

# Making miracles happen one child at a time at Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT)

Children with special needs work with TROT therapy horses, instructors and volunteers during Media Day

Monday, February 26, 2018 — Every week, Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT) instructors and volunteers are amazed at the miracles that happen among students with special needs. On Wednesday, before the buses roll up from Ocotillo Early Learning Center in the Sunnyside School District, the volunteers arrive to groom and tack the TROT horses. They are almost giddy in anticipation of the life-changing work that's about to begin.

When the school bus arrives and you can feel the excitement grow as the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH) instructors and TROT volunteers lead the horses to meet up with the children. But the excitement is nothing compared to the feeling the children have as they come down the bus stairs smiling ear-to-ear and see the horses waiting for them.

The volunteers will tell you stories of children talking for the first time during their ride at TROT. Parents tell stories of their children gaining independence and self-confidence. Research shows that equine-assisted activities and therapies can make a huge difference in the quality of life for a special needs child. Both of these groups will be on hand for interviews in both English and Spanish.

Research published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders showed 70% of target behaviors were better during therapeutic riding and improvement was retained in 63% afterward. This is only one example of how equine-assisted therapy can help children with all types of special needs.

Reporters will be able to experience TROT through the eyes of the children, family, volunteers, and staff during the class. **They will also have the opportunity to ride a therapeutic horse through the unique Sensory Integration Course located on the TROT grounds.**

**When: Wednesday, February 28th 9:45am-11:30am**

**Where: TROT 8920 E. Woodland Rd., Tucson, AZ 85749**

**Who: Ocotillo School families**

- **Fimbres family (bi-lingual)**
- **Camacho family (bi-lingual)**
- **Sandi Moomey TROT Executive Director**
- **Sandy Webster, TROT Program Director and PATH Intl. Certified Instructor**
- **Paul Ohm, Ocotillo Early Learning Center, Principal**
- **Sonia Valencia, Sunnyside School District Public Relations**

## TROT

Since 1974, TROT riders have experienced many incredible life-changing breakthroughs: first words, first steps, first time to follow a series of directions, first time to willingly interact with classmates and volunteers. Path Intl. Certified Therapeutic riding instructors utilize the movement of the horse to help riders with special needs by teaching all learning styles in their mobile classroom on horseback, to emotionally improve the confidence and self-esteem of each rider.

## Ocotillo Early Learning Center, Sunnyside Unified School District

Ocotillo Early Learning Center is a high quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood center serving children ages birth to seven of all abilities in an inclusive, nurturing and stimulating environment. Ocotillo is a part of the Sunnyside Unified School District, the second-largest



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TROT-Healing Bonds



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