



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SERIES

Miracle Farm

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ASHLEY WRIGHT

In 1989, Lenora Detering opened a facility that would change the lives of young men forever. Her mission was, and still is, to help at-risk youth learn respect for themselves and others, all while earning a high school diploma.

Located in Brenham, Texas, on a 325-acre working ranch, Miracle Farm is a beacon of hope for at-risk young men. The expansive facility can house up to 22 boys at one time. The farm boasts horses, cattle, a welding shop, group homes, a custom rodeo arena and even a few fishing holes. Throughout the property, several homes are set up for the young men who share housekeeping duties and are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their new homes.

Each residential-style home is supervised by “house parents” who help the boys stay focused, organized and motivated. These individuals dedicate their lives to making sure that these young men leave the program to become their best selves.

Miracle Farm’s programming is 100 percent donor driven. This means that there is no cost passed on to the students or their families. Executive Director Alex Hamilton said, “Miracle Farm is not a consequence, but an opportunity.”

Each young man who lives and

works on the farm understands hard work is a choice that he chooses to make every day. A typical day on the farm starts at 6 a.m. and includes horsemanship, roping, ranch management, woodworking, welding, and attending school on the property and a daily devotional session. According to Hamilton, the best part of leading Miracle Farm is seeing the look in a boy’s eye when the change happens and he realizes that he is worth something.

“Yes, this seems like a place I could stay,” said Micah Horace, a recent graduate of Miracle Farm’s high school program, as he recalled his first thought driving down the long, winding entrance to the farm.

At 17 years old, Micah did not have one high school credit. He came to Miracle Farm from the Houston Metro area and roping seemed like something done in Western movies. He admits that he was slow to acclimate to the changes of living on a farm. “The whole experience was a learning curve for me, but it changed my life,” he said.

Most of the at-risk young men enrolled at Miracle Farm come from urban communities, but once they arrive, they are assigned a horse and put together a schedule and long-range plan for obtaining goals, both agreed

upon by the young man and staff. Each young man is given certain levels of responsibility.

Micah began his training at the lowest experience level, known as greenhorn. He then worked his way up to ranch hand, followed by roper, and finally the most coveted position, top hand. Each promotion is assessed by a written test and a skills test.

As of 2015, Micah now holds a high school diploma, which he was able to earn while he lived and worked at Miracle Farm. When asked to summarize what he learned while being a member of the Miracle Farm community, Micah proudly said that it was to “look good, act good and be good in everything that you do.” He said he is grateful for the bright future in front of him, thanks to a place where miracles happen every day. Currently, Micah is working full time at the ranch as a mentor and role model for incoming students.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is supporting this tremendous organization for the first time through a 2016 Educational Program grant. Miracle Farm plans to use the funds to continue to offer at-risk young men the chance for a brighter tomorrow. 🤠



THE WALL OF FAME LISTS THE NAMES OF ALL THE YOUNG MEN WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATED FROM MIRACLE FARM. IT IS A MOTIVATION FOR A QUEST TO SUCCEED FOR ALL RESIDENTS.



“THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS A LEARNING CURVE FOR ME, BUT IT CHANGED MY LIFE.”

— MICAH HORACE, RECENT GRADUATE OF MIRACLE FARM