



DONATE



November 18, 2024

Dear Friend,

What could a group of young adults from the McHenry High School Bridges program possibly have in common with a group of seniors and their caregivers from Senior Services Associates?

*More than you could possibly imagine.*

At first glance, these two diverse groups seem worlds apart. **Yet, thanks to you and your support**, they came together at the farm last fall to spend time with our horses, animals, and with each other. Through these interactions, they discovered a common dialogue that transcended the generational divide, opening the door to creating meaningful connections.

The **McHenry High School Bridges** program helps students with disabilities transition to independent living. They learn vocational skills and important life skills. The Bridges' teachers describe that unlike any other educational experience, Main Stay helps in many of these areas.

Learning how to feed and care for the animals teaches them how to nurture and feel compassion for others. Working together at the farm and with the animals teaches collaboration.

And, the best part is learning new skills, which gives them a sense of power and control. Many of the Bridges' students have experienced social isolation, having positive interactions with each other and the animals helps them feel successful and *when they feel successful, they want more of it!* Working with the Main Stay staff and animals, they gain the courage to make decisions for themselves empowering them day in and day out.

**At Main Stay, they feel welcomed and a part of something bigger.**



*Participating in impromptu dance parties encourages social interaction, creative expression and a sense of freedom!*

**Senior Services Associates** provides seniors and their caregivers with access to the social services and resources they need to improve their quality of life. Coming to Main Stay for a day was a special treat for both the seniors and those who are charged with their daily care. It gave the seniors an opportunity to engage with the outside world and enjoy the farm, fresh air and the animals. Good memories came flooding back about days gone by and other special times in their lives.



It was also therapeutic for their caregivers who came with them. Caring for a loved one every day is a significant responsibility, and can be lonely. Visiting the farm allows them to take a breath and relax, all while knowing their loved ones are in a safe place at the farm with the experienced and professional staff at Main Stay.

*Enjoying social interactions with each other and the animals in the relaxed setting of the farm brings a sense of hopefulness and joy and even some dancing too!*





At first glance, these two diverse groups seem worlds apart. Yet, because of your generous support, **these two groups found just what they needed at Main Stay**—a place to feel valued, accepted and celebrated!

That is the beauty of the Main Stay community—*it's a place where everyone's individual "dance" is both supported and applauded.*

As you read this letter today, Main Stay is proud to celebrate 37 years of operation in McHenry County. Our expanded equine and animal-assisted programs offer powerful growth opportunities for just about everyone, and include adaptive riding and horsemanship, animal-assisted learning, adaptive gardening, and professional development! *This year, your investment in Main Stay enabled over 600 individuals to forge meaningful connections at our farm.* We remain committed to keeping our program fees affordable while providing financial assistance, allowing us to reach those who need our services the most.

Should your circumstances allow, please consider sending a gift to Main Stay today. Your contribution—regardless of the amount—directly impacts the lives of those we serve, allowing Main Stay to remain a place for individuals of all abilities to thrive, connect and rejoice.

From all of us at Main Stay, thank you for believing in our mission and the incredible people we serve.

Warmest regards,

*Loriann*

Loriann Dowell  
Executive Director

*- P.S. -  
tap or scan to watch  
the students and seniors  
build connections*





Main Stay's mission is to enrich mind, body and spirit through powerful connections with horses, animals and nature.



**Main Stay Therapeutic Farm**  
6919 Keystone Road  
Richmond, IL 60071  
815-653-9374 | [info@mainstayfarm.org](mailto:info@mainstayfarm.org)

***[mainstayfarm.org](http://mainstayfarm.org)***

