

Hands-on Healing

Animals as Natural Therapy



Improving mental and behavioral health through animal-guided programs and mentorship with special attention to youth and veterans in Northwest Washington.

www.animalsasnaturaltherapy.org

Table Of Contents

1

Who we are

2

Accreditation

3

The Farm and
Animals

4

Equine-Assisted
Learning

5

Equine Assisted
Therapy

6

Mobile ANT

7

Rainbow Bridge

8

On the Horizon

9

Financial
Assistance

10

Financial Profile



Who we are

From humble beginnings to a highly sought-after curriculum

ANT has offered innovative programs since 1999 when Catholic Community Services (CCS) first sent “at-risk” youth to Windy Acres Farm. What began as simple animal and youth encounters developed into a far-reaching, highly effective and sought-after experiential learning model. Our twenty-six-year history of collaboration with local agencies and schools shows the depth of our experience in the field of mentoring and reflects the increasing demand for our services.



Accreditation

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, Int'l

Animals as Natural Therapy has been a PATH Premier Accredited Center since 2010, one of only 5 in the state of Washington, and employs both PATH-certified CTRIs (Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructors) and ESMHLs (Equine Specialists in Mental Health and Learning). PATH Intl. is committed to the advancement of equine-assisted services and certifies and accredits centers, instructors, and equine specialists according to a set of field-tested standards to ensure the highest levels of safety, ethics, and effectiveness in the equine-assisted services industry.



The Farm & Animals

3

In addition to programming, ANT staff and volunteers work to maintain the farm or animal and program use.

We lease or adopt animals that need a new start in their lives. They get a job in our program where they can connect with our community and change lives plus get all the love and care they need to succeed!

Annually, a large portion of our budget is dedicated to these items:

- \$17,000 in animal feed
- \$10,000 for veterinary care
- \$3,600 in farrier services
- \$5,000 for bedding
- And much more!



ANT leases almost 10 acres in northern Bellingham



Our herd consists of 10 equines, 1 cow, 8 goats, 8 chickens, and 7 rabbits!

Equine-Assisted Learning

Life Skills



Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) is an experiential learning approach that involves interactions between people and horses to promote personal growth, social skills, and learning. ANT's EAL services are facilitated by professionals in a structured setting and use a wide range of contexts, such as education, leadership development, mental health, and team building.

Key Aspects of EAL:

- **Experiential:** Participants learn by doing, often through groundwork exercises like leading, grooming, or guiding horses (riding is not always involved).
- **Focus on Life Skills:** Enhances communication, problem-solving, empathy, confidence, and emotional regulation.
- **Horse as a Mirror:** Horses are highly sensitive to human emotions and behavior, which helps participants gain immediate, nonjudgmental feedback about how they present themselves and interact with others.

Equine-Assisted Therapy

EAT is an experiential therapy model that can address acute mental health challenges and meet significant life goals, from healing from trauma to learning how to cope with stressful situations. In EAT sessions, the client and their equine partner work with a licensed mental health therapist and a PATH Intl. Certified Equine Professional toward established mental health goals, such as:

- Decreasing anxiety
- Treating depression
- Healing from PTSD
- Creating healthy relationships
- Addressing grief
- Coping with stress



Mobile ANT

Mobile ANT provides a unique opportunity for a multitude of community members to experience the joy, comfort, and therapeutic benefits of animal interaction. Our visiting therapy animals include: horses, miniature horse, miniature mule, goats, dogs, chickens, & rabbits.



For Business



For Assisted-Care
Facilities



For Schools

Rainbow Bridge

LOCAL NEWS

Rainbow Bridge program brings joyful animal visits to hospice patients in Whatcom County

Chickens, barn cats and bunnies are helping hospice patients in Whatcom County.



Rainbow Bridge is a special Mobile ANT program, offered in partnership with Whatcom Hospice, that is focused on providing animal-assisted care and support to hospice patients, bereaved families, and hospice staff.

On the Horizon

In 2025, we are exploring stronger partnerships with Growing Veterans, Community Links, and Lydia Place.

- In Spring, we will be offering an Equine-Assisted Therapy Group with Lydia Place that serves young mothers facing housing insecurity.
- We are working with Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center to offer support services to teen non-violent offenders as part of Community Links.
- We are partnering with Northwest Therapeutic Riding Center and Growing Veterans to offer Equine-Assisted Learning & Therapy workshops free of charge.



Financial Assistance



Our organization is committed to making equine-assisted therapy accessible to all individuals, regardless of their financial situation. To achieve this, we implement a sliding fee scale based on the Area Median Income (AMI), ensuring that therapy remains affordable for families from diverse economic backgrounds. This approach allows us to serve those who need it most—children, veterans, and individuals facing trauma or mental health challenges—without letting cost be a barrier to healing.

By aligning our fees with household income, we foster equitable access while maintaining sustainability. Support from funders directly underwrites sessions for low-income clients, extending the life-changing benefits of equine therapy to underserved populations who would otherwise be unable to afford this level of care.

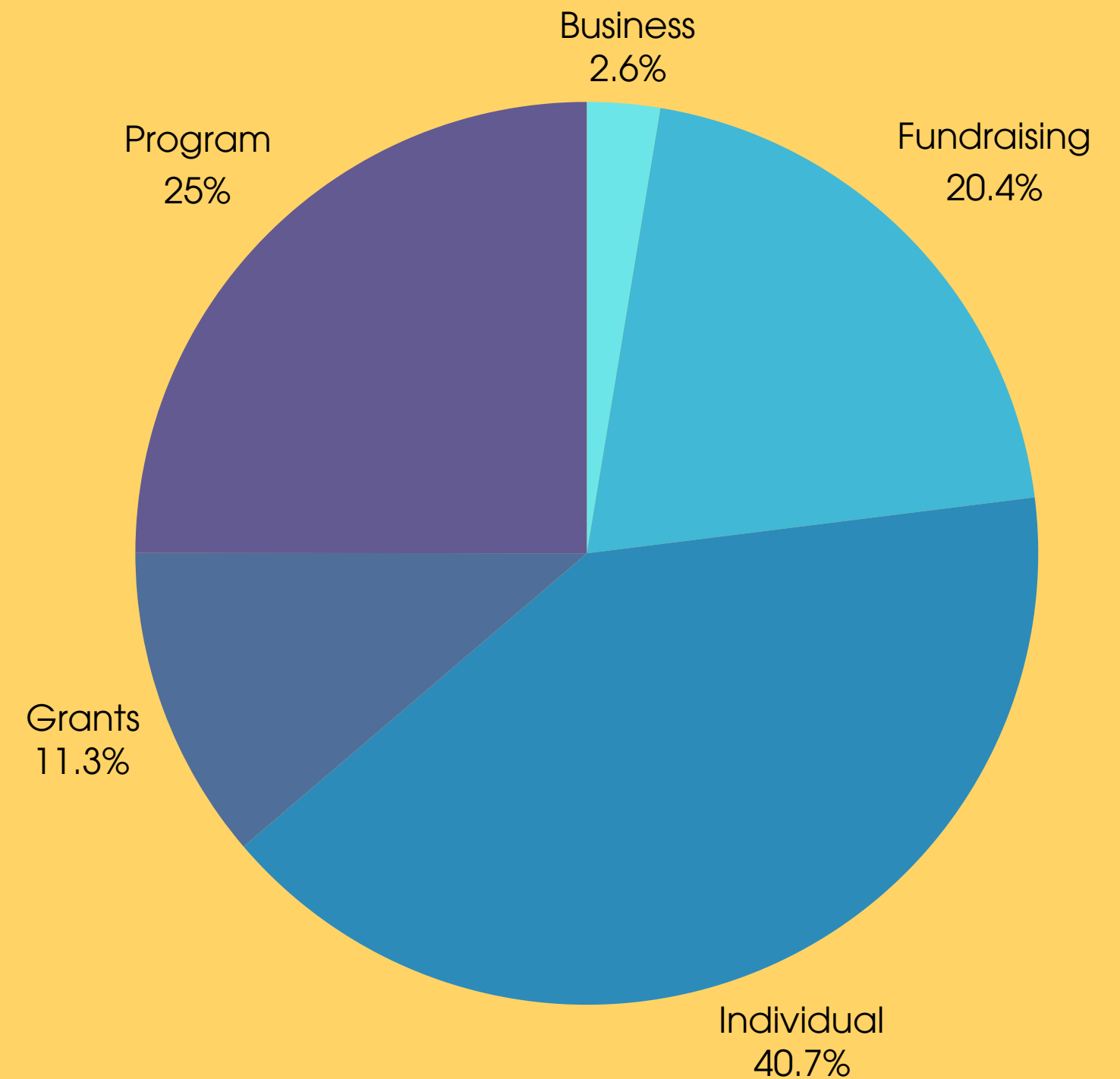


Financial Profile

Forty percent of our funding comes from individual donors, reflecting strong community investment in our mission. This broad base of support not only demonstrates public trust but also helps sustain our programs with stability and resilience.

Much of our program income is pass-through funding from our many partner organizations, including school districts and community nonprofits.

In 2024, with a budget of \$540,000, we served over 5000 individuals in Whatcom County.



Ginyard International Co.

THANK YOU



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