experience pain and trauma the idea of branching out and experiencing new things becomes less and less feasible. In an attempt to avoid similar pain, they act on survival skills and generations of family dysfunction.



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# #RAISETHEMUP



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As they shoulder the blame for behaving just like those around them. Staying comfortable becomes easier than reliving the trauma in front of a group of strangers. Which leads them to us on 2400 acres of beautiful New Mexico desert encouraging kids to dive back into their trauma for the hope of living through it in greener pastures.

With our donor's help we show up to help fight these battles every day. To teach them that life is full of ups and downs that create a joy at the end that none of us deserve but are promised. Our residents are fighting an internal battle daily of their life lives filled with trauma, both received and sometimes self-inflicted.



When we try to create a winter wonderland here on The Ranch, complete with Christmas lights, inflatables, hot chocolate, and joy. The residents often find themselves battling childhood memories and grieve what they wanted. They stare down the reality that someone cares enough about them to do it today. Some of you who have never met them and may never meet them but feel called to support our mission to rekindle hope in their lives.

It is our job to let them know they don't have to fight alone. Thank you all for joining us to help them fight for a better tomorrow.

This year we watched as a resident who has struggled to find a home his entire life and faced life decisions at 7 that most of us never have to process, let alone choose. He cried and cried that someone out there thought about







# THEIR JOURNEY







# THE RANCHES

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him to spend their hard-earned money to help him experience a Christmas season he had never enjoyed before. He sat down and wrote a thoughtful thank you letter that resonated as if someone had saved his life. The smallest act of generosity can lead to a life changing experience for any of our residents. As they walk around in new clothes and having spent an hour using their new hygiene items because the weight of the world seemed a little lighter that day.

This year our donors and supporters again provided us with an opportunity to provide a Christmas season worthy of any child or home. Our residents enjoyed decorating the campus with a variety of Christmas lights and even worked at creating our own home Christmas light trees. Each cottage was donned with lights, a tree, and a plethora of decorations. Each resident had the opportunity to open multiple gifts of things they wanted and things they needed. We headed north to Albuquerque to participate in the annual Sagebrush Christmas tree lighting service. The residents visited First Baptist Church of Rio Rancho for their annual Christmas play about the birth of Jesus. Our board members hosted an event at Macy's, each resident received a styling appointment and picked out an outfit. As the Christmas season we passed, we took time to experience the blessings provided by our generous donor base. Because of you Christmas joy and spirit were alive and well at The Ranches.







# THE RANCHES

## What To Expect in our 80th Year

By Julian Chavez

2024 marks our 80th year in operation. It's hard to imagine how much this organization has changed since 1944 and all of the exciting things that are still to come.

The most significant change you can physically see on campus is the new Beaty Cottage that is being built and is getting closer to completion every day. This new building will give us the ability to provide more help to the youth who need it, and you can see regular updates on its progress on our social media.

Another significant change has been some remodeling at our school. The classrooms got new floors and some new desks that all of you helped provide to the kids. When they returned from their Christmas Break, they were all surprised to see the change and were excited for some new scenery. That type of change in their everyday environment helps to rekindle hope.

We have several upcoming projects planned, and in addition to that, we are also preparing for our 80th Anniversary Celebration at The Ranches. Every five years, we organize a reunion on campus where former residents and staff from years past come together to enjoy some delicious food and catch up with each other. We will share more details about the event soon; keep an eye out for more information!



Thank you to all the businesses, organizations, and churches that made monetary gifts in excess of \$150 during the period of October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023. We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

## THANK YOU

|                                   |             |    |  |             |    |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----|--|-------------|----|
| AAA Pumping Service, Inc.         | Albuquerque | NM | Legacy Church                              | Albuquerque | NM |
| Alamo Ranch Company               | Deming      | NM | Libby Holman Foundation, Inc.              | New York    | NY |
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| Ken Brudos Insurance              | Albuquerque | NM | United Church of Los Alamos                | Los Alamos  | NM |

And another THANK YOU to Don and Rosie Tripp, Faith Baptist Church of Artesia, Believer's Center of Albuquerque, Monte Vista Christian Church of Albuquerque, Discount Tire - Los Lunas, and Doylestown Hospital.



# Become a Partner

## Become a Partner

Have you ever wondered what it means to be a Partner of The Ranches? Our Partners commit to a monthly gift which allows us to provide hope for the kids in our care. The Financial needs of an organization which is dedicated to providing HOPE for "the least of these" can be daunting. By making an affordable automatic gift, each month, you can help bring HOPE to the children who, through no fault of their own, have been hurt and have lost hope.

We want to make becoming a partner as easy as possible.

You can go directly to our website at

[www.theranches.org/partners](http://www.theranches.org/partners)

or call us direct at 505-881-3363 or 800-660-0289

or fill out the form below, return it, and we will call you.

We appreciate your continued support of The New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches.

## Help Us Share Our Story

Representatives of New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches are available to meet with clubs, civic organizations and fellowship groups, either in person or via the web, to share our story of bringing hope to hurting youth.

If you are interested in arranging a speaking engagement for your organization, simply give us a call at (505) 881-3363 or (800) 660-0289.

**YES! I would like to Become a Partner!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: You may contact me by email. My email address is:

My Monthly donation will be: (a minimum gift of \$25 a month is required to become a Partner)

\$25 a month (\$300 yearly)

\$100 a month (\$1200 yearly)

\$50 a month (\$600 yearly)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to make a Donation by credit card  
please visit us at

[www.theranches.org/invest-in-our-youth/](http://www.theranches.org/invest-in-our-youth/)

or call us direct at (505) 881-3363 or (800) 660-0289.

Please contact me at the number listed above to set up monthly payments by Credit Card or Electronic Funds Transfer.

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