

The Ranches Alumni

Before The Ranches, I was in a place where I didn't care about myself at all. I felt lost and confused and I didn't really care about anything really. Once I got introduced to The Ranches I was unsure about it, and after a week or so I decided that this is what I might need to have a change, and it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The Ranches have taught me so much, that I now show my kids and give them the chance I was given, and being able show them the love and care I was given when I felt no one else was there when I needed someone the most.

-Alumni, Joe S.

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Rekindling HOPE for At Risk Youth - Since 1944

Fall 2025

Another 4H Season Comes to an End

By Mikela Kull

In our last Corral, I shared the story of this year's 4-H journey at The Ranches. The early mornings, the quiet hours in the barn, and the steady work of learning responsibility one feeding and one halter at a time. This program has always been about far more than raising animals. It has been about raising young

people to believe in their own worth and potential.

Now, I am so pleased to report that the hard work our kids put into this season was richly rewarded at the Socorro County 4-H Fair. The fair gave them the chance to bring all of those quiet lessons, long mornings, and late evenings into the



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GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Mikela Kull

President

Over the past few months, I have had the privilege of watching the kids at The Ranches face challenges head on. One of the most powerful examples of this was during our annual *Challenges* event.

For this event, the kids were divided into teams and asked to complete a variety of tasks that required problem solving, communication, and perseverance. From the very beginning, they had to figure out how to work together with peers they might not normally spend time with. They encouraged one another, discovered hidden strengths, and found ways to contribute that often surprised even themselves. Some stepped naturally into leadership roles, while others learned the importance of contributing ideas to a team during a particularly difficult task.

What stood out this year was not just the winning team but the way every participant grew throughout the process. Kids who may have started unsure of themselves ended it with a sense of pride in what they accomplished. They learned that their efforts matter, that their voice is important, and that success is best achieved when everyone works together.

Although the Challenges event was a highlight, it is just one example of the ways our kids are building the skills they will need for life. Whether it is working with their 4-H animals or facing personal obstacles, they are learning how to persevere, how to adapt, and how to support those around them. These are lessons that will serve them well as they continue to navigate life's difficulties.

I am proud of the determination and teamwork our kids displayed. Each challenge they overcame this year is a reminder that they are capable of meeting the obstacles in front of them and that with support, encouragement, and their own resilience, they will continue to grow.

Thank you for believing in these young people and for supporting The Ranches. Your commitment makes it possible for us to provide these opportunities, and it allows the kids to discover that they are stronger and more capable than they ever imagined.

Sincerely,

Mikela Kull - President

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public eye, where they could stand tall and show the results of their dedication. And stand tall they did.

This year, our kids came home with an impressive list of accolades:

- 16 first place ribbons in their class
- 8 second place ribbons in their class
- Grand Champion Goat
- Reserve Grand Champion Lamb
- Reserve Grand Champion Swine
- Reserve Grand Champion Goat Showmanship
- Top Hand for Swine Belt Buckle
- Indoor Projects Belt Buckle
- 21 sale slots



Each ribbon, each title, and each sale slot tells a story of perseverance. Behind every win are countless hours of mucking stalls, brushing coats, hauling water, measuring feed, and practicing patience. It means that a child who once doubted themselves kept showing up, even when tired. It means that kids who might have given up on challenges in the past chose instead to try again and again until they improved.

The fair was not just about competition. It was about courage. For many of our kids, stepping into the show ring required bravery. It meant walking out in front of judges and an audience, holding their head high, and trusting in the work they had done. Whether they walked out with a ribbon or not, each of them walked out with a stronger sense of confidence than they had before.

Another profound part of this journey has been the act of nurturing. Many of our kids arrive at The Ranches without ever having



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#RAISETHEMUP

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felt truly nurtured themselves. Their histories often include neglect, instability, or relationships where care was inconsistent or unsafe. Learning to provide daily care for an animal begins to unlock those emotions. When they feed a goat, brush a lamb, or sit quietly with a nervous pig until it calms, they are practicing something that may have been missing from their own lives. In turn, they begin to process what it feels like to give and receive care, to be gentle, and to see the difference their consistency makes. Through nurturing another living being, they begin to heal and understand that they, too, are worthy of being nurtured.

We are especially proud of the way our kids supported one another throughout the week. In the barns and on the show grounds, they cheered for each other, offered encouragement, and shared in both nerves and celebration. That spirit of teamwork reflects the heart of The Ranches, where young people learn that their efforts matter, but also that





THEIR JOURNEY





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they are part of something bigger than themselves.

For many of them, this fair was their first taste of seeing hard work translate into recognition. The smiles on their faces as they held their ribbons or heard their names called were more than moments of victory. They were glimpses of healing. Kids who once felt invisible or unworthy were seen, applauded, and celebrated. Not for what they had lost or endured, but for what they had accomplished.

One of the most meaningful parts of the fair is the livestock sale. Thanks to the generosity of the community, our kids' animals earned spots in the auction, and the proceeds from those sales are placed into savings accounts for each child. These funds are set aside for them to use after they leave The Ranches, giving them a small but important foundation as they begin their next chapter.





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For many, it is the first time they have had something tangible to carry forward into their future, a reminder that their hard work truly pays off in more ways than one.

And while the fair is now behind us, its lessons remain. The ribbons and banners will eventually be tucked away, but the growth in character, confidence, and resilience will continue shaping their lives long after the show season has ended. The discipline they learned in the barn will carry into their classrooms. The confidence they showed in the arena will echo into job interviews, leadership roles, and future relationships. The resilience they practiced will help them face new challenges with courage instead of fear.

This season has been a powerful reminder of what happens when young people are given responsibility, encouragement, and the chance to rise to a challenge. At The Ranches, we continue to believe that healing happens not only in counseling rooms, but also in barns, pastures, and show arenas. Every feeding, every early morning, every halter in hand represents another step toward rebuilding lives with hope, strength, and determination.

The story of this year's fair is not just about animals and ribbons. It is about kids discovering who they can be, learning to nurture and be nurtured, one lesson and one effort at a time. And that, more than anything, is the true reward of this season.

Thank you to all the businesses, organizations, and churches that made monetary gifts in excess of \$150 during the period of July 1 to September 30, 2025. We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

THANK YOU

Alamo Ranch Company	Deming	NM	Old Mill Farm & Ranch Supply	Belen	NM
Colquitt Company	Anthony	NM	Quality Liquors, Inc.	Roswell	NM
Greeman Ranches	Tishomingo	OK	Southwest Piping Supplies, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM
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NAVHDA Zia	Albuquerque	NM	Foundation	Albuquerque	NM



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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!**

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☐ \$100 a month (\$1200 yearly)

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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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