

## The Ranches Alumni

**What's one lesson you learned at The Ranches that still shows up in your life today?**

*"I learned how to budget my allowance which was my foundation for budgeting my finances as an adult."*

- Alumni, A.R.

*"Compassion and how to care for something or for someone other than yourself."*

- Alumni, D.T.

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## Winter 2026 The "Point A" Problem

By Mikela Kull

The beginning of a new year carries with it a quiet invitation. It asks us to pause, to look back on where we have been, and to imagine who we might become. For many of us, that hope is mixed with realism. We know change is not easy. We carry habits we wish we could leave behind and dreams we are not always sure how to reach. Still, there

is something about a fresh start that reminds us it is never too late to try again.

That same hope, fragile and brave, often arrives with the children who come to The Ranches.

Long before they walk through our doors, many of these children have already been defined by others. They have





# GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Mikela Kull**

President

As I reflect on the work being done at The Ranches, I am continually reminded that this mission does not exist in isolation. It exists because of a community of people who believe deeply in the value of children, even when their stories are complicated and their paths forward are uncertain. I am profoundly grateful for each of you who choose to stand with us, pray for us, support us, and trust us with the responsibility of caring for the young lives placed in our care.

The difference being made at The Ranches is often found in quiet, everyday moments. It shows up in a child who begins to show up consistently to school after years of disengagement. It looks like a young person learning how to manage their emotions instead of being overwhelmed by them. It sounds like laughter returning to a place where discouragement once lived. These moments may not always be dramatic, but they are deeply meaningful. They are the building blocks of lasting change.

I am keenly aware that my role places me at a unique intersection between our supporters and the children we serve. Many of you walk faithfully alongside this mission without ever seeing the day-to-day growth your support makes possible. You may not witness the small victories, the hard conversations, or the gradual progress that unfolds over time. I have the privilege of seeing those changes every day. I see children learning to trust adults again. I see confidence replacing fear. I see hope beginning to take root where it once felt out of reach. I want you to know that your belief and generosity are present in each of those moments, even when they are unseen.

These changes do not happen by chance. They happen because of a shared commitment to showing up, again and again, for children who need stability, encouragement, and guidance. They happen because of staff who invest their hearts and energy into this work, and because of supporters who make it possible for that care to continue. Every step forward a child takes is the result of a collective effort grounded in patience, compassion, and faith in what is possible.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and excitement. There is much to look forward to. Several of the children in our care are drawing closer to high school graduation, a milestone that once felt out of reach for many of them. Each diploma represents far more than academic achievement. It represents perseverance, growth, and the steady support of a community that refused to give up on them. These moments remind us why this work matters and encourage us as we continue moving forward together. There are always challenges ahead, and there will be days when the work feels heavy. But there is also great hope. The coming year holds new opportunities, continued growth, and the promise of watching young lives take meaningful steps toward independence and confidence. None of this would be possible without you.

Thank you for trusting The Ranches with this responsibility. Thank you for believing in second chances, in steady progress, and in the potential that exists within every child. I am continually humbled by your support and deeply encouraged by what we are able to accomplish together. The work being done here belongs to all of us, and the lives being changed are a reflection of that shared commitment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mikela Kull". The script is fluid and cursive.

Mikela Kull - President

MikelaKull@theranches.org



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been called difficult, disruptive, or too much to handle. They have been misunderstood, written off, or expected to fail. Over time, those words take root. They shape how a child sees themselves and what they believe is possible for their future. The weight of those labels can be heavy, especially for a child who has never been given space to be known beyond them.

When a child enters our program, we are reminded that their story is far from over. At The Ranches, we work intentionally to create a place where children can begin again. A place where they are not reduced to their past mistakes or hardest moments, but instead are seen for who they are and who they are still becoming. It is our hope that, over time, they begin to understand that they are worthy of care, capable of growth, and deserving of a future filled with opportunity.

One of the original slogans of The Ranches reminds us that we are “a place where a fella can get a second chance.” Those words reflect something deeply human. We all long for second chances. We all know what it feels like to fall short and wish for the opportunity to try again. For the children we serve, that second chance is not just about changing

behavior. It is about rebuilding trust, learning new ways to respond to challenges, and slowly discovering that they are more than the sum of their past experiences.

When we talk about goals for the children in our care, they are often simple, yet profoundly important. We hope to see them graduate from high school. We hope they learn the value of showing up, working hard, and taking responsibility. We hope they grow emotionally, learning how to express themselves, manage frustration, and build healthy relationships. More than anything, we hope they leave with a foundation that helps them recognize their own value and understand that their lives matter. These are not lofty or unrealistic goals. They are the quiet hopes many of our children share with us when they begin to believe in themselves again.

As an organization, we are clear about where we want each child to be when they leave us. In our staff training, we call this vision “Point B.” It represents the outcomes we hope for: stability, confidence, and the ability to move forward with purpose. But we also know that a destination means very little if we do not first understand where the journey



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#RAISETHEMUP

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begins.

That beginning, which we call “Point A,” looks different for every child. Some arrive carrying years of instability. Others bring grief, anger, fear, or deep disappointment. Each story is unique, and each starting point deserves to be understood. Just as directions only work when everyone agrees on where you are starting, progress with a child can only happen when we truly take the time to know them. Their history, their struggles, their strengths, and their hopes all matter.

The work we do begins with relationship. It begins with listening, with patience, and with the willingness to meet a child exactly where they are. From that place of understanding, small steps forward become possible. Trust begins to form. Growth takes root. Slowly, the path from Point A to Point B starts to take shape, not in dramatic leaps, but through steady, intentional progress.

As we enter a new year, many of us are carrying our own hopes for change. We reflect on the areas of our lives where we want to grow and the people we want to become. We know that meaningful change rarely happens overnight. It happens through daily choices,

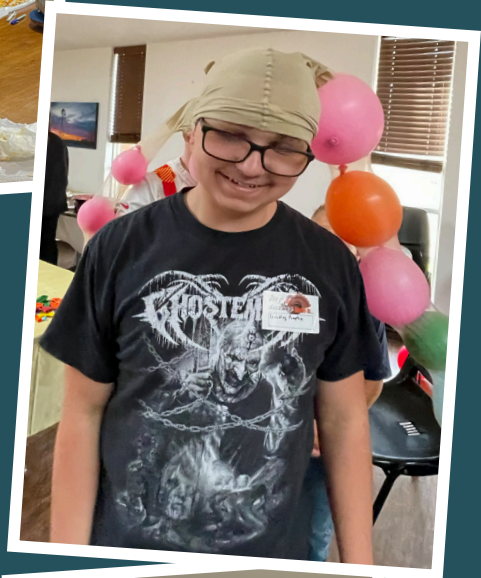
perseverance, and grace along the way. In the same way, the work being done with each child at The Ranches is guiding them closer to the outcomes they have asked us to help them achieve.

It is our hope that this new year brings growth for all of us. As we pursue the changes we want to see in ourselves, we remain committed to walking alongside each child, trusting that the steady work being done today is helping them move closer to the future they deserve.





# THEIR JOURNEY





## Celebrating Hope Around the Holidays

By Taylor Truitt

The holidays can be a challenging time for many people—especially the children in our care. Amid the excitement and busyness of the season, it's easy to feel displaced or overlooked, or to experience the anxiety that can accompany the start of a new year and the uncertainty of what lies ahead.

That's why we are deeply grateful for the individuals and organizations who partner with us to make the Christmas season meaningful and memorable. This year, several groups spent time with the children in our care, sharing the holiday spirit through games, gifts, and quality time. We are truly humbled and thankful for everyone who donated their time, resources, and stories of hope.

The Ranches once again celebrated the season with our friends at the Baptist Church of Rio Rancho, who presented another stunning Christmas play

exploring the theme of reconnection—to one another and to Christ. It was a beautiful opportunity to remind the residents we serve that even in moments of loneliness or overwhelm, hope and connection are still within reach. It's a message worth remembering for all of us, especially when the season becomes crowded with wrapping paper and wish-list overwhelm.

That spirit of connection may be contagious. This year, residents spent months preparing to continue a new tradition:





# THE RANCHES



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hosting a holiday puppet show for a local elementary school. Every resident, along with several staff members, performed three shows that shared messages of hope, family, and community.

Thanks to the kindness of our supporters, the dedication of our staff, and the generosity of volunteers who

shared their time and resources, the children in our care were able to create new memories and meaningful experiences. Each one served as a reminder that kindness is the greatest gift, community is our strongest foundation, and hope belongs to us all.

Thank you for another amazing year.



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

## THANK YOU

AF & AM Temple Lodge 6	Albuquerque NM	Libby Holman Foundation, Inc.	New York NY
Alamo Ranch Company	Deming NM	New Mexico Baptist Foundation	Albuquerque NM
Albuquerque Community Foun.	Albuquerque NM	Old Mill Farm & Ranch Supply	Belen NM
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Ken Brudos Insurance	Albuquerque NM	United Church Of Los Alamos	Los Alamos 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](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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P.O. Box 9  
Belen, NM 87002-0009

(505) 881-3363  
(800) 660-0289

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

