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Williamsburg Couple Makes Therapeutic Horse Program Possible for Children with Siblings Living with Autism

WILLIAMSBURG, Virginia – When Richard and Mary Ann Sleece saw the sheer joy and heard the squeals of delight from young campers at [Dream Catchers at the Cori Sikich Therapeutic Riding Center](#), they knew right away their mission to support others was succeeding. This past summer, thanks to the Richard and Mary Ann Sleece Foundation and their collaboration with the experts at Dream Catchers and One Child Center for Autism, children with siblings living with autism enjoyed a free horse camp designed exclusively for their own needs.

Campers aged 9-13 enjoyed both mounted riding and ground lessons. The customized camp for children living with siblings with autism provided learning opportunities for developing healthy coping strategies and healthy ways to express frustrations and needs. Through equine-assisted activities, the goal was to provide support for siblings to ultimately strengthen family dynamics.

The Richard and Mary Ann Sleece Foundation began their support of the therapeutic riding center in 2018. First came the sponsorship of therapy horse Max. After observing the life-changing benefits students of all ages gain from their sessions at Dream Catchers, the Sleeeces leaned in further and funded the Summer Camp for Siblings in support of One Child Center for Autism.

Therapy horse sponsorship continues

In addition to sponsoring the camp, the Sleeeces also renewed their support of therapy horse Max as shown here <<INSERT VIDEO LINK>>. Their [sponsorship gift](#) underwrites the feed, hay, supplements, some tack, daily care, farrier fees and veterinarian wellness plan for one of Dream Catchers' most popular horses. Their foundation's logo is featured on Max's saddle pad and halter. He dons his logoed gear while participating in equine-assisted activities with the nonprofit's participants as well as when he travels offsite for demonstrations and media appearances.

"Richard and Mary Ann Sleece continue to amaze us with their ideas and generosity," says Janet Mayberry, executive director of Dream Catchers. "We are grateful for their support of Max and the Dream Catchers family."

To learn more, visit DreamCatchers.org or call 757-566-1775.

Image

Dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9adiapif09nmygg/AACeBf1r2VsEwQMAMMjAuovGa?dl=0>

Caption

2019 Sleece Sponsored Camp - Dream Catchers and One Child Center for Autism Summer Camp for Siblings attendees and Dream Catchers staff join sponsors Richard and Mary Ann Sleece along with therapy horse Max to proudly show their "I Have Horse Power" t-shirts from the camp dedicated to children who have siblings living with autism.

Mary Ann & Richard Sleece with Max The Richard and Mary Ann Sleece Foundation renewed its sponsorship of Dream Catchers therapy horse Max

About Dream Catchers at the Cori Sikich Therapeutic Riding Center

Dream Catchers at the Cori Sikich Therapeutic Riding Center is a Premier Accredited Therapeutic Riding Center through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.). The nonprofit organization serves an average of 80 to 100 participants each week to help children and adults with special needs reach their potential and make dreams come true. Located in Toano, Virginia, Dream Catchers serves the communities from Richmond through Hampton Roads.

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