

# CORRAL

## WINTER 2018

Vol. #50, Issue #4

### The Ranches Alumni

"The Boys Ranch helped me back in 1979 and 1980 during a difficult time in my life. I believe everything that helps bring back the family unit is good thing."

"Mike, The Ranches, and their philosophy helped shape me..."

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Rekindling Hope in Today's Youth - Since 1944

## WHAT DOES THE RANCHES' BRAND STAND FOR?

By Heath Kull



As I travel around New Mexico and talk to groups and individuals about The Ranches, I am amazed at how often people ask me some version of, "what does The Ranches stand for?"

Unfortunately, I tend to assume that everyone in New Mexico knows about us and what we do. I recognize that this is a bit lazy on my part, but I am hopeful that I can summarize what we stand for in this issue. At The Ranches, we are a Christian organization that strives to care for, nurture, support and help young people who are hurting and who are in need of guidance, education, structure and hope.

Many have come before me and contributed greatly to this organization and to what we stand for. I hope to honor them as we continue to strive to *Rekindle Hope in Today's Youth*.

James 1:27 "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

**1. HOPE**– to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence.

Our mission is to *Rekindle Hope in Today's Youth*. This is a humbling and daunting mission as it is, by definition, about the kids. Children who have been hurt often lose hope first. They stop believing in the idea that they are valuable, that they matter and that people will choose to love them. As a result, they lose hope in their dream of a future that includes happiness, family, faith, friends, a meaningful career, influence and love. "What's the point?" becomes a mantra for many young people and they seem to find very little evidence of hope when they look to adults, to school, to peers and to social media. It is our job to answer that question as we work to rekindle their hope. Chores, church, horses, activities and school are all opportunities for us to expose kids to hope. Thankfully, you can see it in their eyes the minute they start to hope again. We then just have to fan the flames a little in order for the fire to start burning.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

**2. HARD WORK**– exertion or effort directed to produce or accomplish something.

Life can be hard under the best of circumstances, but it gets much, much



# THE RANCHES - WHAT DO WE STAND FOR

harder when you are lazy. We will never be able to heal every emotional trauma or wound that a child has suffered and we cannot give them a better past, but we can teach them the value of work and show them the benefits of having a positive work ethic. In our experience, life will be a whole lot easier for kids if they leave The Ranches with an understanding of, and appreciation for, hard work. Sadly, we cannot teach this concept with our words. We must demonstrate this every day and in every way. Laziness is contagious and the kids will catch it from the staff if it is present. As staff, we are always demonstrating our work ethic to kids. It is our job to make sure that our work ethic is positive and that we stamp out laziness in ourselves at every opportunity. Once we commit to doing this, we can then hold kids to a standard of hard work while they are with us. We often ask our staff, "what are you teaching kids about hard work?"

Colossians 3:23 *"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."*

### **3. HONESTY** – truthfulness, sincerity, or frankness.

All of the kids at The Ranches have been lied to and many have never had the benefit of hearing the truth from a caring adult without a manipulative motive driving the communication. While this is sad and hurtful, we are no better (than those who have lied to them in the past) if we are unwilling to live honestly or be honest with the kids every time we have the opportunity to interact with them. How will they learn to believe us, and in us, if their first challenge is learning when we are choosing to be honest and when lying is something that we are willing to do as a product of our own selfishness or cowardice? Imagine if Jesus had, like many Christians tend to interpret him, given us the instruction to be honest...unless it is really difficult, will cause conflict, will cause you pain or will make you unpopular with others whose approval you secretly crave? Thankfully, Christ instead gave clear directions on integrity and on being honest...even when it's really inconvenient.

Ephesians 4:25 *"Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."*

### **4. HELP**– to give or provide what is necessary to accomplish a task or satisfy a need.

The Ranches stands at the intersection between you, our donors who want to help others, and the kids we serve who are in need of help. The essence of The Ranches is to help young people and their families, but we also hope to help our staff, our neighbors and our community. Interestingly, it is you who starts the chain of help when you donate to us and to the kids we are working with. Our responsibility is to utilize the funds you give in order to help kids while keeping them safe and ensuring that our staff, who have the privilege of working with kids, are well trained, professional, supported and able to help in ways that lead to healing and growth.



Psalms 46:1 *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

### **5. HEALING** – growing sound; getting well; mending.

What is The Ranches if it is not a place for young people to heal? Under the very best of circumstances, adolescence can be painful and difficult. It gets even more so when kids don't feel they have a support system that will defend them, guide them, support them and love them...no matter what. While most of the young people at The Ranches are struggling to identify, or even admit, they are hurting and in need of healing, they are, indeed, hurting and desperately in need of healing. In many cases, we are not the first to attempt to facilitate healing. This makes the job much more difficult as kids who feel they "failed" at being helped are then reluctant to be open to additional attempts to help, or to heal. As a result, we must stubbornly persist and, at times, get very blunt in challenging young people to see themselves, and their situation, a bit differently than they have seen themselves up until coming to The Ranches. Hopefully, when the time is right, they will see in us the healing power of faith and the love and hope that comes from Above.

Matthew 11:28-30 *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

### **6. COMMUNITY**– a social, religious, occupational, or other group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists.



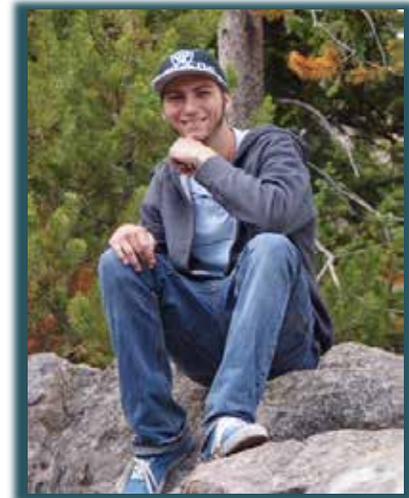
# THE RANCHES - WHAT DO WE STAND FOR

The Ranches is, at its very core, a community of caring adults who have decided to work with other people's kids in hopes that their efforts will serve to better the future of those hurting young people. Sadly, many of those young people are completely unfamiliar with the concept of community; unless it is in a negative, codependent or unhealthy framework. Gangs, detention, probation or clandestine love serve as poor excuses for community in the eyes of many kids that we serve. We work together, play together, eat together, laugh together, cry together and worship together. As a result, we have to teach and model conflict resolution, forgiveness, grace, mercy, selflessness and sacrifice for the greater good of the group. Unfortunately, sometimes we also have to address and call out adults for holding onto grudges, being quick to anger, passive aggressive tendencies, selfishness and unenviable work habits and relationship skills. We have found, over the years, that addressing the kids without addressing the same behaviors in ourselves and our staff, lead to less than desirable results. The only way to establish and build our community at The Ranches is to agree upon our core beliefs, live them out every day, and invite kids to start participating in our community until they can develop the independence that allows them to choose and join a community of their own.

*Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

## **7. AUTHENTICITY**— not false or copied; genuine; real.

While the word authentic is plastered on everything from food to jeans, not many young people know what it means to be authentic. Why would they? If you grow up copying the latest trend and dressing like someone else and telling jokes you heard in a movie or on TV, what would you know about authenticity? Kids often end up trying to figure out if they measure up to someone else's opinions or thoughts or feelings or standards and never ask themselves, "Who did God intend for me to be when he created me?" That question, for me, is far more humbling. When I was younger, I didn't really want to know the answer. As awful as it sounds, I wanted to be a really authentic copy of someone a little cooler, better looking, richer and funnier. Not until I met my wife was I willing to really look at the question of who God intended for me to be. Thankfully, it led me here and the kids taught me, rather quickly, that I wasn't much use to them if I was a copy of someone else. Authenticity matters.



*Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

## **8. ACCOUNTABILITY** – subject to the obligation to report, explain, or justify something.

I am amazed at how often I hear the word accountability. Even more amazing is how often it is used incorrectly. At The Ranches, accountability is a willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions and the effect that those actions have on others. This is the concept and principle that is the most difficult to teach and the most often misinterpreted by staff and kids. I have never found there to be a shortage of people that are willing to be held accountable for the actions they are most proud of, but those same people tend to struggle with being held accountable for the actions they were hoping no one was paying attention to. To further exacerbate the problem, people tend to accept accountability from people they agree with or who think exactly the same way they do. We have even found that kids today believe they should not be held accountable if they have enough "likes" for their actions on social media. Standing up to a teacher or humiliating a classmate are sometimes seen as acceptable as long as the social media audience is still clicking on and "liking" the actions. We disagree. We are accountable for our actions and the impact on others; even if a lot of so-called friends "like" it. In many cases, accountability is the principle that becomes the hardest to teach, but also the principle that is the most necessary for young people, and the people that care for them, to understand. I have spent many hours explaining to kids how I am accountable to our donors, our board of directors, to CYFD, to the Fire Marshal, to parents, to the media and, most recently and confusingly, the State Board of Pharmacy. While I don't always agree with those entities, I am accountable to them. The Bible didn't really give me any leeway to ignore my accountability just because I don't agree with the entity holding me accountable. Believe me, living by this principle has been, at times, trying and taxing. It is still the right thing to do as we are accountable to do the right thing; and we subscribe to a slightly Higher standard for what is right.

*continue reading on page 8*



# THEIR JOURNEY





#RAISETHEMUP @MVR

## MVR - A CHILD'S JOURNEY

By Alisia - Previous MVR Child Resident

My name is Alisia. My mom, Dionne, is the Administrator at Mountain Vista Ranch (MVR). Hearing that my mom administers the program, you might not think we were once in the program. Before we had ever heard about New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranch, and their services, we weren't in the best place. My mom had been laid off from her previous job due to medical reasons.

Ever since that happened, we had been in transitional housing such as Family Promise and Catholic Charities. Between the charities we lived in our car, or if we could afford it, hotels. This is how I spent my days before I got into the MVR program, which The New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranch offers.

I remember the first day my mom told me we would be getting a furnished apartment. I was ecstatic to not be sleeping in a different place every week, or in my car. I remember barely having enough gas to reach Mountain Vista Ranch when I arrived for the very first time, the air was crisp, the leaves were turning yellow and orange on the trees, and the smell of a fireplace burning fresh wood filled my nostrils. It was the day before Halloween when I finally found a home. Walking up to the gate I had more excitement each second that passed. We were greeted by one of the nicest people, she walked us into the apartment, our apartment. After the administrator explained how the program works, and how to be successful in it, I asked her, "Do we really have the apartment? Are we really able to stay here?" because I was scared to go back to all the other programs without structure, and not knowing where I would be the next week. Us being accepted into the program was affirmed with every question that I could muster up.

When we started moving the very little items we had into the apartment, I felt relieved, but still slightly anxious. I knew we were safe and secure, and were able to go back to the normal routine we had months ago at our old apartment before everything happened, but I didn't want to go back to sleeping in cars and going into weekly programs. I didn't know how secure MVR was, and how long it would last. Being there for a couple weeks changed that mindset. I knew these amazing people were here to help us, and that our residence was for as long as we needed it, and as long as we were being productive.

With the support The Ranches offered, my mom had gotten a volunteer opportunity at Senior Affairs. Senior Affairs is a business that brings hot meals to seniors who are unable to get their own, and also driving them to the store and important appointments, which after three months turned into a paying job. A year after Dionne's job at Senior Affairs, The Ranches offered her a job as the Resident Advisor. After a year being the Resident Advisor, Dionne became the new Administrator of MVR, once again, the first resident to get the title.

Throughout the years of being in the outstanding community of MVR, with the support my mom offered, I have grown into a caring, loving, young adult. I now know positive male role models, that I knew nothing about previously. The main one being Heath Kull. Before coming to MVR, I never had a positive male role model in my life. Meeting Heath has had a large impact on my life. Hearing his wisdom on many topics as well as advice to almost anything you can think of, helped me in my journey of becoming a young adult. I have learned to respect myself, the people around me, the environment, and how to be truly grateful to what God has planned for me, and what is next to come in my adventure of growing up. The Ranches is one of the reasons why I am the person I am today. Everyone who works there has made my life, and this world a much better place.





# THE RANCHES - WHAT DO WE STAND FOR

*continued from page 3*

Hebrews 13:17 *"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."*

## **9. RESPONSIBILITY**– having the power to influence or manage.

The Ranches was founded on, and based upon, taking responsibility for children in New Mexico who can't, for whatever reason, be at home. I suspect that we will always be anchored in that responsibility and there doesn't seem to be a shortage of young people who need help and healing. As a result, we will constantly be working to be capable of meeting the needs of hurting young people; even as the behaviors become more shocking and difficult to address. These kids are our responsibility and one we don't take lightly. In an effort to meet this tremendous responsibility we must, in many cases, work to build up and teach our staff so they can be the influence and mentors our young people need. We often refer to the motto "Raise Them Up" when talking about the kids, but we usually have to start with staff. Not many people come prepared to deal with the behaviors, attitudes and bad habits of people who have been hurt and who are dedicated to keeping adults at a distance. I assure you, I do not take this responsibility lightly.

James 3:1 *"Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."*

## **10. SERVICE** - an act of helpful activity; help; aid.

The Ranches has always been about service and will continue to be about service for as long as we are able. While we were originally founded to serve the needs of young men who were struggling with the absence of the men in their family due to World War II, we have continued to serve the community of New Mexico by caring for, and serving, children who are struggling, hurting and deficient in hope. We've grown and changed over the years. We've added girls and foster care and a young mother's program to our brand, but we are still the same organization at heart and we are still ready and willing to serve the families of New Mexico (and the rest of the country) who find themselves in need. My goal is to treat every child in a manner that teaches them it is our honor to serve them, they are not a burden and we do not ever consider them to be an inconvenience. I view my job as both a privilege and an honor. If I am being totally honest, I don't actually consider it work most of the time. I get the chance to shape the lives of young men and women...and someone actually pays me to do it. What a blessed life I lead. It is my hope I can teach our staff to view the kids in the same light that I do; A gift that was given to someone else, that I get the opportunity to care for and serve before returning them to their family.

Matthew 25:34-40 **34** *"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

In essence, this is what The Ranches stands for and I am proud of this organization and our ability to help young people. I cannot ever thank you, our generous donors, enough for supporting us and allowing me the opportunity to serve and to lead this organization. I hope to continue for many years to come.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "HK", written over a faint background image of a cow.

Heath Kull - President



# THE RANCHES

## BLESSED- DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The Holidays always provide us the opportunity to experience the generosity of our community and of groups that want to make sure the kids at The Ranches are not overlooked. While there is always a sense of anxiety for the kids due to the expectations that come with being away from The Ranch, a number of groups made sure that the Holidays were a time filled with parties, gifts, treats and cheer. We'd like to extend a heartfelt "Thank You!" to the following groups:



Sojourners Club

3 Albuquerque Lions Clubs

Faith Baptist Church, Artesia, NM

First Christian Church, Albuquerque, NM

Monte Vista Christian Church, Albuquerque, NM

FedEX Albuquerque Employees

Buffets Candies, Albuquerque, NM

## THANK YOU

Thank you to all the businesses, organizations and churches that made monetary or in-kind gifts during the period September 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017. We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

Alamo Ranch Company	Deming	NM	Ned's Structural Steel LLC	Belen	NM
Bernadette Plumbing & Heating	Albuquerque	NM	NM Acoustics and Specialties, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM
Bruff Kentish, Ltd. Attorneys at Law	Englewood	CO	Otero Cowbelles	Alamogordo	NM
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Greeman Ranches	Tishomingo	OK	Slayton Foundation	Roswell	NM
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Jarmon Ranches	Cortez	CO	Trinity On The Hill Episcopal Church	Los Alamos	NM
Kay R McMillan Investments	Roswell	NM	Tucumcari Altrusa International Club	Tucumcari	NM
Ken Brudos Insurance	Albuquerque	NM	United Church Of Los Alamos	Los Alamos	NM
Kohlhaas Corp.	Albuquerque	NM	Wild West Braiding Co.	Farmington	NM
Murphy Builders, Inc.	Gallup	NM	Yucca Cowbelles & Woolgrowers	Artesia	NM



# BECOME A PARTNER

## Upcoming Family Programs

Our counseling staff offers classes for parents and others working with young parent training programs.

Two-Day Sessions: 2018

May 12 & 19

Nov 10 & 17

Eight-Week Sessions: 2018

Feb 1 – Mar 22

Aug 9 – Sep 27

## Help Us Share Our Story

Representatives of New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches are available to meet with clubs, civic organizations and fellowship groups to share our story of bringing hope to hurting youngsters.

If you are interested in arranging a speaking engagement for your organization, simply give us a call at (505) 881-3363 or (800) 660-0289.

### YES! I would like to Become a Partner!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

My monthly donation will be: (a minimum gift of \$25 a month is required to become a Partner)

\$25 a month (\$300 yearly)

\$100 a month (\$1200 yearly)

\$50 a month (\$600 yearly)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to give by credit card.

Please charge my:

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Master Card

Discover

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Acc.#: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ 3 - or 4 - digit number located in card signature field, usually after the account number

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# The Ranches

Rekindling Hope in Today's Youth - Since 1944