



Rainbow Acres

A Residential Christian Community
Serving Adults with
Developmental Disabilities

INSIDE:

- *Rainbow Academy*
- *An Evening of Discovery*
- *Western Round-Up*

...and more!

2018 brings ‘paradigm shift’ for Rainbow Acres

There’s a dramatic transformation taking place at Rainbow Acres, one that will benefit the Ranchers with enhanced educational experiences, but also help Rainbow Acres become even more appealing to prospective Rancher families.

While these changes are still in progress, we’ve outlined them in this issue of the newsletter, which focuses on our new Rainbow Academy, Project Discovery programs, and the Education Team that is making it all happen.

The Education Team is re-inventing educational experiences around a Holistic Care Plan and the personal and aspirational goals of each Rancher. Three new professional educators with lifelong careers in teaching are joining three current team members in lifting old limitations on the Ranchers and

empowering them to achieve all that is possible.

We are investing in the restoration of the Worden Taber Center with the latest laptop computers, musical instruments, scientific equipment, SMART boards and course materials for 27 new Project Discovery classes. The Education Team meets weekly to collaborate in preparing a soft launch of these new educational experiences under the umbrella of Rainbow Academy. Fine Arts painting, Arts and Crafts, and new Music Therapy programs are also being incorporated.

Our new approach will help the Ranchers excel, and has been favorably noted by community leaders. The Arizona Community Foundation of Yavapai County called Rainbow Acres’ new approach “transformative!” – and provided a \$17,600 grant (almost double their largest previous grant to Rainbow Acres) to support the implementation of Project Discovery, our new life skills and job skills training program for the Ranchers. They named Project Discovery one of the five “outstanding transformational programs” in Yavapai County with their “Shining Star Award”!

In addition, during their site visit in mid-September, members of the EAGLE Accreditation Team caught a glimpse of our paradigm shift—and the team members were excited about the collaboration and planning taking place



across campus. They are even eager to return to Rainbow Acres to witness our successes. Jeff VanCamp, one of the reviewers, said in an e-mail: "Matt and I both hope we can justify a reason to come back and visit in a year or so to see Project Discovery and the new Worden Taber Center up and running... along with an increased census! I believe it'll happen for you." Jeff serves as Executive Director of the Chaddock Children's Foundation in Quincy, IL.

Lifelong Learning and Holistic Care are in the DNA of Rainbow Acres. Rainbow Acres has long held the conviction that "public education ends long before individuals with developmental delays or cognitive impairments reach their learning, growing and thriving potential." Nevertheless, for too long, we have relied on the caregivers to carry this responsibility. With this new paradigm, we are empowering the Education Team to broaden and deepen our educational offerings.

Thank you to one and all who invest in the lives of the Ranchers at Rainbow Acres. Join us in witnessing the transformations with Rainbow Academy as the Ranchers learn, grow and thrive in the months ahead!

For the Ranchers,



Gary W. Wagner, President & CEO



Rainbow Acres

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The Promise

Fall/Winter 2018

The Mission of Rainbow Acres is to serve as "a Christian community with heart that empowers persons with developmental disabilities to live to their fullest potential with dignity and purpose."

Founded in 1974, Rainbow Acres is an independent, non-profit Christian ministry related to the American Baptist Churches USA. Licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services, Rainbow Acres is governed by an independent, self-perpetuating Board of Trustees from Arizona and across the nation.

Rainbow Acres has earned and was awarded EAGLE accreditation by the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare.

Rainbow Acres is made possible by generous contributions from numerous churches of all faiths, as well as individuals, foundations and corporations. Rainbow Acres has been designated a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the IRS code.

Contacts and Credits

Rainbow Acres

2120 W. Reservation Loop Road
Camp Verde, AZ 86322-8408

Phone: (928) 567-5231 • Fax: (928) 567-9059

Website: www.rainbowacres.com

E-mail: info@rainbowacres.com

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‘Rainbow Academy’ maximizes Rancher experiences

Transitioning into a more-active learning community, Rainbow Acres has over the past year reimagined its approach to providing educational experiences for the Ranchers by rejuvenating existing programs, creating new job and life skills courses, and establishing a more-structured system that caters to the personal interests, talents and abilities of each Rancher. In short, Rainbow Acres has raised the bar for educational experiences.

This fall, following an extensive planning process, the new Rainbow Academy was launched with the Education Team in place to provide necessary support for a new approach to providing educational experiences. Rainbow Academy is offering a wide-ranging curriculum that includes enhanced Music Therapy options, Animal Science and Horticulture activities, Fine Arts and Practical Arts programs, and new Job Skills and Life Skills courses that

stem from Project Discovery, a nationally-renowned vocational training program designed for adults with developmental disabilities that has been used in over 5,000 schools and non-profits.

“This is a paradigm shift for Rainbow Acres,” Gary Wagner, President and CEO,

said. “In terms of how we view the Ranchers, Rainbow Academy will ensure they’re treated as active learners who have a strong desire to pursue their goals and interests.” In early September, the Ranchers voted in a campus-wide election to select the name of this new initiative. They chose ‘Rainbow Academy’ based on how it reflects the new,

more academic nature of learning through Rainbow Acres’ courses, activities and experiences.

The seed for Rainbow Academy was planted over a year ago when Jen Murphree, Director of Admissions, initiated a discussion with the executive team focused on unifying Rainbow Acres’ array of educational offerings and implementing Project Discovery as a program she knew could be successful. “Project Discovery has a great reputation among non-profits that serve adults with developmental disabilities,” Murphree said. “I knew that it could really make a difference in preparing our Ranchers for living together and working on and off the ranch.” Also, Tim Hagan, CEO of Education Associates, the creator of Project Discovery, visited Rainbow Acres several months ago, and

“Many prospective Rancher families have higher expectations for programs that more effectively prepare their loved one for gaining experiences in the larger community.”

Jen Murphree
Director of Admissions





Rainbow Acres' Education Team includes (from left) Rodolfo Martinez Morales, Ph.D., Horticulture and Ecology Educator; Catherine Metz, Life Skills Educator; Lisa Page, Animal Science Educator; Rolene Dugi, Rancher Services Coordinator; Marlys Mallét and Michael Redhawk, Fine Arts Instructors; Mitch Koonce, Religious Life Coordinator; and Eric Jennings, Music Educator and Rancher Choir Director. Not pictured: Andy Rogers, Vocational Educator; and Lu Anne Behrle, Computer Science Educator.

shared information that was helpful for researching their curriculum.

Alongside these developments, two Rainbow Acres educators were exploring new ways to teach Ranchers, abandoning “rote learning” in favor of providing more intellectually-stimulating challenges. Rodolfo Martinez Morales, Horticulture and Ecology Educator, and Lisa Page, Animal Science Educator, established new courses that engaged the Ranchers as active learners and encouraged them to work to their greatest potential. Wagner was amazed by the results, leading to the new direction.

Morales had established courses in which Ranchers research scientific topics, then develop presentations they provide live to their classmates and Rainbow employees, and during events like Family & Friends Weekend. Page focused her courses on interactive learning related to horses and other animals on the ranch including a miniature Mediterranean donkey; African dwarf goat; guinea pigs; and “guest animals” on occasion.

These trends came together in 2018 to shape the executive team’s thought-process relative to Rainbow Acres’ appeal to current and new Ranchers.

“Many prospective Rancher families have higher expectations for programs that more effectively prepare their loved one for gaining experiences in the larger community.” Murphree said. “The creation of Rainbow Academy is a direct response to meeting these heightened expectations.” New donations for the acquisition and implementation of Project Discovery were generated through special events, foundations and personal gifts.

Over the summer, Rainbow Acres’ executive staff focused on planning for implementation of the new educational approach, even as Wagner recruited new staff to help Morales and Page raise the bar for all of Rainbow Acres’ educational experiences. “Vacancies in the education area enabled us to begin developing new experiential education approaches to benefit the Ranchers,” Wagner said. “Over the past three years, we have been able to recruit some of the finest educators in the history of Rainbow Acres.”

In addition to Morales and Page, Rainbow Acres also benefits from the service of Education Team members Rolene Dugi, Rancher Services Coordinator; Andy Rogers, Vocational Educator;

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Rancher experiences, continued

Mitch Koonce, Religious Life Coordinator; and Michael Redhawk and Marlys Mallét, Fine Arts instructors from Sedona with over seven years of volunteer service. Within months, Wagner added several new team members: Catherine Metz, Life Skills Educator; Eric Jennings, Music Educator; and Lu Anne Behrle, part-time Computer Science Educator. What's more, all of the new hires were within the budget, including the personnel expenses for the Project Discovery courses.

At the same time, the summer of 2018 also provided a golden opportunity to renovate the Life Long Learning Center into a new adult education facility to be named the Worden Taber Center. The building was renamed by the Education Team in part to emphasize that learning takes place throughout the Rainbow Acres campus. "The Wordens and Margie Taber were personal and professional friends for over 30 years," Wagner said. "They cared deeply about Ranchers learning, growing and thriving. And they were both generous benefactors to the program and facility that now bears their names." This major renovation, partially funded by Bellevue Heights Church of Sun City, will enhance the classrooms, computer lab, media library, office space and restroom facilities. The renovation also includes installation of more-efficient HVAC, lighting and appliances.

Through Rainbow Academy, each quarter Ranchers will select their own courses and activities, and assemble a weekday schedule with the Education Team. Each

weekday will be divided into five course periods with breaks in-between. A typical day can include a Life Skills course, an Animal Science experience, our Fine Arts program, attending Choir practice, and more. Our educators will work alongside the Ranchers, guiding their progress as active learners, utilizing interactive lessons, video segments and other methods to

provide the Ranchers with a flexible and engaging learning experience.

With the launch of Rainbow Academy, Rainbow Acres is bringing together all of its educational experiences into a unified curriculum that can be personalized for each Rancher.

The executive team is excited about these new developments for

the future of Rainbow Acres. "We have been listening to the Ranchers," Wagner said. "We know that they want to be challenged – and we've seen how helping them expand their intellectual horizons has expanded their abilities to understand and relate to the world."

"...and we've seen how helping them [the Ranchers] expand their intellectual horizons has expanded their abilities to understand and relate to the world."

Gary Wagner
President & CEO



Education Team ready to launch Rainbow Academy

Last summer, Rainbow Acres completed the recruitment of the Education Team that is implementing plans for Rainbow Academy. Here's a summary of its offerings and the team member(s) bringing each area to life:

Life Skills/Job Skills:

Each quarter, Rainbow Academy offers a rotating schedule of courses for Ranchers. Life Skills courses include Self Esteem, Teamwork, Social Skills, Problem Solving, Time Management, Basic Banking and more. Ranchers can take up to 18 different Life Skills courses over multiple quarters. Job Skills courses help Ranchers seek employment, whether its on-ranch jobs or off-ranch employment. Ranchers can choose from courses such as Office Filing, Cleaning Maintenance, Greenhouse Work, Grocery Clerking, Food Service, Animal Care and more. Ranchers can take up to nine different Job Skills courses over multiple quarters.



Catherine Metz, Life Skills Educator: Catherine has over 30 years of teaching experience, most recently at Stapley Middle School in Mesa, AZ. Stapley is the district's premier middle school, with centralized services for Special Education students, where Catherine team-taught with Special Education faculty.

Andy Rogers, Vocational Educator: Andy has worked with adults with disabilities for over 20 years. After four years as a caregiver, he became Vocational Director in 2009. In this new capacity, Andy provides vocational training, job placement/coaching, and transportation coordination for all of the working Ranchers.

Animal Science:

Daily access to animals – especially horses – is wonderfully therapeutic for the Ranchers. Whether petting an animal or providing for its care, the exchange of support provides an emotionally-enriching experience. Ranchers can schedule riding and/or leading the horses. Rainbow Academy offers classes on breeds of horses, styles of riding, equipment use, and how to care for horses. We also offer lessons on animals that Ranchers are interested in learning about, such as bats, cougars, snakes and guinea pigs.



Lisa Page, Animal Science Educator: Lisa is a seasoned equine professional in all aspects of the horse and livestock industry. She has served as program coordinator for the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension program and V Bar V Ranch, and as an agriculture instructor for several schools in Arizona and New Mexico.

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Horticulture:

In the greenhouses, Ranchers learn how to produce a wide variety of vegetables year-round for consumption on the ranch, including cabbage, beets, lettuce, tomatoes, squash and more. In the classroom, Ranchers learn about plants, ecology and gardening, and then develop their green thumbs as they plant, water, fertilize and harvest. The greenhouses also offer workshops that engage Ranchers in researching scientific topics of their own interest and presenting their findings to others as a learning experience.



Rodolfo Martinez Morales, Ph.D., Horticulture and Ecology Educator: As a Fulbright Scholar, Rodolfo's education and career have focused on many aspects of horticulture, with global positions in Ecuador, the Galapagos and Niger. He brings a broad perspective of global ecology issues as well as a practical approach to connecting with the Ranchers.

Fine Arts/Practical Arts:

Rainbow Acres will continue its Fine Arts painting program developed by a wonderfully-talented couple of Sedona artists who have volunteered at Rainbow Acres for the past seven years. Michael and Marlys help each Rancher in selecting images that inspire them, then guiding them in the process of recreating images as paintings on canvas, creating remarkable results. Ranchers can also choose to participate in our current Practical Arts courses (weaving, stepping stones, decorative arts).



Marlys Mallét/Michael Redhawk, Fine Arts Instructors: Marlys and Michael are a highly-accomplished, nationally-recognized artist couple from Sedona. Their relationship with Rainbow Acres began in 2008 when they created a large mural inside the new Palmer Community Center and were first approached by Ranchers seeking artistic advice.

Music Therapy:

Rainbow Academy offers many options including Rainbow Acres' traditional music programs like Rancher Choir, Clavinova Connection and Drum Circle, with plans to broaden its music therapy offerings with Voice Ensembles, Beams, Hand Bells and Music Appreciation. The Rainbow Choir is expanding its repertoire with new songs and plans to continue touring and performing throughout the southwest and across the United States at church services, Special Olympics competitions and other events.



Eric Jennings, Music Educator and Rancher Choir Director: Eric has a lifetime of rich musical experience including Dean and Music Advisor at The New Seminary in New York City and Director of Music at St. John's Episcopal Church in New Rochelle, New York. Eric has performed opera throughout the East Coast and Europe.

Taber Computer Lab:

Rainbow Acres is in the process of renovating its existing Computer Lab with all-new workstations that can be used by Ranchers to learn basic computer skills, engage in activities and stay in touch with their families. Rainbow Academy courses will focus on instruction in the use of Microsoft Suite software that can be applied in an office or off-ranch workplace. There are also plans to whet the appetites of the Ranchers and explore the creative functions of a pad or tablet through photography, videography and music.



Lu Anne Behrle, Computer Lab Educator: Lu Anne is a lifelong educator with over 30 years of experience from Phoenix's Isaac School District to the U.S. Department of Defense, teaching in North Carolina, South Korea, Greece and Germany. She also has four years of experience as a vocational rehabilitation counselor.

An Evening of Discovery benefits new life/job skills programs



Save the date for next year: Thursday, April 25. Join us for a fun, exciting evening of good food, fellowship and fundraising that benefits the Ranchers.

Last April, a group of Sedona residents comprised of long-time and new-found supporters of Rainbow Acres came together to help the non-profit launch an inaugural fundraising benefit.

“An Evening of Discovery” premiered on Thursday, April 26 at Steakhouse 89 in Sedona, with the evening’s proceeds underwriting the implementation of Project Discovery, a new nationally-renowned curriculum of life skills and job skills courses proven to be effective for teaching adults with developmental disabilities.

Three Sedona residents joined together to launch the new benefit: Dave Blauert, Claudia Ault and Dieter Lehmann. After learning more about the non-profit from long-time board member Claudia Ault, Dave Blauert suggested that Rainbow Acres launch an event in Sedona to expand awareness of its mission.

Blauert connected Gary Wagner, Rainbow Acres’ President and CEO, with new Sedona resident Dieter Lehmann, co-owner of Steakhouse 89, one of Sedona’s newest restaurants. Lehmann, along with his partners, generously offered to host the benefit, and the new event was born. Sedona resident and past Rainbow Acres board member Judith Glenn agreed to serve as the event’s chair and worked with others to plan the details.

Wagner knew where he wanted to direct the proceeds: Project Discovery and reinventing Rainbow Acres’ approach to life skills and job skills training for the Ranchers. “The Ranchers receive a strong sense of purpose and independence from jobs they enjoy, where they are treated with dignity and respect,” Wagner said.

An Evening of Discovery raised a little over \$20,000 in ticket sales and over \$5,000 in personal donations. The event featured an elegant, four-course dinner provided by Steakhouse 89, live musical entertainment, and lots of door prizes and giveaways. Tickets were \$150/person or \$250/couple.

Wagner announced that “An Evening of Discovery” will become a new annual fundraising event that will continue to support Rainbow Academy and Project Discovery.



Family & Friends 'Western Round-Up' offers events galore



Beautiful Arizona weather greeted visitors as they gathered for the annual “Family & Friends Weekend” on Friday and Saturday, October 26 and 27.

On Friday, Ranchers provided educational presentations in the newly-renovated Worden Taber Center (formerly the Life Long Learning Center). That was followed by the “Legacy of Love” Luncheon (with keynote speaker Andy Quiet, Acting Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, Southwest and Hawaii). This year’s inductees were John W. Macklem, III, brother of Rancher Howard Macklin, and Ruth L. Daehler, who has provided support for over 25 years.

Also, Rancher and Army veteran Rick Bruner received a “Quilt of Valor” in recognition of his service to our nation. Members and friends of First Baptist Church of Greater Des Moines created the

quilt and made the presentation on behalf of the Quilts of Valor Foundation.

Friday evening, guests enjoyed a BBQ Dinner on the Daehler Building lawn and the “Rainbow’s Got Talent” Show, with performances by Ranchers and Rainbow Acres staff and family members.

On Saturday, during the Open House, visitors could take walking tours of the campus and view Rancher demonstrations at the barn, updates on the greenhouses, and an incredible concert with the Rancher Choir (under the direction of Eric Jennings, new Music Educator and Choir Director).

They also browsed through the recently-renovated Gift Shop (which features Rancher art and crafts), and participated in the Silent Auction, BBQ picnic, and more. Thanks to our many volunteers who helped make this event a huge success! What a great way to showcase Rainbow Acres!



‘WISH LIST’ addresses need for campus improvements

With the holidays coming, Rainbow Acres has put together its “Wish List” of capital improvement projects that would benefit the entire community. The Buildings & Grounds Department has been busy with recent renovations to the Worden Taber Center and the new Fine Arts classroom in the Daehler Building. Still, many “small projects” remain and require financial support from donors in order to move them forward:

Wireless Network – Campus Alert System

Many Ranchers depend on visual communications and would benefit from the ability to view daily information and emergency alerts on TV monitors around the campus. Rainbow Acres would like to install a network of four monitors to stream wireless content to key locations: Palmer Community Center, Daehler Building, Worden Taber Center and the Barn. This network also could be used for educational purposes. The project has a total cost of \$4,000.

Tommy Lift – Buildings Maintenance

Rainbow Acres frequently has to handle large, heavy items such as appliances that must be removed or installed in Rancher housing units. To make this process easier (and safer), Buildings & Grounds would like to purchase a Tommy Lift for the back-end of one of the ranch’s existing pick-up trucks. The Tommy Lift would enable these items to be safely lifted to/from the truck bed and the ground. The Tommy Lift is a \$4,500 investment.

Audio Board – Campus Radio Station

Since 2011, a low power FM radio station on campus has provided a creative outlet for Ranchers and a way to broadcast a continuous loop that gives visitors information about the ranch. Unfortunately, the audio board (the station’s most important piece of equipment) is on its last legs and parts are no longer available. Rainbow Acres would like to acquire a small audio board that would be ideal for our use, which is available at a cost of \$2,600.



If you would like to grant any of these holiday wishes, please visit our website (www.rainbowacres.com) and click on the Donation tab, or call Dawn Jones, Donor Relations Manager, at (928) 567-5231 for more information.

Many ways to help Rainbow Acres at year-end

Each year, Rainbow Acres focuses on several “special needs” campaigns that address its most dire funding areas, including the **Adopt-A-Rancher Fund** (in which donors can “adopt” a particular Rancher who needs financial support due to family circumstances); the **Good Samaritan Fund** (which assists those Ranchers who do not have adequate insurance for medical or dental needs); and the **Scholarship Fund** (which supports general scholarships, to be distributed at the discretion of Rainbow Acres for Ranchers in need). Also, your gifts to the **Annual Fund Campaign** at year-end provide critical support for general operations. If you would like to help, please visit our website (www.rainbowacres.com) or call Dawn Jones, Donor Relations Manager, at (928) 567-5231.



Give from the Heart ♥ *Adopt a Rancher*

You can make a profound difference in the life of a Rancher in need at Rainbow Acres! The “Adopt-A-Rancher” Fund supports Ranchers like Daniel C., who grew up in a close knit and intact family, the youngest of three sons, in San Luis Obispo, California.

As an adolescent with developmental disabilities, school was challenging. Daniel continued through age 22, the norm in California schools. Through programs in his area, he received basic vocational training and attempted several jobs in his community. Each job was short lived as Daniel struggled to focus on his work-related activities amid the pressures of daily life.

All the while, his parents worked hard to find other options. Ultimately, they discovered Rainbow Acres and found that it met their priorities: a safe environment, vocational development, and friends who accept you as a peer. His parents hoped that Daniel would learn new skills, grow cognitively and thrive at the Ranch. And he has! Daniel has developed a network of friends, engaged in numerous

educational programs and tried a number of employment opportunities.

It took some time, but Daniel found his niche at the Ranch. He developed new skills and focus with his increasing responsibilities for the care of the livestock at the Barn. One year ago, Daniel was promoted to being the Barn Manager and became responsible for the evening feeding of the animals and performing those duties on weekends. He’s also a great ambassador by welcoming tours and visitors to the Barn and eagerly telling the group about each animal.

Daniel celebrated his first anniversary of being Barn Manager on September 30. We are all so proud of this accomplishment and his success! He is living and thriving at Rainbow Acres! Daniel is one of our Ranchers who need financial assistance to cover their cost of care at Rainbow Acres.

If you would like to sponsor Daniel, please visit our website (www.rainbowacres.com) and click on Donation/Adopt-A-Rancher, or call Dawn Jones, Donor Relations Manager, at (928) 567-5231.



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