

THOROUGHBRED CHARITIES OF AMERICA YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST

SQUARE PEG FOUNDATION-A PERFECT SANCTUARY FOR HORSES & HUMANS

“.....the problem with pounding a square peg into a round hole isn’t that the hammering is hard work – it’s that you’re destroying the peg.” (Paul Collins)

Dear Thoroughbred Charities of America Board Members,

My name is Aaron and I am 10 years old. I am writing to tell you about the most amazing place on earth. “Square Peg” in Half Moon Bay, California. Like many other kids with learning and coping disabilities, I was really struggling to find true “happiness” in my life. I had always connected with animals, as they are non-judgmental and always forgiving; horses, cows and dogs being my favorites. We cannot have an animal in our place, so my mom found out about Square Peg through my therapist at school. We did some research and loved the fact that its tagline was “Team Quirky” and its mission was to connect people and animals who don’t quite fit in. It is “home” to retired horses and we go to Square Peg because the horses need us. We went to check it out and it truly is everything you

would imagine a dream world to be; Horse-land (minus the unicorns according to my little sister).

What used to be boring Saturdays are now fun family day trips where we all go and enjoy the peaceful environment that is filled with the most gentle retired horses and caring humans. The humans have learned well from their animal friends and are extra understanding, patient, and kind. My parents used to hover around me nervously and now they see how good I am with the horses and how gentle they are with me, they go visit their favorite horses and I am free to be me!

My favorite horse is Ace, I like him the best, he is a total ham (a little like myself). He tries to eat me whenever I sit next to him, he really loves it when I bring him treats. When we arrive at Square Peg, I immediately run to visit Ace, then sometimes I ride Ace around the arena. Did I already mention how much Ace likes to eat a lot of food? He is super friendly and my pet horse.

I have been going to Square Peg for three years now and it always makes me excited to visit. As we drive there, I feel the excitement building in my tummy and I cannot wait to arrive. I feel welcome and accepted by the horses and the staff.

I know they do not care that I cannot hold a pencil or ride a bike. But, I can ride a horse and how cool is that! Sometimes at school when I am feeling down, I think about Square Peg and our next visit and it helps me to cope that day.

I would like to invite you to visit Square Peg as I think you need to see it for yourselves to believe how fantastic it is. I would be so excited to win this competition for Square Peg so they can do even more for kids and horses that don't fit into the right "hole". By the way, I read this essay to Ace and he tried to eat me in appreciation.