Shining Hope Farms

Annual Report Based on Fiscal Year 2025 (January – December)

Shining Hope Farms is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to enable children and adults to reach their full potential through the use of equine assisted activities and therapies.

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Annual Report Based on Fiscal Year 2025 (January – December)

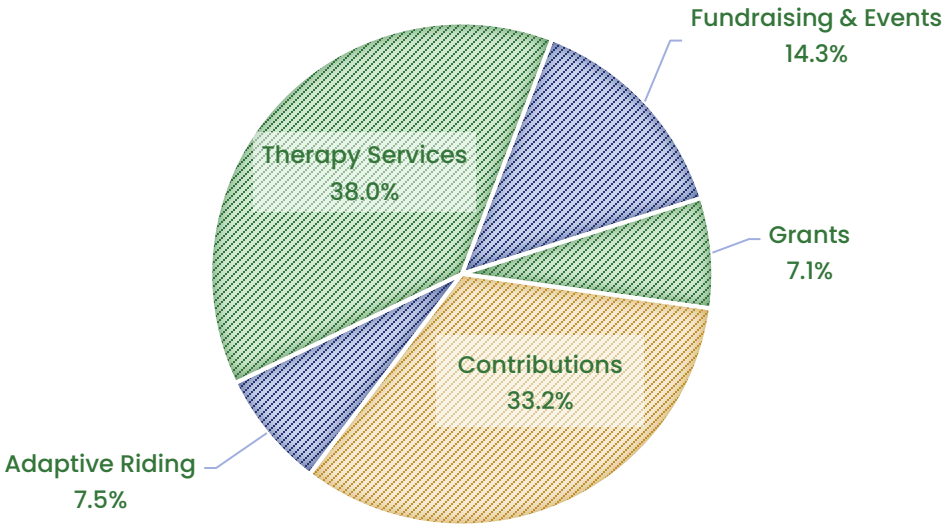
Financial Report

Total Revenue	$1,780,219
Total Expenses	$1,700,184
Revenue Less Expenses	$80,035

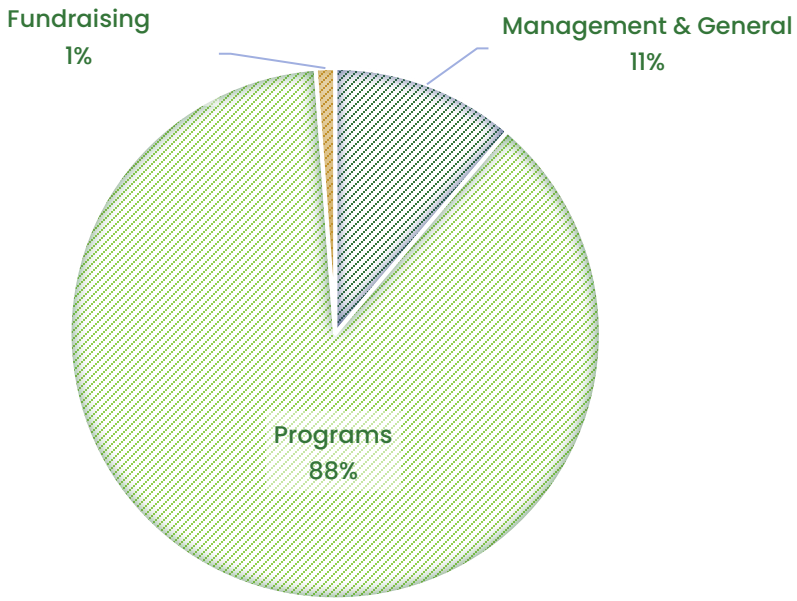
The cost to operate Shining Hope Farms for one day in 2025 was $4,658.

88 cents of every dollar was spent on our programs in 2025

INCOME



EXPENSES



2025 Audited Financial Statements Summary

Financial figures are derived from the 2025 Audited Financial Statements prepared by Foard & Company, P.A. Complete audited statements are available upon request or they can be found on our website at shininghopefarms.org/nonprofit/

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	December 31, 2025			2024 Prior Year Comparative Totals
SUPPORT AND REVENUE	**Without Donor Restrictions**	**With Donor Restrictions**	**TOTALS**	
Fees for service	837,223	-	837,223	575,208
Grants	120,582	-	120,582	73,261
Contributions	314,029	13,500	327,529	421,023
In-kind contributions	97,107	140,376	237,483	65,708
Fundraising & special events, (net of $48,921 direct benefit)	243,298	-	243,298	192,177
Investment income	8,594	-	8,594	11,039
Other income	5,510	-	5,510	5,539
Net assets released by restriction: Payment	18,682	(18,682)	-	-
Net assets released by restriction: Time	51,868	(51,868)	-	-
TOTAL	**1,696,893**	**83,326**	**1,780,219**	**1,343,955**
EXPENSES				
Program services	1,489,392	-	1,489,392	1,175,393
Management and general	190,843	-	190,843	201,589
Fundraising	19,949	-	19,949	26,229
TOTAL	**1,700,184**	**-**	**1,700,184**	**1,403,211**
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	**(3,291)**	**83,326**	**80,035**	**(59,256)**
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING	513,036	252,100	765,136	824,392
NET ASSETS, ENDING	**$509,745**	**$335,426**	**$845,171**	**$765,136**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	December 31,	
ASSETS	**2025**	**2024**
Current Assets:		
Cash	73,450	161,997
Receivables		
Promises to give	60,000	60,000
Other	57,941	23,189
Total Current Assets	**191,391**	**245,186**
Non-Current Assets:		
Beneficial interest	79,578	72,243
Promises to give, less current portion	265,608	177,100
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	589,610	570,397
Total Non-Current Assets	**934,796**	**819,740**
TOTAL ASSETS	**$1,126,187**	**$1,064,926**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	**2025**	**2024**
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	15,719	13,170
Credit cards payable	20,937	22,931
Payroll liabilities	36,566	50,028
Deferred revenue	5,280	
Notes payable (current portion)	14,174	55,264
Total Current Liabilities	**92,676**	**141,393**
Long-Term Liabilities:		
Notes payable (less current portion)	188,340	158,397
Total Liabilities	**281,016**	**299,790**
Net Assets:		
Without Donor Restrictions - Designated	79,578	72,243
Without Donor Restrictions - Undesignated	430,167	440,793
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	**509,745**	**513,036**
With Donor Restrictions	335,426	252,100
Total Net Assets	**845,171**	**765,136**
TOTAL	**$1,126,187**	**$1,064,926**

Our Programs in 2025

THERAPY SERVICES

Our THERAPY SERVICES PROGRAM is conducted by licensed healthcare professionals and includes clinical occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), speech-language pathology (SLP), and mental health counseling. Along with our onsite clinics and nature-based activities on our farms, these therapies often incorporate equine movement and/or interactions as treatment tools in the overall therapy plan.

For OT, PT, and SLP, the term hippotherapy refers to how OT, PT and SLP professionals use evidence-based practices and clinical reasoning in the purposeful manipulation of equine movement to engage in sensory, neuromotor and cognitive systems to achieve functional outcomes. When equine interactions are utilized in mental health counseling, the therapist leverages the equine as an incredibly helpful biofeedback tool with their patients.

In 2025, our Therapy Services Program served 451 patients over the course of 6,641 visits between our three locations.

An emphasis is placed on serving low-income families in the community, and the majority of the clients in 2025 were able to access our program without any out-of-pocket costs.

ADAPTIVE RIDING

Our ADAPTIVE RIDING PROGRAM provides goal-oriented, recreational group or private lessons and is conducted by a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International certified riding instructor. Clients typically have a physical or cognitive disability and participate in games and activities while learning riding and horsemanship skills. Improvements are made in the areas of emotional stability,

social interaction, cognition and physical abilities. A horse leader and side-walkers assist the riders, which provide an enjoyable social environment.

In 2025, our Adaptive Riding Program served 96 clients over the course of 1,704 lessons, most on a weekly basis.

In order to serve the low-income community, lessons are provided at an affordable rate and scholarships are offered when necessary.

SADDLES & SALUTES

SADDLES AND SALUTES is a program at Shining Hope Farms that serves Veterans as a part of their community support system for Veteran wellness. Our goal is to help the Veteran thrive in the process of re-integrating from a military community to a civilian community through equine-assisted services (EAS). Veterans are given the opportunity to decide which of our EAS offerings they feel would be the best fit for them on their wellness journey. Primarily, Veterans choose from adaptive riding and mental health counseling in a private or group setting with other Veterans.

In 2025 we served 19 Veterans through adaptive riding over 287 sessions. All Veterans were able to access our program free of charge which is made possible by a partnership with the Wounded Warriors Foundation, grant opportunities and extensive fundraising efforts including our annual 5K/10K Salute Trail Run to provide scholarships.

Our program finds success in a number of factors, including the following:

1. Research shows the positive effects of EAS on Veterans' physical, mental, and emotional wellness.
2. We're providing Veterans with a fun and motivating approach to wellness.

3. We are giving Veterans an option as to which type of service is best for them (recreational but goal-oriented and therapeutic in nature, or actual mental health counseling that is still engaging and motivating with its equine component).
4. We offer the opportunity for camaraderie with other Veterans, an important component that can be healing in and of itself.
5. We also offer additional opportunities for engagement for Veterans where they can "stick around" after a session (or come another time) to volunteer in the barn or in our other programs for individuals with disabilities. This is an opportunity that many of our Veterans have enjoyed and found purpose in.
6. Veterans have the opportunity to build a relationship and trust with a non-threatening being (the horse vs. a person), an often much gentler and less-threatening way to gain confidence in rebuilding these skills in their personal lives.
7. We provide a Veteran with a structured, standards-based environment which is often comforting and familiar to a Veteran. It also reminds them and gives them confidence that they're able to successfully complete tasks which they can then translate into everyday life.
8. We are removing the financial barrier to obtaining these elective services.

EQUINE-ASSISTED LEARNING

In 2025 we formally launched our EQUINE-ASSISTED LEARNING program. Through this program we serve individuals and groups through using horses in an unmounted capacity to work on skills that include but are not limited to skill building, leadership, team building, education, and communication. We use a six, eight, or twelve-week curriculum that focuses on these areas of expertise. Some of the activities that are included in these curricula are learning horsemanship skills through games, working together as a team to get you and your horse through an obstacle course that varies in difficulty, or even guiding the horse through something that might be hard for the horse to understand.

As part of our Equine-Assisted Learning services, in 2025, we expanded our community reach by launching a meaningful new partnership with the Catawba County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC). This council is dedicated to providing local, community-based intervention strategies for a wide spectrum of youth—ranging from those identified as highly at-risk, to those whose challenges have already escalated into active court involvement or probation.

Our initiative directly addresses a critical gap in the Catawba County service continuum. While traditional, office-based family counseling is available, there has been a deficit in active, experiential programs that engage the juvenile and their support network in a shared environment. We fill this need by providing intensive Family Skill Building Sessions utilizing our unique Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) model.

Rooted in the "Do-Reflect-Apply" Experiential Learning Cycle and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks, our program uses the natural partnership between humans and horses to cultivate behavioral change. In the arena, horses provide

immediate, non-judgmental "biofeedback" to a participant's non-verbal cues. If a youth exhibits aggression or dysregulation, the horse retreats; when they exhibit calm, assertive leadership, the horse follows. This physical mirror teaches immediate emotional regulation and guides families to break down walls, practice accountability, and mend communication gaps together.

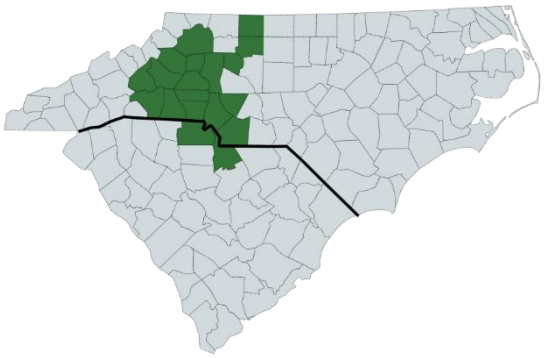
By wrapping support around the entire family unit in a non-traditional setting, we help transition these lessons from the arena back into the home to prevent further justice-system involvement. In our very first year, we were honored to successfully guide 9 local families through 44 intensive sessions, proving that with innovative, restorative support, transformation is always possible.

Our Participants

Primary Diagnoses/Disabilities Served/Treated Include:

Cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, developmental disabilities, brain injuries, hypotonia, and mental health support

The majority of our patients received no bills for therapy in 2025.



Counties Served in North and South Carolina:

Alexander, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Iredell, Lancaster (SC), Lincoln, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Rutherford, Stokes, Union, Wilkes, York (SC)

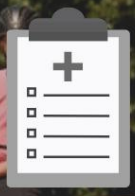
Let's Do the Numbers

2025 Year in Review

583 clients were served in our programs **583**

500 500 volunteers faithfully served Shining Hope Farms, our clients, and horses

25 horses worked in our Therapy Services and Adaptive Riding programs **25**



6,641 6,641 physical, occupational, speech, and mental health therapy visits were conducted

We conducted services at 3 locations in 2025. At SHF facilities in Mt. Holly, Charlotte, and Conover, NC **3**

1,991 1,991 adaptive riding lessons were conducted including 287 Veteran lessons as part of our Saddles & Salutes program

19 Veterans received scholarships and were able to participate in our Saddles & Salutes program free of charge **19**

Our Stories

MEET WYOMI

When Wyomi first arrived at our farm, her mobility and daily functions were severely limited. She could only manage an army crawl, she struggled significantly with eating, she was unable to stand, and independent walking felt entirely out of reach.

However, everything changed when she was paired with her dedicated care team: Jessie (her physical therapist), her speech therapist, and a special, one-eyed therapy horse named Tucker.

Through the unique power of hippotherapy (using the purposeful movement of a horse to achieve therapeutic goals) and the continuous support of our therapists, Wyomi began to defy expectations. The progression of her strength and confidence has been nothing short of incredible:

- First came standing independently.
- Then came cruising, as she began confidently sidestepping along the couch at home.
- Today, she is moving with a walker, exploring the world with a newfound strength she never knew she had.

Reflecting on this remarkable transformation, Wyomi's mother shared, "Her progress has been wonderful… just to see her do the things she wasn't able to do."

Notables

A Historic Leadership Transition & Honoring Our Founder's 23-Year Legacy

As a natural step in Shining Hope Farms' long-term governance strategy, 2025 marked a monumental milestone as Founder Milinda Kirkpatrick stepped into her new role as Founder and Executive Director Emeritus, passing the leadership baton to Patrice Gibson as Executive Director. Founded in 2002 out of Milinda's deep personal connection to disability, love for horses, and selfless resolve—including selling her own family home to acquire and rebuild the original Mt. Holly property—Shining Hope Farms grew under her 23 years of tireless dedication from a single heartfelt mission into a premier, multi-location healthcare nonprofit. Building upon this extraordinary legacy of compassion, grit, and community impact, Patrice Gibson—who joined as Development Director in 2020 and helped propel the organization past $1 million in annual revenue—now leads Shining Hope Farms into its next chapter of strategic expansion.

Record Financial Growth & Strengthened Fiscal Sustainability

Under Patrice Gibson's leadership, the organization achieved strong financial results during the 2025 fiscal year:

- **Revenue Surge:** Total revenue grew to $1,774,094 (up 32.9% from $1,335,137 in 2024), fueled by strong growth in both contributions/grants and services.
- **Return to Net Operating Surplus:** While strategic investments in clinical staff and new programming expanded operating expenses to support higher patient volumes, revenue growth outpaced costs—shifting the organization from a -$59,256 deficit in 2024 to a +$80,035 net operating surplus in 2025.

32.5% Revenue Growth

- **Debt Reduction & Balance Sheet Strength:** Total liabilities were reduced by $18,774 (down to $281,016), building total net assets to $845,171 and reinforcing Shining Hope Farms' Candid Platinum Seal status.

Expanded Clinical Capacity:

First Full-Time Mental Health Therapist

To meet the escalating demand for mental health support in the Charlotte metro region we welcomed Alexis Sabul, LCSWA, CCM, as our first full-time mental health therapist. Operating out of the Charlotte location, Alexis leads the mental health counseling discipline, expanding our capacity to deliver therapy to individuals, youth, and families.

Launch of the "Care for the Caregiver" Initiative

Recognizing the unspoken burdens carried by families of individuals with special needs, We formally launched our Care for the Caregiver program. Designed to combat burnout and promote mental wellness, this program offers dedicated, restorative sessions specifically tailored for primary caregivers, granting them a supportive space to recharge and focus on their own well-being.

In 2025 we were fortunate to receive grants from the following organizations:

- **Catawba County JCPC** to provide equine assisted learning services to at-risk youth
- **Catawba Valley Community Foundation** to support our mental health services at our Conover location.
- **Corning Foundation** to support our Therapy Services Program

- The **Harold T. Sumner fund at the Gaston Community Foundation** for ConTiGO training for our therapists (a nature-based pediatric therapy certification & mentoring program)
- The **LEEPS Foundation** to complete the construction of a shed for our farrier to conduct his services out of the way of our program operations at our Mt. Holly farm
- The **Lincoln County Community Foundation** to ensure Lincoln County clients have affordable access to our equine-assisted therapies
- The **North Mecklenburg Women's Club,** which went to support our Therapy Services Program
- The **Patrick O'Leary and Karen Yamaski Charitable Foundation**
- The **Rosendin Foundation** to support our Therapy Services Program
- The **Speedway Children's Charity** to support our pediatric Therapy Services Program
- **Telus Agriculture & Consumer Goods** for outdoor farm enhancements for our nature-based therapy services
- The **Underdown Foundation** to support our Therapy Services Program at our Conover location
- The **Unifour Foundation** to support our mental health services at our Conover location
- **United Way of Lincoln County** to support our Therapy Services Program for Lincoln County participants

We are grateful for the support of our contributors who help to make this possible.

Our 2025 Leadership

Board of Directors

Kari Saylor, CPA
Board Chair / Treasurer

Sheila Gibson
Vice-Chair / Secretary

Patrice Gibson
(Non-Voting Executive Director)

Claire Chadwick	Alex Bogojevich	Meagan Wrigley, CPA
Jean Penner	Dr. Kevin Monroe	Connie Bowman
Kristen Kannen	Cathy Neufeldt	Courtney Stuckey Jones
Claudia Restrepo-Gartner	Tres Wooldridge	Milinda Kirkpatrick (Non-Voting Founder)

Chief Administrative Personnel

Patrice Gibson
Executive Director

Jessamyn Farrell
Assistant Director

Morgan Helms
Director of Programs

SHINING HOPE FARMS