



## CEO STATEMENT

Despite the immense challenges of the last year, DEFHR was able to continue to say “yes” to calls for help from regional animal control offices and law enforcement agencies. Because of the generosity of our donors, who have stood by us through the uncertainty of the current times, we took in 53 equines!

As we move into the next fiscal year, there is a lot of excitement and anticipation building about DEFHR’s future. We have just acquired the firehouse property adjacent to the main farm, and our plans to create the Center for Equine Welfare are well on the way to being realized.

For the first time, DEFHR has been awarded a \$500,000 grant by the State of Maryland to acquire and renovate the firehouse property. We are excited by this recognition by the state! As we kick off a capital campaign to fund not only the purchase but the renovations of this space, your support is going to be crucial. Our vision for this newly acquired space includes:

- A world-class visitor center to educate the public on equine welfare
- A hospital facility to assist our veterinary partners in providing state-of-the-art care to our equines in a sterile, controlled environment
- Space to expand educational events and enriching opportunities, even in less than ideal weather conditions
- Enhanced intern housing to further the reach of our education of up-and-coming animal professionals

These exciting expansions will richly complement the work we do with the equines who need our help. They’ll help DEFHR promote agricultural tourism throughout Maryland, making DEFHR into a must-visit destination for hands-on, family-friendly experiences with immersive, tactile installations.

We are excited about what’s to come for DEFHR and the welfare of equines in Maryland and surrounding regions. Thank you for supporting DEFHR and for being a part of our cutting-edge initiatives!

*Erin Clemm Ochoa*

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*DEFHR CEO*