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Books, Buddies and Bright Futures

greenchimneys.org

Therapeutic Education
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On a Friday afternoon, huddled under blanket forts, drinking smoothies, two elementary school classes joined forces to share favorite books and support each other through “Reading Buddies,” a peer reading activity devised by teachers Jamie Beanland and Danielle Weiss. Some students read aloud to each other as others perused their book, pointing out particular details. It was a motivating way for students to collaborate and show what they know, and what they love.

For so many, reading is a favorite pastime that begins at an early age. First memories of bedtime books and compelling discussions of classic novels become the foundation for further exploration of topics and authors, paving the way for access to limitless information and enjoyment, and the ability to understand and share what is learned.

All aspects of our lives depend on literacy development. It helps us think critically, understand complex issues, and learn new things.

New farm friends—fluffy and scaled, big and small—are ready to partner with students in therapeutic activities. See inside.

It ties directly to academic achievement, global awareness, and cultural connection and yet, reading—and writing—can be one of the most challenging areas of a student’s educational experience.

Green Chimneys students represent a wide range of learners, many of whom struggle with learning differences, the ability to focus, or other impediments to building foundational skills in literacy. “The majority of our students have not had success in traditional academic environments, which often can’t support the needs identified in an Individualized Education Plan,” notes Brewster Campus Literacy Instructor Thei Cherry.

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Message from the CEO



As we approach the end of the academic year, and the upcoming celebration of our graduating seniors, I am reminded of the scope of what we do at Green Chimneys and how so many elements come together to support our students. This environment

sets the stage for a unique educational experience that helps our children through individualized therapies, and a focus on the best curriculum paired with the best teaching methods to help our students achieve academic success.

Green Chimneys' literacy initiatives are a perfect example of how our teachers and specialized literacy instructors support our students with varying learning differences. We know that literacy is the foundation for academic achievement, and future success. Yet we constantly hear news of declining literacy rates across our country citing various causes, from increased social media usage to pandemic-related delays to myriad other factors.

Our children are not immune to these impacts, and face the added obstacles of diverse social, emotional and learning challenges. These initiatives, and the creative staff who deliver them, are engaging students in learning and

building positive experiences to increase students' comfort with and, dare I say, love of reading.

We are truly fortunate here at Green Chimneys to be able to provide services within a bucolic setting encompassing a dedicated team of supportive professionals, and special animal partners. It is a wonderful environment for children to receive therapeutic and educational services, making real change leading to real success for our students. It's been a part of our history since we opened our doors nearly eight decades ago; it's the reason I've been a member of this incredible community for nearly 18 years and counting, and it's why so many of you support our work. We couldn't do it without you and we thank you!

Kristin Dionne, MSW, MPA
Chief Executive Officer

Ensuring the Welfare of Our Birds

Operating a school on a farm provides extraordinary opportunities for Green Chimneys students and staff. This winter, it also presented a genuine challenge. As the global spread of Avian Influenza reached the Northeast U.S., Green Chimneys farm and wildlife staff prepared for potential impact, with the hope that our 300 animals would remain safe. In early January, the discovery of several deceased waterfowl called for immediate action as staff put protocols in place to limit contact and prevent cross contamination between the many bird habitats on our campus.

As a school and residential center, the safety of our students and staff is critical; even before testing confirmed that the birds had been infected with the virus, our staff modified programming to minimize disruption to regular education and activity schedules. Precautions also included suspension of our wildlife rescue and rehabilitation activities to prevent unnecessary exposure for our animal



caretakers, and our resident birds. And we ultimately made the decision not to hold our annual Birds of Prey Day in June, which draws falconers and their birds from across the Tri-state area.

As Avian Flu concerns remain high in our region, and for animal populations worldwide, we are taking important steps to mitigate risk to the life and health of the birds at Green Chimneys. Migrating birds are a leading cause of spread to domesticated birds and because our waterfowl reside in an open habitat with

its own pond, they remain vulnerable to wild geese and other species that have a higher incidence of contracting the virus, and infecting other birds.

We have identified the need to transform our large waterfowl pond into an enclosed aviary, and you can help to support this necessary construction project costing up to \$75,000. Preventing access by wild birds will increase biosecurity for our waterfowl and those who interact with them. It will help us maintain continuity of service in our animal-assisted programs for Green Chimneys students, and as a rescue and rehabilitation facility for wildlife in our region.

We are grateful for the guidance of the New York State and Putnam County Health Departments, and New York State Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Environmental Conservation in helping Green Chimneys to navigate this serious issue. We hope that you will join the charge to support the health and welfare of our birds. Go to greenchimneys.org/birds25

Becoming a Raptor



The greatest athletes to watch are the ones who play because they love the game, and no one at Green Chimneys loves the game of basketball more than Yousef.

Yousef joined the Raptors varsity basketball team in the winter of 2023 as a 6th grader who was fairly new to Green Chimneys. He could tell you every stat on NBA star Steph Curry, and showed intense passion for the game but as a new player and of smaller stature, it was challenging to make

an impact on the court. This didn't stop Yousef. He practiced hard, listened to his coaches and used the season to improve his skills in any way that he could.

When the 2024 season began, Yousef emerged as Green Chimneys' own version of Steph Curry! During one mid-season game, Yousef was untouchable; in an exciting two-minute span, he scored five shots in a row from the floor, four of them from behind the 3-point line. Fast-forward to the current season and Yousef is the veteran player on the team. His maturity on the floor has flourished, and he's the guy you want to have the ball in his hands.

What makes Yousef's story unique is before he arrived at Green Chimneys, he had little interest in sports at all. Yousef's 5th grade year in his home district had been his most difficult, defined by struggles with peers and increased frustration about school. In hindsight, part of Yousef's problem was lack of a healthy outlet for his physical energy and intense emotions.

Yousef's mother, Wajiha, feels that the Green Chimneys environment changed everything. "The small class size, the farm, and the natural setting helped Yousef find himself," she says. But it was the gravitational pull of the basketball court outside of his classroom that captured Yousef's attention, and it became a vital resource for channeling his energy.

Yousef's success in basketball has spilled over into all aspects of his life; academics, friends, and family have become pillars of strength. If you ask what he loves most



about basketball he says, "It's the perfect game to play on your own or with a group of friends." The kid who came to Green Chimneys frustrated and lacking the skills to build friendships has turned into a strong, thriving young man with a team—and a community—assembled around him.

There were no shortcuts to Yousef's success. He embodies the notion that if you set high goals and work toward them every day, there is no telling how far you can go. No matter the time of year or the weather, Yousef is putting in the work to get better at what he loves. According to Coaches Gary Smith and John Boyle, the only real problem is getting Yousef out of the gym and onto his bus after practice. He even persuaded his parents to have two outdoor basketball hoops at his house so he can keep up his skills at home. How far basketball takes Yousef is yet to be seen but there may come a time when Steph Curry has nothing on Yousef!

2025 Green Chimneys Golf Classic Hit the Green for a Great Cause

Monday, August 4, 2025
Sunningdale Country Club in Scarsdale, NY

Tickets and sponsorships are available;
visit greenchimneys.org/golf



Books and Buddies

continued from cover

“Some students may lack motivation or tend toward work avoidance, and simply do not want to read or write. Others cannot sit for long enough periods to develop necessary reading and writing skills, and older students often do not want to read aloud, making it difficult to work on fluency.”

Clearpool Campus Literacy Instructor Gina Viebrock points out that “It may be difficult to recognize the reasons why a student is at risk of not meeting grade-level skills. Struggles in literacy often snowball into a compounding of challenges that need identification and explicit targeted instruction. And without support, student behaviors can escalate out of frustration.”

Earlier this year, Green Chimneys School launched a new literacy curriculum for elementary and middle school students, *Into Reading* for grades 2-8 and *Into Literacy* for grades 6-8. This comprehensive product focuses on



the Five Pillars of Literacy: Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension, with a strong writing component integrated throughout. As a highly interactive program that offers differentiation of instruction to respond to individual learning needs—including adaptability both for students working below grade-level and those who need a bigger challenge—it works hand-in-hand with the school’s Explicit Direct Instruction teaching model.

The first ingredient of literacy instruction is engagement and “Reading Buddies” was an ideal activity for the 3rd-5th graders,

as they begin to gravitate toward preferred topics, and enjoy sharing their expertise. “Reading Buddies offered insight, confidence and creative thinking to my students. They absolutely loved being role models to the younger students, and sharing their thoughts as they read together,” says Danielle Weiss. “My students experienced a sense of leadership while they were able to build relationships.”

Jamie Beanland’s students expressed their enthusiasm in a writing reflection exercise:

“Reading Buddies was fun and I want to do it again. I loved reading Dog Man.”

“I liked reading with my buddy, and I liked the food. I did central idea reading with my partner, we read about sports.”

“The forts were fun, and my friend liked my book. I hope we do it again!”

There is joy in seeing students respond to what they learn—not just from the new information but also from the process—and to know that it’s the start of a lifetime of learning.

Smart Use for Healthy Minds

Teen and adolescent use of smartphones has been a growing concern among parents for years. Bullying, misinformation, and general overuse has led to declining mental health and isolation for youth at one of the most vulnerable times of their lives.

Research shows that smart devices are a major distraction for students and have negatively affected learning and test scores. “This is often what triggers parents to re-evaluate terms for, or restrict, phone use in their homes,” says Green Chimneys Community-Based Services Director Clare Rigano. “But helping youth develop an awareness of their habits and impact on their well-being is a critical first step.”

In working with youth, Community-Based Services clinicians often see this struggle at the outset of a relationship with a

client and their family. Issues around devices frequently ignite conflict related to larger issues; parents report observing a decline their child’s overall mood and level of interaction, as well as an increase in aggression, volatility, and isolation. Building awareness and introducing intervention strategies are essential, and provide the basis for guiding youth in healthy decision-making.

CBS clinicians balance supporting parents with advocating for a youth’s needs by approaching device use as a shared responsibility through some simple strategies:

- Encourage self-monitoring of screen time and usage pattern
- Facilitate discussions about social media and its effect on their mood and feelings
- Model mindful usage and healthy diversions
- Include their input in setting reasonable boundaries

Combining strategies with open communication and collaborative efforts sets the stage for beneficial discussions while creating a balanced and mindful approach to smartphone use, and a safer experience for youth.

Our CBS staff work closely with youth and their families to support positive individual and family development, self-reliance, and healthy communication. Learn more at greenchimneys.org/cbs





Staying Grounded with Horses

Recent transition to groundwork-only equine activities has created new opportunities in animal-assisted education with an enhanced view of animal welfare. As a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor and Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning, Valerie Castracucco brings valuable insight to her role as Equine Program Teacher.

What is Green Chimneys' approach to equine-assisted learning?

Our program is entirely ground-based, which means we focus on interactions with horses without riding them. We practice Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL), an experiential approach where students develop social-emotional skills and personal growth through meaningful interactions with the horses. Students connect these skills through basic care, handling and training, and learning to understand horse behavior and how it relates to human social circles.

What skills do students develop through this approach?

Students gain a wide range of useful skills, from procedural tasks to more perception-based activities. Fundamental skills include proper horse care and clear communication techniques. When

you're working with an animal that weighs over 1,000 pounds, understanding body language is incredibly important!

Students engage in activities such as grooming, leading, lunging, ground driving, liberty training, and longlining. They assist staff in keeping the horses mentally and physically fit through varied training exercises, and desensitizing them to our active campus. Students also have the opportunity to learn about equine nutrition, anatomy, and physiology through caretaking tasks; and education-focused activities, such as art projects and herd observation, facilitate participation for those with a lower degree of comfort.

Students practice communication skills and build on empathy by recognizing the needs of the animals, and their role in the horses' care and well-being. They also learn to develop observation skills by reading their horse's body language, and identifying signs of relaxation or stress to better respond to the horse's needs.

How do the horses benefit from a ground-based approach?

We've noticed such positive changes in our horses. Without the pressure of carrying riders—particularly beginners, who can be more challenging, or even frustrating for a horse to accommodate—they seem

more relaxed and free to express their unique personalities. The barn atmosphere is noticeably calmer without the rush of preparing tack for riding lessons.

This revised approach also allows us to welcome horses of all ages and abilities, including those with special needs who might struggle in a traditional riding program. We recently took in a horse and two donkeys from two local horse rescues. The physical demands of a riding program makes many rescued horses unsuitable but now we can focus on all the other aspects that make them good partners for our students! Students recognize that these horses still have great value by being able to empathize with their situations, and be a part of the healing process. The concept that not having a certain ability does not equate to an inability to make a meaningful contribution is a strong, transferable example to students.

How does groundwork expand the students' learning experience?

It really comes down to quality time and trust. Without the need to focus on riding mechanics, students can concentrate on the horse's cues during their classes. They experience things in the present moment, just as horses do. Groundwork also makes the program more inclusive. Students who are physically unable to participate in riding can fully engage, and hesitant students can be met where they are.

Our herd ranges from 34-inch-tall mini horse Cricket to Danny, a 19-hand-tall Clydesdale, so students can partner with animals of a size that matches their comfort level. Many eventually feel comfortable graduating to work with larger horses, or form a deep and meaningful bond with their current partner.

For a student, the relationship fosters growth, confidence and compassion that extends far beyond the barn, while it builds trust and enriches life for the horse. We are already seeing the impact as humans and horses make gains—all without anyone climbing into a saddle.

Learn more about Green Chimneys' therapeutic equine education and activities: greenchimneys.org/equine-education

Students Take the Stage

The School Talent Show is always a blast, celebrating students' special skills while encouraging confidence and public performance skills. Students share how they felt after the show:

"Playing drums in the show meant a lot to me. It gave me a stronger bond of friendship and an opportunity to express myself through music in a way I haven't done in a while. I learned about myself that I have patience and empathy and understanding for others."

- Gem, 9th grade

"People cheered for me! It made me feel so happy and almost cry!"

- Angie, 8th grade

"I battled my stage fright and got encouragement from peers. I felt sad because my mom couldn't come but I also felt happy because I performed in front of a bunch of people I never have before. One of the other performers told me how good my performance was!"

- Matthew, 5th grade

"Being in the Talent Show made me feel like a good person. I learned about myself that I can get on stage and perform in front of people. It was stressful, but I got through it. I had people to help me through it."

- Jo, 9th grade



Curiosity and Creativity Come Together

The annual STEAM Fair is a highly anticipated event for Clearpool Campus students. It's an opportunity for our middle-schoolers to explore a variety of topics, test hypotheses, and share their discoveries with classmates, staff, and families.

This year saw a wide range of projects, and many invited hands-on participation. Students tested the senses with a gummy bear brand comparison and "How Strong is Your Nose?" blind scent challenge. Visitors also assisted a volcano eruption, and mixed colorful creations with milk, food coloring and dish soap.

Experiential learning is a core component of Green Chimneys academics. Exploration of the why and how of science and nature is an important process for our students as they discover their ability to uncover answers, solve problems, and gain a sense of accomplishment.



New Faces at the Farm

Green Chimneys animal partners comprise species of all sizes. Different animals offer unique benefits for children in therapeutic interactions, from a tiny guinea pig giving gentle comfort, to a powerful horse helping to build confidence and provide sensory regulation through movement.

Flora, Fauna, and Merryweather. Named by students after the three good fairies from *Sleeping Beauty*, these sweet rats help break the stigma that they're just pests. "Rats make wonderful companions because they interact and explore so eagerly," says Livestock Program Manager Danielle Zalewski. These small creatures help students who might be nervous around larger animals, and teach what's involved in caring for common household pets.

Russell and Francisco. This miniature donkey pair loves greeting people and animals along the fence with their inquisitive personalities. Outgoing Russell is 18 years old and welcomes attention, while 8-year-old Francisco is more hesitant but enjoys a good scratch when students show patience and calm energy. Students tell them apart by the differences in their noses, Russell's is a soft pink and Francisco's is a darker gray.

Eastern Box Turtle. Tagged and released as a juvenile, this turtle lived 11 years in the wild until a car struck him, damaging his shell and limiting his mobility. Now students at our Clearpool Campus help with his daily care including baths, preparing meals, and as weather warms, digging up worms for treats.

Children's Python. This curious 6-year-old Children's Python came to Clearpool Campus after living in a high school science classroom from just a few months old. His small stature and confident personality makes him a good fit for interactions with younger students interested in reptiles.



Parent Perspective by NS

I first noticed that my son was different when he was three years old at day camp. That summer marked the beginning of daily phone calls about his behavior—something I had never experienced before. Those calls continued for the next seven years, until the day he arrived at Green Chimneys.

For years, I took him to every specialist and therapist I could find. I created charts, implemented reward systems, and did everything in my power to help my brilliant son. Yet, every social gathering was a source of stress, as he struggled to control himself and engage with other children without conflict.

When he started kindergarten, we began working with a psychiatrist, experimenting with different medication combinations. While there were months when things seemed to improve, the progress was always temporary. No one can truly understand the struggle unless they've witnessed it firsthand.

My son was placed in a classroom environment that was unsuitable for his academic capabilities but provided a high level of support. We were willing to do anything to prevent more suspensions and traumatic episodes, but it felt like we were merely buying time. For what, I wasn't sure.

He transitioned back into a general education class and his behaviors escalated, both at home and at school. He was always on the offense, while my husband, daughter, and I remained on constant defense. It took hitting rock bottom before we were finally able to get real help.

The school district and I worked tirelessly to find a place that could truly support my son and our family. Words cannot express how eternally grateful I am for Green Chimneys and their incredible staff.

People often ask how difficult it was to decide to send my son to a residential treatment center. The truth is, no parent makes that choice unless there is truly no other option.

From the moment I began the admissions process—speaking with staff and touring the grounds—it was clear that this place was special. For the first time, I met people who truly understood our situation. They weren't horrified by our stories; instead, they were confident they could help.

Within one-and-a-half school years, my son's transformation has been truly remarkable. His initial transition was challenging, but the phone calls from the staff kept me informed—always offering solutions rather than just questions. The residential staff have become like family,

providing constant care and support. Whenever I have concerns, they are addressed immediately with kindness and understanding, making this experience far more comforting than I ever imagined.

My son naturally gravitated toward the garden and its staff whenever he needed a break to regulate himself. Over time, this connection blossomed into a true passion for gardening. He now spends countless hours tending to the garden at school, and has even created one at home. Gardening has become a therapeutic outlet for him, offering both comfort and fulfillment.

The school and other staff have been incredibly patient and supportive, guiding both my son and me through this journey, and always prioritizing his well-being. This school year, he has achieved high honor roll for both marking periods—a testament to the dedication of everyone involved.

While we still have challenges, we continue working together to create a plan that helps us progress. Over the past year at Green Chimneys—fondly known as “The GC”—we have encountered minimal issues, and I often find myself saying this place is “too good to be true.” Yet, it truly is everything they promise. My only wish is that every family facing similar struggles could have access to a place like Green Chimneys to support them through their journey.

Leir Internship Fall Application Opens in May!



The Leir Internship Program offers an immersive hands-on experience in animal education and interaction, wildlife rehabilitation, or horticulture for individuals who want to explore career paths in education, human services, animal welfare and farm facility operation. Gain valuable experience in the human-animal bond and nature-based activities supporting children with special needs.

An enriching learning opportunity for recent graduates and professionals in Social Work, Psychology, Education, Veterinary Science, Animal Care, or Program Administration—no academic prerequisites required!

Apply starting May 1st for full-year opportunities from September to next August. Go to greenchimneys.org/leir-intern



Cultivating Independence

A key part of child development is gaining progressive levels of independence and life skills.

In her studies of childhood experiences, Psychologist Mariah Schug observes that youth learn through independence, and the freedom to travel through their neighborhood—without direct adult supervision—helps to develop critical skills. Independent walking promotes risk assessment, social competencies, environmental knowledge, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities (Schug, 2023).

On a large campus, Green Chimneys students navigate daily between academic programs, recreational activities, and scheduled therapeutic sessions. Developing skills around safety, time management, accountability, and self-regulation helps them move away from traveling exclusively with their class, or needing to be accompanied by staff. Students cultivate independence as they build confidence in themselves, learn to take responsibility for their actions and decisions, and step out of their comfort zone by trying new things. This independence helps them learn to manage everyday challenges, and grow from them.



Utilization of ‘walking passes’ has been very successful as an incentive for students to meet certain objectives around life skills. Students who consistently demonstrate physical and verbal safety can earn a Head Start pass, which allows them to head to their next program or activity independent of their class, or take a short walk on their own as a break. This serves as a stepping-stone to a second level, an Independent pass, designated for students who have made great strides in consistently exhibiting physical, verbal, and emotional safety on campus. These students can travel solo to any area of campus, as well as nearby off-campus locations, such as Boni-Bel Farm or a local market.

Chief Program Officer Denise Luft says walking passes are part of Green Chimneys’ agency-wide strategic plan and represents a culture shift for a residential program. This year has seen a 28.5% increase in students earning walking passes compared to last year!

Independent walking privileges empower our students to:

Enhance their safety by learning to be aware of their surroundings, like people, cars, bikes, and even animal crossings, and understanding the importance of knowing your environment.

Practice time management skills by abiding by check-in times using a watch or timer. Time management helps students prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and improve focus by minimizing distractions.

Build accountability for their actions. Students are responsible for any misuse of their privileges or falling short of expected behaviors. Accountability is a fundamental skill that guides better choices and decisions, and builds trust.

Strengthen self-regulation skills. Walking regulates one’s internal state by engaging in a controlled, repetitive activity. Self-regulation is beneficial as it helps to cope with stress, maintain healthy relationships, and achieve goals.

Discover the Difference

What makes Green Chimneys so special?

Hear directly from students, families, and staff as they share how our school empowers students to reach their potential through personalized, innovative academic, behavioral, and emotional support, all in our nature-based therapeutic environment.

Watch at greenchimneys.org/school



Partner Spotlight:

Corporate partners are a mainstay for Green Chimneys and provide immense support to our campus community in various ways. Be it through group “team building” days of service, financial support of programs, participation in special events, or having company leadership serve on Green Chimneys’ Board of Directors, PepsiCo is one of the best examples of a company not only doing well, but also choosing to do good.

Throughout the spring and fall, PepsiCo sends groups of 10-20 employees, each from various departments throughout the company, to our campus for a day of service. They give their time to necessary projects to benefit our students, or our animals, and ensure campus areas are in good repair and ready condition for student programming. In 2024, PepsiCo’s Global Concentrate Solutions (GCS) and Integration groups helped us complete

important safety and beautification projects at the Brewster campus and Boni-Bel Farm, saving Green Chimneys time and money in the process.

“PepsiCo has been a dedicated partner of Green Chimneys for over two decades,” says Green Chimneys Vice President of Development Kathryn Cousins. “In addition to efforts by its employee teams, we’ve been fortunate to have its executives serve as members of our Board of Directors, and currently benefit from the expertise of the company’s Vice President of Global Benefits, Greg Smith.”

PepsiCo’s commitment to Green Chimneys extends even further, with generous financial support creating lasting positive impact on programs and services year over year. We are truly grateful for this comprehensive partnership!



A winning entry from PepsiCo’s 2024 PEP+ photo contest, which highlights the company’s positive impact on the community.

Make a Difference and Volunteer!



Volunteers play an invaluable role in helping us fulfill our mission to provide educational and therapeutic support to youth with special needs in a nature-based environment. We host over 60 individual volunteers on our campus year-round, in addition to corporate teams.

More than 30 companies take part in our volunteer program each year, bringing 500 employees to work on projects such as painting and repairing fences, landscaping the farm and animal areas, and weeding and planting in our organic gardens. After completing the day’s tasks, volunteers enjoy lunch, and visit our Farm & Wildlife Center, home to over 300 animal and wildlife residents.

Please contact us at **845.279.2995 x1231** or go to greenchimneys.org/volunteer to learn more about how your company can give back through volunteering. We look forward to welcoming you to campus!

Celebrating Impact: Green Chimneys Gala Honorees

Impact Award Engelstad Foundation

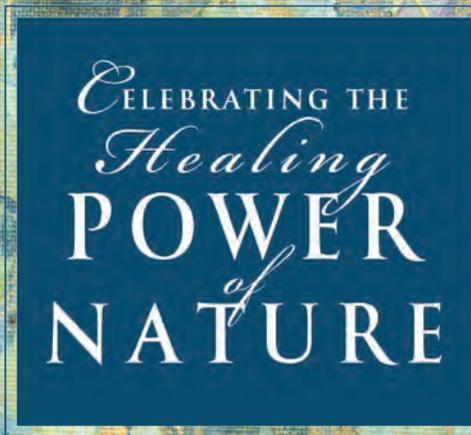
Congratulations to the Engelstad Foundation as the recipient of the 2025 Impact Award. Since 2020, the Foundation has been a powerful partner in helping Green Chimneys to provide vital academic and therapeutic programming for students with special needs, joining our mission at a time when students and families needed us most.

The Foundation's understanding of the issues faced by children with mental health challenges, and its commitment to supporting innovative nature-based therapies through generous general operating support, has directly benefited the youth and families that rely on our special education school and clinical treatment program.

The Engelstad Foundation was founded in 2002 by Ralph and Betty Engelstad, with the purpose of partnering to create solutions in medical research, improving day-to-day living for people with disabilities, and raising the possibilities for high-risk individuals. We are grateful for steadfast support that has helped our students to thrive, grow, and reach their full potential.



ENGELSTAD
FOUNDATION



The Green Chimneys Gala is coming May 8th!

Each year this event raises critical funds for innovative education and animal-assisted therapy programs for children with special needs, as well as for the care of our animal partners.

Join the celebration as we recognize the key individuals and organizations who are part of our students' success.

Visit greenchimneys.org/gala

Further your support with our online auction of unique and luxurious items.

Scan and start your bids.



Leadership in Service Donald Ross

The Green Chimneys Leadership in Service Award recognizes a group or individual that has consistently gone above and beyond in their service to Green Chimneys, through volunteerism or employment, resulting in contributions that have a profound impact on the organization and its mission.

This year we are particularly proud to honor Board Member Donald Ross. Don is the son of Green Chimneys Founders Sam and Myra Ross. He grew up on the farm and attended the school established by his parents. It was a natural part of his day to pitch in, tending to animals or taking care of the grounds, working side-by-side with his family.

Over the years, Don's commitment and leadership has resulted in millions of dollars of philanthropic support for Green Chimneys from foundations, corporations, and individuals around the world.



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Meet Morty!

Abandoned in the wild by his former owner, Mortimer—known as "Morty"—was rescued underweight and injured. At 20-25 years old, he is now in his golden years and faces arthritis, tendon injury, and circulation issues requiring daily care.

Thanks to our equine program focused on groundwork, our Horse Barn staff can provide him with the specialized support he needs, and include him as an important part of the program. Morty engages with students, teaching them about equine medical treatments, like laser therapy and wrapping, while enjoying their attention as they practice skills in leading, grooming, and behavior observation.

Each of our animal partners live a life of purpose at Green Chimneys.
Read more at greenchimneys.org/animal-partners

Stay up-to-date on everything happening at Green Chimneys; follow us at:



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Green Chimneys



Green Chimneys News