

WE CAN RIDE



HORSES HELPING PEOPLE DISCOVER THEIR ABILITIES

Dear Prospective Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with *We Can Ride!* We are a non-profit, volunteer-based therapeutic horseback riding and carriage driving program for children and adults living with disabilities. *We Can Ride* has been operating since 1982, and it is our volunteers who make this program possible!

During class, a volunteer serves as a “side walker” or “leader”. Sidewalkers work with the client by walking alongside the horse during class. They help the client understand the instructor’s directions, achieve balance, independence, and reach personal goals. Leaders are responsible for control of the horse during class. They warm up the horse before class, secure the horse during mounting and dismounting, and lead the horse during class. All these points are covered in the evening training that you will attend before the session begins, and continue to be addressed regularly in class.

The minimum age to volunteer with *We Can Ride* is *14 years*. For our Thursday night classes in Minnetonka only we require volunteers to be at least 21 years old. You do not need any previous experience working with horses or individuals living with disabilities, only a desire to help. We provide training! Enclosed are volunteer forms for the upcoming year that must be completed and returned in order to be confirmed for one of the training sessions: registration, emergency, and the *Authorization for Release of Information* (required if you are over 18). **Please double check that you have signed all forms as required and that you have completed both sides of the registration form.**

I have also included a Class Sign-Up form in order that you can see how our classes are structured and scheduled, and where they’re held. (2012 locations are Minnetonka, University of MN St. Paul Campus, Delano, Marine on St. Croix, just north of Stillwater and potentially a new site in New Germany). If you could complete and return that form, it would be very helpful for us--although you aren’t committed to a class until you attend the training and confirm a particular class. Training sessions are held several times throughout the year and prepare you for sidewalking, leading, and working in the barn. When you attend training you will be asked to choose and/or confirm the class or classes for which you are available to volunteer. **We ask volunteers to commit to 3 hours per week for an 8 week session.** If you are unable to commit to volunteering regularly every week, or if you feel that other commitments could cause you to miss **several classes during the upcoming session**, you might want to consider waiting until the next session to volunteer. Please feel free to call and talk with me if you’re uncertain how to proceed!

Whether you are looking for an on-going commitment or a shorter term opportunity, volunteering with *We Can Ride* will be a memorable and rewarding experience. The time and effort donated by volunteers truly make a difference in the lives of our riders. We appreciate all that our volunteers do for our organization!

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact me at (952) 934-0057 or at volunteers@wecanride.org.

Sincerely,

Jenna

Volunteer Coordinator

