

United Way Proposal Brief

In 2016, Mending Arrow Ranch opened its gates and heart to the children within our community. Located at the southern end of Bradley County, Mending Arrow's fence posts border the Tennessee / Georgia state line. This gives us an advantage to not only reach out to our local county, but also to surrounding counties and those willing to travel. Mending Arrow Ranch is an equine ministry that aims to connect a horse and child to achieve the goals of mending and redeeming hearts, minds, bodies and souls. The Ranch utilizes four equine assisted programs that include Brave One, Dream Catchers, 4 Directions, and Reading Warriors. These programs strive to improve child development, through equine and animal therapeutic tactics in an effort to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged youth, children with physical and mental needs, adolescent girls, and struggling readers. Reading Warriors, our newest addition, provides a unique opportunity for children, parents, and teachers to receive specialized support for literacy in our community.

The Reading Warriors program, which was designed by a local educator and tutor who utilizes the Orton-Gillingham approach, aims to provide a unique opportunity for children who struggle with learning to read. Formatted to assist primarily dyslexic learners, Reading Warriors strives to enrich the learning process even more by including our ranch animals in each experience. We have already seen how the equine programs at Mending Arrow Ranch can benefit children with special needs. Research suggests that students who struggle with reading are at higher risk of poor self esteem, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, we intend to encourage students who struggle with reading to develop self confidence and independence that will carry over into academic endeavors, while simultaneously bridging the reading gap. It is our belief that

our newest program will not only promote a relaxed and positive atmosphere, but also help meet the emotional needs of students we serve.

The Reading Warriors program assists children by offering positive reading experiences, prescriptive support for learning, and outreach within the community. Once a month, families can attend Reading Day at the Ranch to spend time reading to horses and ponies. Parents and students who need more support with reading skills can meet with our tutor weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly for consultations, one-on-one sessions, or parent workshops. Tutoring sessions are tailored to each child's needs and include time with animals at the ranch. Incorporating animal work into reading sessions not only creates a natural reward, but fosters a sense of pride and responsibility for each student. The outreach division of Reading Warriors, nicknamed The Reading Corral, travels to off-site events such as community festivals, fairs, and schools with various animals from the ranch. The outreach division will encourage our program to reach a greater number of children in Bradley County schools and surrounding regions.

All services at Mending Arrow Ranch are offered free of charge. With that being said, we are requesting United Way's Health Endowment Fund for \$8,000. This amount will fund a structure for indoor learning, teaching materials, furniture items, and the hourly rate for the Orton-Gillingham tutor for our weekly sessions and summer camp. It is our aspiration that the Reading Warriors program will have a positive impact on children across the Tennessee Valley by providing positive experiences, meaningful support, and outreach within our community.

United Way Full Proposal

Organizations Overview

1) What community need is your organization and programs addressing? (1500 char)

Dyslexia affects roughly one in five people in the United States. Teacher education programs are sorely lacking in efforts to prepare teachers to identify and meet the needs of dyslexic students in the classroom. Many parents of children who struggle to learn to read seek help from private tutors, only to find that the cost of tutoring sessions is above their means. For many parents who struggled with reading themselves and are not in a position to offer reading help at home, this dilemma of finding affordable, yet effective assistance proves to be a prohibitive problem that often does not get resolved. Designed by an experienced, local educator who is a certified Orton-Gillingham diagnostic tutor, the Reading Warrior Literacy Program at Mending Arrow Ranch aims to provide a unique opportunity for children who struggle to learn to read. We have already seen how the equine programs at Mending Arrow Ranch can benefit children with special needs. Research suggests that students who struggle with reading are at higher risk for poor self esteem, anxiety, and depression. Through participation in the Reading Warriors program, students who struggle with reading can develop self-confidence and independence that will carry over into academic endeavors, while simultaneously bridging the reading gap by gaining access to resources and effective supplemental instruction.

2) What are the greatest unmet (Crisis/Relief) needs, of the clients that you serve, that your organization is not able to meet or provide services for? (500 char)

The greatest unmet need of clients in our local community is supplemental support for children with reading difficulties. As of right now, we are unable to provide our students with a calm, enriching environment in which they may receive effective reading instruction. Furthermore, our dyslexia specialist, Mrs. Parker, is limited in her ability to provide services as often as needed to students due to her personal childcare costs.

3) What are the greatest unmet long-term (Development) needs, of the clients you serve, that your organization is not able to meet or provide services for? (500 char)

Research has shown that students who are not reading on grade level by the third grade are not likely to ever read past a ninth or tenth grade level without intensive remediation. Students who receive effective intervention prior to third grade have the best chances of closing the reading gap, with earlier intervention being the most effective.

4) Please list out the organizations you collaborate with. (250 char)**

*** Organization reports being involved in high-quality, mutually beneficial partnerships that:*

- (1) Identify gaps in the Target Area and programs/services to alleviate those gaps,*
- (2) Provide services in a collaborative manner that increases the benefit to the client,*
- (3) Allow for savings by sharing back-end costs, and/or*

(4) *Demonstrates collaboration in another manner not stated above, by a provided example*
**True collaboration is more than only referrals being made to and/or from another organization.*

Southern Adventist University School of Social Work
University of Tennessee Chattanooga
Lee University

5) Please explain the role each collaborating partner plays. (1000 char)

Each of these partnerships provide interns that assist in daily operations at the Ranch. We currently have one intern from each of the schools listed, and each intern brings a unique set of skills to the Ranch. The intern from Southern Adventist University is working towards obtaining her Master's in Social Work (MSW) and assists in clinical therapy sessions with the students, grant writing, website design/organization, and daily ranch chores. The intern from Lee University is obtaining her degree in Psychology, and also assists in therapy sessions, grant writing, website design/organization, and daily ranch chores. The intern from Lee University is obtaining a degree in business administration and assists in the clerical operations at the Ranch.

Program Information

1) Do you consider your proposed program/service to be:* Development/Chronic
Pick One: Emergency Crisis or Development/Chronic or both

2) If development/chronic, please detail how your program/service empowers individuals/families to 'do for themselves'? (1000 char)

Family participation is an important part of the Reading Warriors program. Parents are encouraged to attend workshops and monthly conferences conducted by our certified dyslexia specialist. The specialist uses teaching strategies that include teaching the logic behind the way the English language works. Students who have been unsuccessful in learning to read using traditional methods-such as memorization of words, will gain a deeper understanding of the phonics system by learning the "why" behind it. By providing visuals, practice materials, logic, and mnemonics, the Reading Warriors program equips families to learn and practice better reading skills together. Monthly Reading Days at the Ranch allow frequent growth checks and updates so that the student can continue forward progress.

Basic Programs of Operations

3) Typical hours of operation* (150 char)

The Reading Warriors Program operates by appointment on Saturdays from 10-2 and by appointment at various other times, days, and events.

4) How do individuals or families access your services?* (500 char)

Students and families may access the services of Mending Arrow Ranch's Reading Warriors program in several ways. Families may attend one of the regularly scheduled Reading Days at the Ranch, sign up for free small group or one-on-one tutoring sessions with our certified dyslexia specialist, attend free parent workshops, participate in interactive social media events, or participate in one of our outreach events offsite.

5) Depending on the type of program, what constitutes successful completion of the program or service?* (750 char)

The success of the Reading Warriors program will be measured in a number of ways. Upon enrollment in the program, participants will be given a basic assessment of literacy skills, along with a social-emotional assessment, and ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) questionnaire. Based on the results of these surveys, individualized SMART goals will be created for each participant. Progress will be monitored periodically during each bi-weekly session, and again at the close of the five-week semester. This data will be analyzed, and individual consultations will be conducted with each family to recognize academic and social-emotional growth at the close of each semester.

6) What is the typical number of volunteers per month?* 8

*What is the average number of hours served per month by volunteer?** 24 hours

7) How are volunteers used to implement program?* (250 char)

The volunteers will participate in Reading Day events by implementing safety measures and facilitating literacy activities. They will also assist the tutor in outreach visits to local schools and with small group sessions at the ranch.

Venture Grant:

8) How will this funding increase the capacity (efficiency, effectiveness, or ability to serve more clients) of this program?* (500 char)

The funding from this grant will enhance the services provided and increase outreach opportunities for this program. The certified dyslexia specialist provides services on a volunteer basis, but her availability for sessions is limited due to the cost of childcare. The funding will allow Mrs. Parker to increase her availability for sessions and provide necessary supplies. The shelter also purchased with this funding would decrease cancellations due to inclement weather.

9) How will the change be measured? (500 char)

The availability for sessions will increase with funding, so the number of students we are able to serve will increase, as well. The rate of cancellations due to inclement weather will decrease if we have a shelter to house tutoring sessions. Having supplies on site will ensure that the proper

equipment is available for each student at all times. Attendance of students will be tracked with an attendance log and compared each semester to ensure growth of the program.

Target Population Served

Provide client beneficiary characteristics data for the total number of unduplicated individuals that were served by your program last fiscal year and that you are projecting for the current and next fiscal year

See attached

Program Outcomes:

1) List the primary outcome(s) for your program, along with the outcome indicator(s) for each one. The indicator should include the target number and/or percentage, as well as the identified time frame. At least one outcome and one indicator must be identified. The outcome(s) should directly align with the selected Community Goal. (250 char)

Students will improve their reading skills while increasing self-confidence. 85% of the students will improve by at least one reading level in two semesters. 75% of reading camp attendees will accomplish their individual SMART goals by end of camp.

Data Collection Process

Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) is a method of scoring the extent to which students' individual goals are achieved in the course of intervention. In effect, each student has their own outcome measure, but this is scored in a standardized way as to allow statistical analysis. Students will be evaluated at each individual or group session in relation to their personal goals. Goal improvement will be monitored and measured over the duration of the semester or camp.

Data Source / Instrument for Collecting

Student growth and improvement would be evaluated manually by the reading instructor at each individual or group session. The evaluation would be using the individual goals established for the student and through the Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) score process. Interns will compile session reports for the duration of the semester or camp, assessing the child's improvement over the course of the learning period.

2) Unit of Service (UOS):* (250 char)

One-hour reading session with tutor and pony bi-weekly for a ten-week semester. Three-hour reading camp group sessions for three consecutive days.

UOS 1: one hour individual tutoring sessions offered biweekly over two 10-week semester periods = 10 UOS delivered = \$25 per UOS

UOS 2: nine hour group tutoring sessions over three-day reading camp = 15 students = \$15 per UOS

Budget

1) Referencing your Program Budget form, please explain Deficit/Surplus or other items of interest.* (500 char)

Items of interest include the 10x20 wooden outdoor building. This structure offers protection from the elements. At this time, all sessions are held outdoors, and the tutoring program is inoperative during rain, summer heat, and bitter winter weather. This building would also house teaching materials, office supplies, and furniture. By attaching a porch and handicap accessible ramp to this building, we will be able to offer full access to students of all abilities.

2) Explain the use of the United Way funding for this program.* (250 char)

It will provide an annual salary for the certified dyslexia specialist, which will help increase opportunities for program expansion. It will also provide instructional supplies and a sheltered environment specifically for the reading program.

3) If the budget for this program shows additional (excess) funds or a deficit from one year to the next, explain how the excess is used or deficits will be covered. (500 char)

We are not estimating any excess or deficit at this time; however, if the program is in an excess position, we will look into purchasing additional materials and tools that can help us expand our literacy program. If we are in a deficit position, we will pursue fundraising activities, social media campaigns, or utilize the unrestricted, general fund of Mending Arrow Ranch.

4) How will this program be affected if the United Way funds are not granted?*(500 char)

If the funds are not granted, the specialist will continue on a volunteer basis, but availability for sessions will be limited. Because there is no tutoring shelter, sessions will need to be cancelled when inclement weather is predicted. Mrs. Parker will be limited to only utilizing supplies she can travel with and personal supplies that are at her disposal.

Finance

1) What is your organization policy related to the use of unrestricted cash reserves?*(500 char)

Unrestricted cash reserves are to be used as needed to support the ongoing efforts of the ranch when operating funds are low due to seasonality of giving or unexpected events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The reserves are kept in a savings account and when we have a surplus of contributions amounts are moved into this account to accrue interest.

2) Explain if and how reserves are permanently restricted, temporarily restricted, or unrestricted.* (550 char)

We currently have no permanently restricted reserves. Our temporarily restricted reserves are related to a grant that was received in December 2018. Those funds will either be fully utilized for the designated purpose as prescribed by the donor, or we will return the unused balance.

Please enter Management and General Expense: \$5,551

Please enter Fundraising Expense: \$3,498

Please enter Total Revenue: \$38,019

Administrative Management and Fundraising Percentage: 23.8%