

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CONTACT

Russ Reno, Communications and Legislative Services, (office) 402-471-8287 or (cell) 402-450-7318, or [russ.reno@nebraska.gov](mailto:russ.reno@nebraska.gov)

## Girls at YRTC-Geneva Learn Life Lessons at J Bar D Ranch

**Geneva** – The past three months, six girls at the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center in Geneva have made their way to the J Bar D Ranch in Geneva for ‘horse therapy’ through the Equine Program.

The program offers youth the opportunity to learn life lessons such as, patience, coping skills in dealing with frustration, gaining respect by being fair and consistent, leadership, and boundaries. The youth work with yearling horses. Much of the initial time is focused on learning safety and equine psychology.

Four YRTC-Geneva youth spoke about the knowledge they gained through the program, including their greatest challenges, greatest moments, and greatest “life lesson.”

Through tears, one youth compared working with her horse to her family not giving up on her, so she therefore, was not going to give up on her horse.

Through their experiences with the horses, the girls developed and used personal management and critical thinking skills. They were taught “hands-on” ground work training, and together the horse and youth overcame their fears and gained confidence in themselves as a result. Through the program, the youth have gained more knowledge of animals, feel more comfortable around them along with a sense of accomplishment, and are able to take what they have learned and accomplished and apply it to life.

On June 26, after spending nearly 100 hours working with their horse, a public demonstration was held at the J Bar D Ranch.

The demonstration and program was facilitated by Jacki Wilkins, who owns the ranch with her husband, Jim. Over 80 people attended the program to show their support of the youth, which included 20 YRTC-Geneva staff, families of the youth, probation staff, a re-entry specialist, community advisory board members and even former YRTC employees.

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