



New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches CORRAL

Winter 2019

The Ranches Alumni

I went here when I was younger as a troubled youth and The Ranches helped me a lot.

Garcia

"I just want to say thanks for having me and teaching me a lot of stuff when I was young. I do believe I'm a better person now, because of the 18 months I spent there, Mom and Pop were was my house parents and I would like to be able to tell them Thank You for it! Although, it was many years ago I will never forget it!"

Rhinehart

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Rekindling Hope in Today's Youth - Since 1944

"WHAT DOES THE RANCHES MEAN TO ME?"

By Resident - RP

When I first came to The Ranches, I thought that is was were the "bad kids" came. I thought that this was a place where your parents dropped you off because they couldn't handle you; that they don't even care about you.

I started getting used to The Ranches and I started to realize that we aren't bad kids and this isn't what I thought it was going to be. When I first got here, I didn't even want to be here. There are times where I still don't. I start to think about my mom and my brother and my sister and how bad I miss them. I get stuck.

I don't ask for help and I keep everything that I am feeling inside. I hate talking about how I feel, but the staff has helped me to learn to open up more. I hate talking about how I feel; everybody hates talking about how they feel.

So, what does The Ranches mean to me? The Ranches mean a lot to me. They have given me an opportunity to want more for myself. Before coming to The Ranches I didn't have a future; I didn't know what I wanted.

The Ranches can't force people to change. Before The Ranches, I was ditching school, being disrespectful to my mom and other family members. I was constantly fighting with my brother. You see, my mom is a single mom with three kids and no support. My brother and my

dad passed away when we were three and five years old. I didn't have a dad growing up and it was difficult for us; especially my mom.

The Ranches is helping me to realize what I want in the future. When I get older, I want to be an orthopedic doctor. I want to have a small family with a house and a car to get places. Before coming to The Ranches, I didn't think that I would ever see this as my future. Because of The Ranches, I have hope for my future now.





LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Heath Kull
President

This edition contains writing from the kids at The Ranches and focuses on their view of growing up at The Ranches. I am proud of their work, their insight, their creativity and their ability. But mostly, I am just proud that many of the kids that are with us are finding their voice and expressing themselves in an attempt to make sense of their life up to this point. I wish that I had started when I was their age.

While the kids in our care and I both spent part of our childhood's at The Ranches, our stories are, at times, very different even if we share the memories and the place. The Ranches really does mean something different to everyone as everyone's experiences vary and their perceptions are tinted by their own personalities and backstory. The stories that you are reading are the perceptions of some of the kids in our program today. We are hopeful that we are a better program today than we were 40 years ago, but it isn't all that easy to measure something so subjective. For me, getting the kids to express their thoughts, feelings and perceptions is important and a skill that will definitely serve them for the rest of their lives. I hope you enjoy their thoughts, feelings and perceptions. I am proud of each of them and proud of their willingness and ability to share with you a part of their story.

Sincerely,

By Resident - VG

"Heath,

#RaiseThemUp

While kids today may be more connected than any generation before them, I often ask, "connected to what?"

I've never felt loved or accepted or appreciated by my phone; it just lets me access information while being devoid of emotion.

Sometimes the kids feel the same way about their parents. They can access information but sometime feel that that their parents lack emotion and connection to them. I'm not advocating getting rid of cell phones. I am simply stating that the emotional connection to our kids is as important as the information that we provide. Make sure that you and your kids are connected by more than just your phones.

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@TheRanchesNM
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@HeathKull
#HeathKull

Thank you, for everything you have helped me with! I realized that most of the staff on the Ranches has helped me with a little something from the second I arrived until this day. Spending some time thinking has helped me realize how much the staff of The Ranches has helped me, and how much The Ranches means to me. Thank you for accepting me. I wasn't sure about The Ranches my first two weeks, but now I know what I want. That is to continue to work on myself, because I am sure I won't get a chance like this again.

I know I mess up a lot and that is because I get stuck. Anyway that is my fault. I'm just trying to push through and find who I am inside. Not who anyone else wants me to become. I know I will mess up sometimes, but I will have to push through and find another way that can help me. Now I have realized that not anyone can want this more than me. Now I know that I need to be committed to me. Knowing this has opened me up a little more.

The Ranches has helped me realize I am important, that I am worth it, and that I need to stand my ground sometimes to be heard and understood.

To me The Ranches is not just a place, to some people it can become a home; people like me. I am taking Lani's offer, because I want to succeed. I am trying to say that The Ranches is not like CYFD or other places, because The Ranches is better.

I have thought about what I want to do when I get older. I want to help people, I am kind of doubting myself but, I want to work at The Ranches when I get older. I don't know if I will succeed, but I want to.

I want to work at The Ranches because there is hope here. The Ranches is different to me, a better place. I have realized I am worth it. Thank you for guiding me. The Ranches has helped me in many ways, and I realized that us as kids at The Ranches, we need to start accepting to get through. I know it is hard to accept, that is why we need guidance and The Ranches provides that.

I was declining but then I went to a different place for a little while, it changed how I felt about The Ranches. I was declining help but now I realize how much The Ranches has helped me in the last eight months. Now I am accepting help and I wanted to say that I WANT more time to work on me. I want it because I want to get to know me from what I was before to what I am now.

Now I am ready!"



The Ranches

By Resident - MC

When I first came to The Ranches, I thought that it was going to be like a jail. I adapted myself over a few months to the program and to the people here. I learned that most of the adults here just want to teach the kids my age to want a better future for themselves.

Being here was never a part of my plan and I'm pretty sure that it wasn't a part of anyone else's plan either. When I stopped and thought about what brought me here, I began to look at The Ranches as a big opportunity to have a better life. Without The Ranches, I wouldn't have been able to find the little piece of myself that I lost.

Before I came here, I was struggling with wanting to please people; even if it meant losing connection with who I was. I was putting more effort into someone else than I was myself. I blamed myself for everything, and I thought that if I wasn't worth that person's time, then I wasn't worth anyone's time.

I came to The Ranches broken, angry, hurt and not knowing who I was. Thankfully, The Ranches helped me and continues to help me grow into a productive adult that knows how to communicate my feelings in a healthy way. The Ranches is teaching us how to put our feelings on paper and to be able to

identify how we're feeling. The Ranches has taught me that it is okay to have emotions and that everyone has the right to feel how they are feeling.

Being at The Ranches and having this opportunity has helped me to understand that what I went through was not my fault. The people here have helped me through a lot in the last nine months. I feel that being at The Ranches has showed me that I deserve better than I got. My first two months here, I didn't trust a lot of people because the people that I had gotten close to in the past lied to me and broke their promises to me. I have learned that it isn't fair to apply my past to new people. After realizing that, I started to trust people at The Ranches.

Having a support system as big as The Ranches helps me know that I am worth anything and everything. Everyone here has shown me that I deserve the world. With this, I have learned that anyone who cannot see this, doesn't deserve to be in my life.

I have also learned that we can't always work through our struggles alone. Everyone who comes to The Ranches has some sort of struggle, but with the help of everyone, I am learning to figure those struggles out; and not let my struggles stop me from growing as a person.

What is it like to be at The Ranches?

By Resident - AS

If you would have asked me this question a few months ago, I would have said, "hard and frustrating." I was confused, angry, sad, hurt and alone. I didn't want to feel like this anymore, but I was afraid of change. I didn't trust anyone enough to open up and talk about what was hurting me. As I am progressing, I am learning how to open up and allow myself to be vulnerable enough for people to help me. It is still hard, but I know that if I put my best, I can pull through and be able to accomplish my goals. I also learned that there are actually good people in the world; the kind that care, help, support, and don't expect anything in return. They give me space when I need it, but remind me I'm not alone. Here at The Ranch, they are always there for me when I need to talk. They help push me to my

goals. They celebrate even my little victories with me and encourage me to be better tomorrow than I was yesterday, and to stand up to all the things that scare me. They want the best for me. They want the best for me and help me want the best for me. They taught me how to understand my worth, and that I deserve to have my dreams become my reality. I know there are people here I can trust. They don't judge me. They help me understand and express my emotions in a healthy way. Before The Ranches, I didn't know what my future would be like. Now, I know my future and that I deserve one. I don't know where I would be without The Ranches, but I don't have to worry about that. My past was yesterday, now I'm looking into tomorrow. That is what The Ranches has given me, Hope.





#RAISETHEMUP @THERANCHES

CHRISTMAS AT THE RANCHES

Christmas was full of joy and warmth, it was not just simply our fireplaces this year. The Sojourners came with clowns and Santa in tow, and gifts for the children that began our Holiday glow. The grills were going with hotdogs and burgers when the Lion's Club came, with shoes for every boy and girl, not one of them the same. Next it was cookies and steaming cocoa with the folks from Morgan Stanly, with a heaping of gifts for the kids to open and see. Lastly it was an evening between the fireplace and Christmas tree, with gifts from PBWS Law Firm, Faith Baptist Church, and Monte Vista Church a most generous and joyous three. This Holiday season was a cold one for sure, we hope that all those folks that gave us and our kids such warmth and generosity had a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We are extremely thankful for folks like you.



#RAISETHEMUP @THERANCHES

HORSES FOR HEROES

While our mission remains to help the children of New Mexico, sometimes we get an opportunity to teach the kids about others that need help and could use our support. Horses for Heroes affords us that opportunity.

Rick Lannucci and Nancy De Santis work tirelessly with vets who've been hurt while serving our country. In fact, Nancy is the reason we are now able to add Equine Gestalt Coaching as she is a graduate of the same program. She also offers the help and healing of horses to those vets that she serves.

While they do great work, The Ranches grows some pretty great hay. As a result, we have been supplying hay to Horses for Heroes for the past few years. It's a great opportunity to teach the kids about the price that comes with freedom. It also gives Rick an opportunity to show off his cooking skills.





THEIR JOURNEY





“Why am I important?”

By Resident - MC

I have a bad habit of putting other's needs in front of my own needs. This has caused me to think that I am invisible, unimportant and that I don't matter to the world or to myself. I began believing everything bad that everyone was saying. This didn't land me in a good spot emotionally or mentally. Unfortunately, I still struggle with this habit. The only difference is that I now see myself as important to me and to others.

I am important to myself because I am a good and happy person; and I also now know that I matter. I also matter because I am a human being and, to me, any human being matters. But I also matter to myself because I know that I am going to be something and I know that I am going to make something of myself. I am not going to sit around and do nothing. I am going to get up and paint a beautiful picture with my life.

I am important to my family because I have never done anything to intentionally hurt them. I am the “sunshine” in my family. I am always told that without me, my family is incomplete. My family notices the smallest things I do; which shows me that I mean

something to my family. I am also important to my family because of the roles I play. I am mainly daughter, sister, cousin and aunty. Without me, my mother wouldn't be a mother of two, my sister wouldn't have a sister, my niece wouldn't have an aunty my cousin wouldn't have me. I have made things for people, good things. Those people show me that I matter by loving me regardless of my mistakes. No matter my “title” in life, I am important. Not only my family but to myself as well.



What is it like to be at The Ranches?

By Resident - CV

Being here is a lot of things. My time here has been very helpful. When staff brings up things that you'd rather forget and don't want to admit it hurts, but when you think about it and deal with it, it is helpful. One of the ways that The Ranches is helpful is when you are struggling and need help, they are always there for you. Another way that they are helpful is when you are hurting mentally or even physically, they are there to help you through it. I am not saying that The Ranches is always a happy or fun place, but there are things that we have to and need to deal with and work on. And it isn't easy. When you come here, it feels like you are in your own worst nightmare and you can't forget or ignore the past or what happened to you. It gets brought up and The Ranches helps you to deal with those things head on. To be 100% truly honest, when I got to The Ranches, I was like, “I'm good. Perfectly fine. Nothing to work on but school.” Now, I am beginning to work on me and it is not always easy. Most of the things that I am working on are difficult to change. Don't get me wrong, the help that they give is not just to fix the things that you don't like, but also to strengthen all of your good personality traits. I have been here for two months and I have found out more about myself than

the last two years of my life. I have found out that I am strong mentally and physically, I am beautiful, smart, confident, brave, and most of all, trustworthy. Out in the world, they say that all you need is a good personality and a good education. I say that you need to know what your personality and your reputation is before you go out “willy nilly” into the world. The Ranches is the best place for that. You can work on you and work on school. Being here has helped me with school and myself, but it has also helped me to trust more. The staff have had a big impact on me while I've been here. The staff are funny, helpful, bluntly honest, trustworthy and kind. The staff here are like no other. They are helping me to be the best version of me. I want to wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and say, “I am loved and there is so much to be proud of.” Like normal people, the staff and I don't always agree and we argue, but we both try to work it out using conflict resolution. They don't say, “I am done, I am just not going to talk to you anymore.” Instead, they are there for me. I would say that The Ranches has made a really big impact on me and my life, but they also helped me to find out who I am.



THE RANCHES - THANKS YOU

SAVE THE DATE Since 1944

In 2019, we are excited to be celebrating 75 years of helping families and *"Rekindling Hope in Today's Youth."* Roughly 3-4 million meals served to approx. 10,000 staff, kids and visitors since 1944.

We plan on celebrating this momentous occasion on August 3rd, 2019.

We'll host a lunch and all are welcome.

If you are an alumni and on Facebook, there is a group you can join for updates and stories.

Heath



THANK YOU

Thank you to all the businesses, organizations and churches that made monetary or in-kind gifts during the period October 01, 2018 - January 31, 2019 We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

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BECOME A PARTNER

“Do you know how to post on the Facebooks?”

In preparation of our 75th Anniversary, we have an alumni Facebook group. If you ever spent time with us, you're welcome to join us. We prefer to remain fairly positive, but I welcome honesty, if sometime a bit more negative, feedback from alumni at Heathk@theranches.org.

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.

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