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Contact: Joy O’Neal, The Red Barn

Email: Joy@TheRedBarn.org

Phone: (205) 223-1362

THE RED BARN TO LAUNCH THERAPEUTIC HORSEBACK RIDING INSTRUCTOR APPRENTICESHIP TO MEET NATIONAL SHORTAGE OF THERAPEUTIC HORSEBACK RIDING INSTRUCTORS

The Red Barn has created a registered apprenticeship program through the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to address the nation-wide shortage of Therapeutic Horseback Riding Instructors. Therapeutic Horseback Riding Instructors teach children and adults with physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities how to safely work with and ride horses. Therapeutic horseback riding has been shown to help individuals with disabilities improve their balance, gross and fine motor skills, self-confidence, and overall health.

Josh Laney, Director of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, says “The Red Barn’s apprenticeship program not only positively impacts the lives of the apprentices, but benefits Alabama citizens as a whole. The first program of its kind in the state, The Red Barn’s apprenticeship offers individuals an innovative career pathway to enhance their skills, which in turn increases the quality of services provided to Alabamians with disabilities. It’s a win-win for the entire state.”

Apprentices will receive on-the-job learning and related classroom instruction while also earning progressive wages and benefits as a full-time employee of The Red Barn. After successful completion of the apprenticeship program, apprentices will receive a nationally recognized credential as a therapeutic horseback riding instructor.

In addition to helping ameliorate the nation-wide shortage of therapeutic horseback riding instructors, this apprenticeship program also provides opportunities for underserved populations to become apprentices, especially women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities. While women comprise about one-half of the national labor force, they make up only about 14% of active registered apprentices. It is expected that this apprenticeship will contribute to increasing the number of female apprentices in Alabama. Kristen Holder, Region 2 and 4 Project Manager for the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, says “The Red Barn is a prime example of a non-traditional industry embracing the components of a registered apprenticeship to address their workforce needs in a new way. We hope to see the Therapeutic Horseback Riding Instructor apprenticeship occupation expand throughout Alabama, as well as nationally.”

The Red Barn is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization providing therapeutic horseback riding lessons and other equine assisted services to individuals with disabilities and special circumstances.

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