

The Ranches Alumni

Spring time at The Ranch meant the weather was getting warmer, the trees were becoming green, and that 4H was just around the corner!

I think mostly, as you came out of the winter, it felt as if you were really going through a new chapter and you could feel the change in the air just as much as you would feel it in yourself.

-Alumni, J.C.

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Rekindling HOPE for At Risk Youth - Since 1944

Spring 2025 Lighting the Way

By Mikela Kull

What does it mean to rekindle hope? This is a question we face each time we engage with one of the children entrusted to our care. It is a question that resonates deeply, not only because it shapes the way we approach our work but because it reflects the essence of our commitment to every child and family we serve. We have made a promise to these kids and their families that, during their time with us, we will help guide them towards a brighter future, no matter the hardships they've faced. While the journey can seem daunting, there is no task more rewarding than walking alongside these young people as they begin to see glimpses of hope and possibility for their futures.

The journey to rekindle hope is not always straightforward or easy. Each child's story is unique, with their own struggles, fears, and dreams. For many of these kids, the road to healing and growth begins with understanding the generational cycles that have led them to this point. These patterns and behaviors have a tendency to shape not only their world view but their view of themselves and their worth.

For many of the kids we care for, these cycles have been marked by poverty, neglect, trauma, substance abuse, or family breakdowns. These patterns, though often rooted in pain, are not a reflection of a child's worth or potential. Instead, they reflect the challenges that

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GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Mikela Kull

President

We recently completed our annual Cottage Training Week for our childcare staff, a vital and enriching component of our ongoing professional development. During this immersive experience, staff members are given the unique opportunity to “check in” to our program, experiencing the same environment the kids do. This hands-on approach allows our staff to not only understand but feel what it’s like to be in the shoes of the children they care for, deepening their connection to the children’s experiences.

This training has proven to be one of the most impactful and transformative aspects of our staff development. It offers team members the rare chance to step directly into the lives of the kids, gaining firsthand insight into the challenges of being away from family and navigating learning, growth, and emotional struggles without the comfort of familiar coping mechanisms. Experiencing these challenges firsthand allows staff to develop a much deeper empathy, understanding, and appreciation for the emotional hurdles the children face each day.

Throughout the week, team members stay in one of the cottages, adopting the same daily routines as the children they care for. Instead of attending school, the focus shifts to engaging in a variety of critical training topics such as grief and loss, setting healthy boundaries, communication strategies, trauma-informed care, and more. This immersive, concentrated approach ensures that our staff are not only equipped with the tools they need to support the children’s emotional and developmental needs but also cultivate a stronger sense of compassion and insight in their caregiving.

In parallel with our efforts to inspire hope in the children by addressing generational cycles, we also actively support our staff in confronting similar cycles they may have faced in their own lives. This process, though entirely voluntary, has proven to be deeply impactful. We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated and compassionate team of individuals who are not only willing but genuinely enthusiastic about stepping into the shoes of the children they care for. Through this, they gain a richer, more nuanced understanding of what it’s like to live in a cottage with peers, navigate difficult emotions, and grow together in community—an understanding that translates directly into more effective, empathetic caregiving.

Each year, I am consistently impressed by the dedication and selflessness of our staff as they push themselves to grow in their personal and professional lives. Their commitment to rekindling hope in the children—and in themselves—is truly inspiring. The passion they bring to their work is a testament to their belief in the transformative power of care, empathy, and support.

Sincerely,

Mikela Kull

Mikela Kull - President

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THE RANCHES



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have, unfortunately, been passed down from one generation to the next. The question we ask ourselves is: How can we help these young people break free from the limitations that these cycles have imposed upon them?

Part of the initial struggle that parents face, is the fear of judgement about their struggles. However, it is essential to recognize that many of the children we work with come from families where the parents, despite their best efforts, may not have the tools or resources to break free from the patterns that they themselves have faced. Many parents love their children deeply and want the best for them, but they are often trapped in cycles of their own. Some may have grown up in homes where they never learned the skills needed to create healthy, stable relationships, or they may be struggling with the same trauma that their children are experiencing. And while these parents are doing the best they can, the patterns of behavior they inherited often perpetuate the struggles of their children. And so, the cycle continues.

As an organization dedicated to breaking these cycles, our role is to offer the support, guidance, and care that will help each child discover their own path toward healing and success. We do this by providing a safe, nurturing environment where they are encouraged to confront their pasts and begin to build a new future—one where they are no longer defined by



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the struggles of their families but encouraged to make the choices that will perpetuate their own success. Three essential aspects of this process are providing stability, accountability, and predictability in order to allow them the necessary environment to begin confronting the negative behaviors.

One of the most powerful aspects of our work is the ability to guide these young people toward identifying and understanding the generational patterns they've inherited. This is not an easy task. It requires patience, trust, and a deep respect for each child's individual journey. It also involves helping them understand that while they cannot change the past, they have the power to shape their future.

In doing so, we also encourage them to recognize their own potential—something that can often be hard to see when they are carrying the weight of generational trauma. The process of rekindling hope begins when these children are shown that their lives are not bound by the limitations of their past. It is when they are given the tools



to create a new story for themselves, one rooted in resilience, self-awareness, and self-worth.

But rekindling hope is not just about breaking the past—it's about creating a vision for the future. Our work with each child is aimed at helping them identify their own strengths, dreams, and desires. Through education, therapy,





THEIR JOURNEY





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mentorship, and a variety of other services, we give them the resources they need to start envisioning a future that is different from the one they may have feared. By empowering them to believe in their own potential, we are helping them rekindle the hope that they may have lost or never known in the first place.

The path to success and happiness is not always clear or linear, and setbacks are inevitable. However, the most important thing we can offer these children is the belief that they are capable of overcoming whatever challenges they face. Every small victory, whether it is in school, a personal relationship, or their own mental health, is a step towards that brighter future. Each success is a moment where hope is rekindled, even if it is only a flicker at first. Over time, those flickers grow brighter as the child realizes their own capacity for change and growth.

What we do at the New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches is not simply about providing care; it's about helping these young people find their way out of the darkness and into the light. It's about offering a space where they can heal from past wounds and build the skills they need to thrive in the future. It's about showing them that no matter where they come





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from, their potential is limitless, and the hope for a better future is always within reach.

Each day, we get the privilege of being part of a young person's journey. We get to witness the moments when a child realizes they are not defined by their past. We get to see the spark of hope ignite when they understand that they can choose a different path. That is the essence of our work and the reason we continue to do what we do—to rekindle hope and break the generational cycles that hold so many children back from realizing their full potential.



Thank you to all the businesses, organizations, and churches that made monetary gifts in excess of \$150 during the period of January 1st - March 31, 2025. We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

THANK YOU

Alamo Ranch Company	Deming	NM	Ken Brudos Insurance	Albuquerque	NM
ABQ Lions Breakfast Club	Albuquerque	NM	Legacy Church	Albuquerque	NM
Cash for Contracts Inc.	Las Cruces	NM	Slayton Foundation	Roswell	NM
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Greeman Ranches	Tishomingo	OK	Trinity On The Hill Church	Los Alamos	NM
Harper Cattle LLC	Arlington	TX	Women's Christian Service Society	Los Alamos	NM
Hillsboro Union Church	Hillsboro	NM			





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

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: _____

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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/

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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