



# THE PONY EXPRESS

Horses change kids. Kids change the world.

*Dear Parents and Participants,*

Welcome to a journey of partnership, leadership, and horsemanship. Our program is designed for young equestrians ages 12–18 who want to go beyond the saddle and truly understand the soul and science of the horse.

Horses are incredible teachers. They mirror our energy, demand our focus, and reward our patience. In this program, students won't just learn to "ride"—they will learn to see themselves a little bit better through the eyes of their horse.

## **Our Philosophy: Connection not Control**

We believe that a true horse-human partnership begins on the ground. Whether your child is a beginner or an experienced rider, our tiered curriculum ensures they develop a "horse-first" mindset.

- **Level I (Foundation):** Focuses on the "Language of the Horse." Students learn how to integrate breath work, regulate their energy and emotion, and how to establish a respectful boundary.
- **Level II (Intermediate):** Transitions into equine care, including equine nutrition, basic veterinary care, and expanding on our horsemanship skills.
- **Level III (Advanced):** Dives into the artistry of riding, focusing on collection, lateral movements, and refined communication between horse and human.

## **What to Expect**

This is a Certificate-Based Program. This means students will be evaluated through both practical demonstrations and "knowledge checks." Progressing through the levels provides a sense of accomplishment and ensures that safety and horse welfare always come first.

## **Safety & Commitment**

Working with a 1,000-pound prey animal requires discipline. We ask that students come prepared with:

- Appropriate footwear (boots with a heel) and safety helmets.

- A "learning mindset"—willingness to listen to both the instructor and the horse.
- Patience. Every horse is an individual, and every day is a new conversation.

**Cost-** \$150.00 Annually, covers insurance and t-shirts

**Commitment-** One weekend day during spring and fall, one weekend day, one week day during summer season. Participants are encouraged to come more often if transportation allows.

**Outcome-** To grow confident, compassionate equestrian leaders. If you have any questions about the curriculum or the certification process, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Happy Trails,

Linda Aldrich

Director, The Pony Express Equine Assisted Skills for Youth

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

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