**NDSU Bison Strides**

**Horse Handler Questionnaire**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a horse handler for Bison Strides! We rely on volunteers for the success of the program and could not do it without you so THANK YOU! **Horse Handlers must have a minimum of 5 years of horse experience to be eligible for the training.**

The number one priority of Bison Strides is participant safety. As a horse handler, your role is to manage the horse immediately before, during and immediately after the equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) session, with the goal of enabling rider independence to the greatest degree possible for that individual. This includes leading the horse into the arena, handling during mounting and dismounting processes, as well as during the lesson, and leading the horse back to their stall. It may also include tacking and untacking.

Horse people all have different experiences and ways of doing things and we appreciate this diversity; however for our therapy horses’ well-being and safety of the participants, our horses are to be managed the *Bison Strides Way*. This will be demonstrated and practiced during Horse Handler Training.

Please understand that not everyone who completes the horse handler training will be handling a horse in the upcoming session. Horse handlers will be selected based on their experience and skill demonstration during training, as well as the horses who are in the lessons during a particular day and lesson time.

Please answer the questions on the following pages so we have an understanding of your horse experience and so we are best able to match horses and horse handlers.

1. Please describe your previous horse experience including:
   1. The number of years you have been around horses
   2. The discipline(s) you are/were involved in (hunter jumper, dressage, western pleasure, barrel racing, trail riding, etc.)
   3. Any formal horsemanship instruction you received and from whom
   4. Horse show experience and the discipline
   5. Experience in ground work with horses (longing, long-lining, driving, round pen work, etc.)
   6. Horsemanship clinics you have attended and whether these were as a participant (riding or doing ground work) or watching a clinician
   7. Any horsemanship certifications you have earned (CHA, 4-H, ARIA, PATH Intl.)
   8. Breed(s) of horses you have worked with
   9. Number of horses you have worked with
2. Please rate the following situations on a scale of 0 to 4:

0 = would not do

1 = very uncomfortable

2 = somewhat uncomfortable

3 = comfortable

4 = very comfortable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Situation** | **Scale** |
| Leading a seasoned therapy horse and seasoned rider in a mounted EAAT lesson |  |
| Leading a therapy horse who has less than 1 year experience as a therapy horse with a rider who is calm |  |
| Leading a seasoned therapy horse with a brand new rider who is screaming and crying and trying to jump off the horse |  |
| Longing a horse (no rider) with a longe line and longe whip who is trained to longe |  |
| Teaching a horse (no rider) to longe with a longe line and longe whip |  |
| Managing a horse who becomes unruly during a lesson and attempts to nip at you |  |
| Managing a horse who is becoming unresponsive to rider and handler aids during a lesson |  |
| Managing a horse who spooks during a lesson |  |