

In the News: Horse Network

Leigha Schrader: The Intern Who Never Left

DEFHR Trainer Leigha Schrader explains how horses have been her passion and her purpose — and the immeasurable ways in which the horses she has worked with have given back to her in this [Horse Network](#) article



Leigha Schrader with Zillow, who was rescued after being locked in a stall for years. **Photo by DEFHR**

As a child, I didn't ride or have any horse experience, but I was looking for a way to get involved with them. I saw that Days End Horse Farm Rescue (DEFHR), in Woodbine, MD, welcomed volunteers of all experience levels, and you could volunteer as young as 12 without a parent. Being 12, I decided to give it a try. From the first day, I was hooked.

After volunteering for a few months, I started taking riding lessons at a local lesson barn, while still volunteering at DEFHR from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both weekend days. I was really invested and learned so much from all the hands-on time that DEFHR offered. I started lessoning more, riding two or three times a week, but never gave up my volunteering.



Early days: Leigha with Zuzu, and riding DEFHR alumni, Diego

When I was a senior in high school, I started interning with DEFHR Head Trainer Sara Strauss, and we joke that I am the intern who never left. I learned more about starting horses under saddle, training, and working with green horses. I was then hired as DEFHR's assistant trainer in 2016; I am so thankful to work for an organization that has really invested in my development. I get to work with trainers across the country while developing my own training style and passions.

Training rescue horses is unlike other training because we don't choose the horses that come into our program, so we truly see it all. I have worked with elderly feral horses, horses that have not had good starts to their life, abuse cases — the full range.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Did You Know?

Every Friday at DEFHR, something special happens. Thanks to the continued partnership with [Norman's Farm Market](#), you can now pick up your box of fresh produce each Friday from our farm. Farm Fresh Fridays bring delicious, local produce to DEFHR's friends and neighbors.



Partnering with Norman's Farm Market means more than crunchy carrots and juicy tomatoes. It's a powerful reminder of how everything in a community is connected, with sustainable farming and animal welfare going hand in hoof. When you pick up your fresh food box at DEFHR, you're supporting both the land and the lives that depend on it — including over 75 rescue horses who call DEFHR home.

Choose DEFHR as your pickup location and swing by each Friday for fresh veggies, friendly faces, and the satisfaction of giving back.

[Sign Up Here](#)

Fall Obstacle Clinic and Fun Show: September 20

Get ready for a day of learning, fun, and friendly competition with personal coaching from the DEFHR trainers on Saturday, September 20. DEFHR is hosting an obstacle clinic and show, featuring an expansive obstacle course designed for both new and seasoned pairs. Receive personal coaching in a clinic format in the morning, with the fun show section in the afternoon, where you can compete for ribbons and prizes.



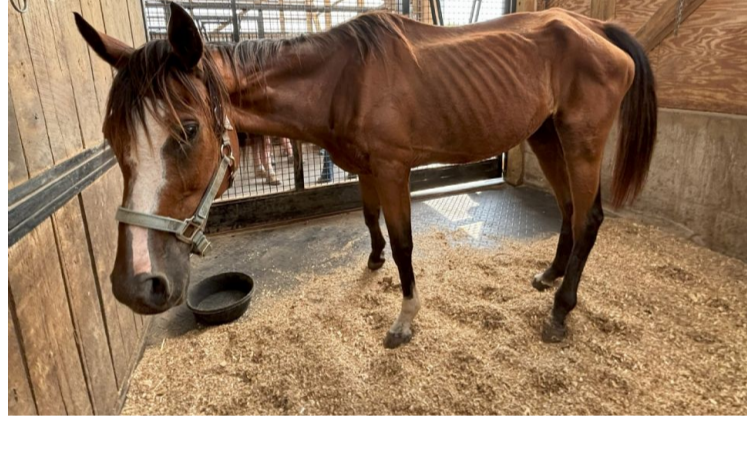
This is the perfect set-up for green horses or those looking to advance their horsemanship skills. DEFHR horses are available to borrow (for groundwork only) or trailer in your equine partner (for groundwork and/or riding through the course). Register now to secure your spot.

- Price: \$75/person

[Sign Up Here](#)

Tremendous Transformation: Azula's Allure

Azula's Allure arrived at DEFHR in July 2024 as part of a 19-horse impound from Queen Anne's County, MD. With a body condition score of one out of nine, Azula was the most critical of all the horses, suffering from malnutrition, dehydration, and overrun with parasites. She started on DEFHR's rehabilitation protocols, which can typically take four to six months to return a horse to ideal condition. For Azula, that timeline was doubled. Treated twice for gastric ulcers and vitamin E deficiencies, her body was able to regain muscle and fat.



With DEFHR's dedicated care and the support of compassionate donors, Azula has made an incredible recovery. Throughout her rehabilitation, Azula remained kind and patient. She is now thriving in DEFHR's training program and is almost ready for adoption.

[Support More Horses Like Azula](#)

[Horses Currently Available for Adoption](#)

Benefit Concert: October 4



On Saturday, October 4, DEFHR welcomes back The 19th Street Band and Patty Reese for our Benefit Concert on the front lawn at our Arts & Education Pavilion. This year's family-friendly concert will celebrate DEFHR's 36-year history in equine welfare. Enjoy food trucks, beer and wine, a fire pit, lawn games, and farm tours to meet the rescue horses.

Book a day out in the country during October's Maryland Horse Month and watch the sunset over our fields. All money raised supports the horses and enables DEFHR's life-saving work in the community.

[More Information and Buy Tickets](#)

Featured Horse of the Month: Zizi



Two-year-old 14.2hh Standardbred

ZiZi is an unbacked two-year-old mare with lots of untapped potential. She has a solid foundation in groundwork and will be ideally prepared to start her career under saddle in the next couple of years. In her groundwork with the DEFHR team, she has proven to be brave over and around obstacles, including tarps, bridges, and kiddie pools. She is very social and enjoys spending time with people. If you think you may be able to give this young mare a forever home where she can learn and flourish, please get in touch.

[More About Zizi](#)

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Share DEFHR's story! For media inquiries, editorial content, or interviews, please contact alice@jumpmediallc.com.

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