

Lexy is a participant in one of our day programs, and she had the opportunity to attend sessions every other week through the school year. As she learned about the horses and activities she became a role model for the other participants. She asked questions, practiced when she learned something new, and was open to trying things she wasn't entirely comfortable with. Her willingness to give herself a chance to learn resulted in an incredible amount of growth over the course of the year.

Lexy not only learned new things, but she taught them to others in her group. During one session she learned how to move her horse's hind quarters and get them to circle. After accomplishing it herself, she demonstrated for another participant and showed him where to hold the leadrope and how to help the horse understand. As he practiced, Lexy was encouraging and genuinely excited to celebrate his accomplishment. On another day, she helped a participant learn to braid their horse's mane. She patiently explained how to braid and supported when needed. Her kindness made others feel inspired and encouraged to do what challenged them.

During one of Lexy's sessions, Mint the mule was having a difficult time being groomed. On that particular day Mint was repeatedly backing away and moving when she tried to brush him. Rather than getting frustrated and insisting they groom, Lexy respected Mint's boundaries. Instead, she chose to connect to him by walking him over obstacles at liberty (with no leadrope). Mint showed his appreciation by letting out a quiet whinny sound when she met him where he was at. Together, they walked over the parachute, through the frog pond, and over the bridge. Lexy reflected on the fact that Mint felt happy when he knew she understood him and his boundaries.

Lexy has grown an amazing amount during her time at the farm and though the school year is coming to a close, we hope to see her back at the farm soon. She puts her heart into everything she does at the farm, whether she is learning, teaching, or respecting others. Lexy has made HRHF a more encouraging and understanding place for other participants as well as Mint the mule.