



CH2M HILL LEGACY

Gift Fund

LEGACY GIFT FUND AWARD SUMMARY

Updated May 2026

The following table summarizes scholarship and project grant awards made by the LGF. Links in the table take you to further details about each award (or simply scroll down).

CH2M HILL Legacy Gift Fund Awards (ctrl-click awardee name for details)	
Scholarships	Project Grants
2025	
Kendra Koe - \$5,000 Nick Katko - \$5,000	Alachua Habitat for Humanity - \$2,500 Music Therapy Retreats - \$637 SPIRIT Open Equestrian - \$1,863
2026	
Andrea Morales Sebastian Siwiec	TBA
2027	
TBA	TBA
2028	
TBA	TBA

TBA – To Be Announced

2025 AWARDS

Scholarships



Kendra Coe

Bold.org (External) Scholarship — Kendra Coe, Hastings, MI is a rising sophomore at Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI) majoring in Paper Engineering and Chemical Engineering. She's an accomplished equestrian and state barrel racing champ. Kendra has an interest in creating more products out of paper and to increase the recyclability of the paper industry. She states that the paper industry is very involved in clean energy and the mindset of sustainability, by prioritizing carbon neutrality. She's currently working as an Engineering Intern for Paperworks.

Kendra writes, "Thank you so much for choosing me for this award. I feel honored to have your support! I am excited to use this award to help pay for my college. This will help me achieve my goals, and have an impact on our climate and environment. I cannot express how thankful I am to be awarded this scholarship. Thank you!"



Nick Katko

LGF (Internal) Scholarship — Nick Katko, West Linn, OR will be a freshman at the Colorado School of Mines (Golden, CO) in the fall where he plans to major in Nuclear Engineering. Nick is an Eagle Scout and a student athlete involved in rowing and swimming. Nick's goal is to earn a PhD after he completes his undergraduate degree at Mines with an interest in contributing to the development of fusion technology. He's currently working with a professor at the University of Pittsburgh in research on extravasation frequency and outcomes in targeted radiopharmaceutical therapies (allowing therapies for prostate cancer to remain accessible).

Nick writes, "I am honored to receive this scholarship and excited to continue working hard to make the most of this opportunity."

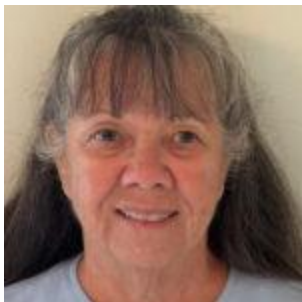
Project Grants

Alachua Habitat for Humanity Awarded A \$2,500 Legacy Gift Fund Grant for Its Alachua Women Build House No. 19



Alachua Women Build (AWB) was founded in the mid 1990's and is an all-volunteer program of Alachua Habitat for Humanity (AHfH), a Gainesville, Florida based affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. Its mission is to provide solid affordable housing while empowering women to learn new skills, build confidence and self-reliance, and work together to improve our community.

Affordable housing for families is not readily available in this area where families with children compete with University of Florida (UF) and Santa Fe College students for places to live. Alachua County has a low median household income level and ranks near the bottom of the Florida's counties in housing affordability. AWB House #19 will be built in partnership with a hard-working single mother who has four children and who does not qualify for a traditional mortgage. AHfH's "a hand up, not a hand out" model of homeownership provides a solution. One of the qualifications for Habitat homeownership, in addition to meeting financial requirements, is for the future homeowner to provide "sweat equity". She must work 50 hours on an AHfH build site, then 200 on her own house. AWB House #19's homeowner will work alongside a group of volunteers, usually 20 on each build day.



<https://alachuahabitat.org/volunteer/women-build>

CHAA Sponsor, Jill Carter (Volunteer, Women Build Construction Site Coordinator):

"I am so happy and thankful to be awarded this grant. In the beginning I didn't consider applying for this grant because I thought this project would be considered too small. I was thinking more about "saving the world" type projects. But then I thought about the Habitat vision, "a world where everyone has a safe and affordable place to live". It might not be a big project, but it will make the world a better place to live. I encourage others to apply for this grant no matter what the size of the project. If you don't have a project, please consider supporting this grant with a donation so everyone can work towards making this a better world."

Jessica Kellar, (Marketing & Events Specialist, Alachua Habitat for Humanity):

“Alachua Women Build lifts up both families and future builders. This Legacy Gift Fund Pay-it-Forward Grant helps us turn an empty lot into a safe, affordable home while giving women hands-on experience and mentorship on site. We are grateful for this support, and I encourage others to apply for LGF funding or make a gift so more families can build their future.”

Music Therapy Retreats Awarded A \$637 Legacy Gift Fund Grant



Music Therapy Retreats is a 501c3 non-profit formed in 2019 that provides evidence-based music therapy practices to support veterans and other people who experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is an approved provider of continuing education for music therapists through the Certification Board of Music Therapists. Its mission is to help heal those who have

experienced trauma. Three-day music therapy retreats, at no cost to the participants, so they can gain mental wellness through the power of music. The retreat approach helps people identify triggers, learn coping skills for self-regulation, and reframe lived experiences.

Music Therapy Retreats utilizes music therapy “best practices,” including goal setting, mindfulness, songwriting experiences with professional songwriters, and adapted guitar instruction.

Each participant engages in four group sessions and two individual sessions over the course of the retreat. As part of the Retreat experience, each veteran receives a brand-new Breedlove Guitar which they use to work on physiological and psychological skills through playing and writing their own music. Retreats for veterans are currently held in 6 states throughout the year. (NC, CO, TN, MO, MA, GA).

<https://musictherapyretreats.org/>



CHAA Sponsor, Andrew McKnight (Volunteer, Staff

Songwriter): I’m thrilled to reconnect my time with CH2M HILL in my early days with my life in music for these last 30 years. I’ve always felt that music is so much more than we can describe with words; soundtrack to moments in our lives, ways to communicate our feelings, and as I’ve learned especially in

these past six years working with MTR and our wounded warriors, as a modality for healing. When we bring a veteran’s story to life in song, we help more than just the vet – we help their inner circle of family and friends understand them too, and the healing has amazing

ripple effects through those circles. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to do this work, and hugely grateful for the LGF support to help us directly, and by helping to spread the word about what MTR is doing.



Mack Bailey, (Executive Director, Music Therapy Retreats): It is an honor for Music Therapy Retreats to be a recipient of the LGF Project Grant. Through your support, MTR will be adding more guitar instructional videos by Andrew McKnight to help support our alumni and keep them engaged with the

instrument. Veterans emerge from MTR's embrace with new labels: *"forever changed," "honored,"* and *"liberated."* Their guitars become a reminder of the retreat experience and a constant coping companion. One veteran said, *"I needed this guitar more than I needed another prescription."* We look forward to sharing stories and songs with you.

SPIRIT Open Equestrian a \$1,863 CHAA Legacy Gift Fund Pay-it-Forward Grant for Its Equine-Assisted Therapy Programs

SPIRIT, Herndon, VA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with 18 years of experience, is a dedicated equine-assisted services organization offering recreational and therapeutic programs for children and adults of all abilities. Our diverse range of programs includes Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship, Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy, Occupational Therapy incorporating Hippotherapy, Equine-Assisted Learning, a specialized Veterans program, and customized workshops designed to meet the unique needs of each group. Through these initiatives, we strive to create inclusive and transformative experiences that foster growth, healing, and connection. The LGF Grant of \$1,863 will be used to enhance its Equine-Assisted Therapy program by purchasing specialty adaptive equipment to facilitate therapeutic program activities.

Michelle Gnozzio, Executive Director:

<https://spiritequestrian.org>



CHAA Sponsor, Doug Gaibler (Volunteer, Board of Director Member, and Parent of Participant): "As you know, I'm proud to be a member of both CHAA and SPIRIT Open Equestrian, and I'm excited to learn that SPIRIT has been awarded a CHAA grant. As a board member and a parent of one of SPIRIT's participants, I've seen firsthand how this program changes lives. This grant moves us forward in big ways, especially when it comes to improved safety, accessibility, and

inclusion values that shape everything we do.

It's also a reminder of what makes CHAA such a great organization. The support behind this grant is generous, heartfelt, and deeply effective. CHAA reflects the character and legacy of CH2M Hill, whose work over the years has contributed so much to our communities and our environment. I'm honored to be part of a group that shows up with purpose and keeps making a lasting difference."

Project Completion Update

SPIRIT, Herndon, VA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with 18 years of experience, is a dedicated equine-assisted services organization offering recreational and therapeutic programs for children and adults of all abilities. Our diverse range of programs includes Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship, Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy, Occupational Therapy incorporating Hippotherapy, Equine-Assisted Learning, a specialized Veterans program, and customized workshops designed to meet the unique needs of each group. Through these initiatives, we strive to create inclusive and transformative experiences that foster growth, healing, and connection.

The organization's team includes certified therapeutic riding instructors, licensed mental health professionals, and skilled equine specialists, all committed to providing transformative experiences. SPIRIT operates in accordance with PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) standards, ensuring the highest levels of safety, professionalism, and program effectiveness.

Doug Gaibler, Board Member of Spirit Open Equestrian, brought this opportunity to LGF to support the program and its riders. Doug's history with Spirit is long and personal.

"My daughter Alison, now 50, has participated at SPIRIT for over ten years, which first drew me into this remarkable program. Alongside the joy and therapeutic value it brings her, I quickly saw its broader impact on her peers in the special needs community.

SPIRIT enriches participants' lives while also sustaining a dedicated network of more than 100 volunteers. What moves me most is the genuine understanding and relationships that form between riders and volunteers—connections that deepen awareness, inclusion, and empathy far beyond the arena."

The LGF Grant of \$1,863 has enhanced Spirit's Therapeutic Riding programs by purchasing specialty adaptive equipment to facilitate therapeutic program activities. Read on for more details about the equipment our grant provided to Spirit.

SMALL TOOLS, BIG BREAKTHROUGHS

Because of your generosity, our therapeutic riders are better able to develop independence, confidence, and connection.

Adaptive riding often begins with one fundamental goal: creating safe, clear communication between rider and horse while supporting each participant's unique physical needs. The adaptive and program equipment purchased through the CH2M Hill Legacy Fund – Pay it Forward Grant allows SPIRIT to provide more accessible, supportive, and effective equine-assisted experiences for riders of all abilities.

Each piece of adaptive equipment is carefully fitted to support the individual needs of every rider—setting them up for success.

Surcingle with handles

Balance and core stability are foundational to riding—but for many therapeutic students, these skills are still developing.



The **Surcingle with handles** provides a stable and secure interface between rider and horse, particularly for participants riding without a traditional saddle to increase sensory and motor input. The integrated handles give riders a safe place to stabilize themselves while developing strength and postural control.

Using a surcingle with handles, Emily can focus on balance and posture while feeling secure—building

strength with every step.



Impact in practice:

Emily is working on trunk control and balance development. Using the handles, she can stabilize herself during transitions and directional changes, allowing her to actively engage her core muscles rather than relying entirely on instructor support. Each lesson builds strength while maintaining safety and confidence.

Bareback Pad

The **Bareback pad** supports rider comfort while encouraging engagement of key muscle groups. Riding without a structured saddle allows participants to feel the horse's movement more directly, promoting balance, coordination, and body awareness.

Its non-slip design increases stability for both horse and rider while also protecting the horse's back through shock absorption.

Impact in practice:

Spirit's OT/PT therapist uses the bareback pad for her Hippotherapy clients - where OT/PT skills are supported by riding. The Hippotherapy clients using the bareback pad experience increased body awareness and improved alignment, helping translate riding skills into improved balance and functional movement off the horse.

Double neck strap



The **Double neck strap** provides riders with an additional point of stability while learning correct hand and body position. This Correct Connect–based support allows riders to steady themselves without pulling on the horse's mouth, encouraging softer and clearer communication.

With the support of Correct Connect, Saira is able to maintain steady contact and actively guide her horse—turning effort into independence.



Adaptive connections like Correct Connect help keep reins evenly positioned, giving riders clearer communication and greater success.

Impact in practice:

Saira previously required continuous instructor intervention to maintain rein position and balance. With the added stability of the double neck strap, she is now able to maintain steadier hands while actively guiding her horse—shifting from passive participation toward independent control.

The 3-in-1 training breastplate

The **3-in-1 training breastplate** helps riders develop correct position and rein use by limiting excessive pulling and encouraging proper alignment of arms and hands.

This tool supports both new riders learning foundational skills and advancing riders refining coordination and feel.

Impact in practice:

Riders gain clearer feedback about how their body position affects the horse, allowing instructors to teach correct mechanics while reducing frustration for both horse and participant.

The Heather Comfort Connect Rein

The **Heather Comfort Connect Rein** provides supportive padded reins designed for riders with weak grip strength, sore hands, arthritis, or sensory sensitivities. The padded rein surface improves comfort and makes consistent rein contact easier to maintain.



Padded reins, compared to typical leather reins, provide a softer, more secure grip—helping riders stay comfortable, confident, and engaged throughout their lesson.

Impact in practice:

Denese, a rider in her 70s, previously needed frequent breaks due to hand fatigue. With the Heather Comfort Connect Rein, she is now able to sustain rein contact longer, allowing lessons to progress beyond basic control into skill development and confidence-building.

The Aaron-Vale Rein

The **Aaron-Vale Rein** functions as a ladder-style rein with padded hand grips that provide consistent, repeatable hand placement. The adjustable grip positions help riders maintain symmetrical rein length and spatial awareness.



Impact in practice:

Steve previously struggled with inconsistent rein length and hand drift. Using the Aaron-Vale Rein, he can now maintain consistent hand placement, resulting in clearer directional cues and improved steering accuracy.

The Engineering of Access

Each piece of adaptive equipment represents a simple but powerful principle:

When variability in human ability is high, systems must adapt.

These tools allow instructors to tailor support to individual riders, creating safer learning environments while promoting independence, strength, and meaningful participation.

The Impact of Your Generosity

Because of your support, our riders are not limited by what they cannot do. Instead, they are equipped with tools that help them discover what they *can* do.

Each adjustment, each added handle, each redesigned rein creates an opportunity:

- To communicate more clearly
- To move more independently
- To build strength, confidence, and connection

Your investment helps ensure that equine-assisted services remain accessible, inclusive, and transformative for every participant we serve.

2026 AWARDS

Scholarships



Alexandria Morales

Alexandria Morales, Parkland, FL, will be a junior in Civil Engineering at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor in fall 2026. She is a member of ASCE, Society of Women Engineers (SWE), Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), and Phi Sigma Rho Engineering Sorority. Alexandria is also a member of the NCAA Division 1 Women’s Rowing Team. She is an Undergraduate Research Assistant for the Great Lakes Water Authority where Dr. Glen Daigger is her advisor. Alexandria plans

to pursue a career in infrastructure, starting in project controls and scheduling, and hope to grow into a project/program manager where she can oversee multiple projects and help guide broader infrastructure efforts in water and wastewater systems.



Alexandria writes, “Thank you so much for selecting me as a scholarship recipient! I truly appreciate the opportunity and plan to use the funds toward my fall semester tuition.”



Sebastian Siwiec

Sebastian Siwiec, Streamwood, IL, will be a sophomore in Chemical Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in fall 2026. He was valedictorian of his high school class in Elgin, IL. His passion for design and chemistry led him to pursue a degree in chemical engineering. Sebastian is a member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and a piano lesson instructor for beginner students.

As a chemical engineer, Sebastian will seek to develop and design sustainable methods of production, leaning towards specializing in food and consumer goods production. His eventual goal is to establish a consulting firm.

Sebastian writes, “I would like to sincerely thank the scholarship committee and CHLA legacy fund for granting this award. It will be a tremendous help in funding my next year of college and pursuing my dreams.”

Project Grants