

MANITO



November 25, 2017

Dear Friends of Manito,

With the approaching holiday season, I am reflecting on the past year and on the amazing progress I have realized through Manito Life Center's therapeutic riding program. I am exceptionally thankful to have found this beautiful haven and the life-changing programs offered there.

When I started riding at Manito a little over a year ago, I had debilitating pain in my back and hips; my hips were so tight that I could not stand up straight. I had hardly any muscle tone in my legs, and I lacked the balance necessary to sit up on the horse. After dismount, I would need to instantly sit. I was sixty pounds overweight.

My instructor, Jenn, encouraged me that this could change, and I struggled to find the hope that she had. Having been born with Spina Bifida, I had become accustomed to chronic pain, feeling trapped in a disabled body for over thirty years.



One year later, my pain diminished to the point that I could stop the physical therapy I had been receiving and desperately needed three times a week. I have lost thirty-five pounds and my legs have gone from shaking and yearning for rest after a thirty minute lesson to being able to walk comfortably for an hour. I recently rode in my first horse show (independently) and got third place in my category.

I feel that I can use my body in ways that the average individual takes for granted every day, but to me, a year ago I would not have believed this to be possible. For those who cannot walk, riding a horse and vicariously feeling what it is like to walk independently- this feeling is indescribable. My progress allows me to now play with my little daughter on the ground with no pain.

I passionately believe in this program, not only because it has transformed my life, but also because I have observed and spent time with many other children and adults with special needs who ride in the Manito program. Seeing a child walk independently for the first time, hearing their first words, and watching their weekly emotional, physical and mental progress- these are unforgettable moments in life.

If you are considering donating to a charity this year, would you consider making a donation to Manito Life Center? Your gift will make it possible for Manito to continue their mission of helping those with special needs to find a path to healing. To me, the Manito program has been the gift of freedom. As a 501(c)3, your donations are fully tax deductible. Even \$1 helps allow the opportunity for those in need to reach their highest potential and greatly enhance their quality of life. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jen Einstein