

# **NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Saddle Up! announces April 21 open house**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Middle Tennesseans will have the chance to see the region's oldest and largest recreational therapeutic riding program for children with disabilities on April 21, when Saddle Up! hosts an open house.

The open house will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Saddle Up!, 1549 Old Hillsboro Road, Franklin.

“This will be a great opportunity to see what Saddle Up! does throughout the year,” said Executive Director Cheryl Scutt. “Saturday is a regular day for lessons, so guests can see our riders and horses in action. Plus, visitors will be able to tour the farm, meet some of our volunteers and staff – horses and human – and learn a little about what this program means to the children and families we serve.”

Founded in 1989 by four local volunteers, Saddle Up! began with 10 students who rode one night a week, using borrowed horses, borrowed tack and a borrowed farm. The 10 quickly grew to 30, and the volunteer base increased to nearly 100.

Today, Saddle Up! is the oldest and largest program of its kind in the region. It is also one of only two centers in Tennessee to earn Premier Accredited Center status from the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), the national organization that sets the standards for the equine-based programs. Saddle Up! now serves an average of 114 children and youth with documented disabilities who ride six days a week year-round, thanks in large part to the nearly 300 volunteers who give their time and talents throughout the year.

“Saddle Up! is blessed to have a highly talented and committed staff. All of our instructors are NARHA certified, and our Program Manager/Lead Instructor Lindsey Rizor was one of only nine professionals in the nation to earn the designation as Advanced Instructor last year,” Scutt said.

“But volunteers founded Saddle Up!, and they remain the spirit and driving force of all we do from the governance role of our Board to leading horses in lessons,” she continued. “We scheduled our open house on this date, in large part, as a salute to our volunteers as part of National Volunteer Week. There's no way we can ever thank them for all they do, and there's no way we could serve the children in our program without our volunteers. They truly are priceless.”

Also during the open house, visitors can get sneak peeks at two June events that benefit Saddle Up! – the June 10 Music Country Grand Prix to benefit Saddle Up! and the June 23

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Chukkers for Charity that benefits both Saddle Up! and the Rochelle Center. Both events are open to the public.

“Saddle Up! exists because of the generosity of donors and money from fund-raising events,” Scutt said. “The Grand Prix and Chukkers both offer a fun way to support the program, and they are both are high level competitive events that draw national attention to the community.”

Saddle Up! ([www.saddleupnashville.org](http://www.saddleupnashville.org)) is a recreational therapeutic horseback riding program for children with disabilities. It is the oldest nonprofit of its kind in Middle Tennessee and serves more than 100 children. It relies on charitable contributions and operates with the help of nearly 300 dedicated volunteers. For more information, please call 615-794-1150 or go to the website, [www.saddleupnashville.org](http://www.saddleupnashville.org).