

The Shea Center is dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs.

Abigail's Story

If you have ever seen grown adults walking around The Shea Center in tutus and crowns, they were most likely client Abigail's volunteer team celebrating her birthday. Abigail, age 13, is The Shea Center's fashionista. She likes to dress up and wear fancy clothes, especially during the holiday season.

Abigail has a great sense of humor and she loves her volunteers. Don, Jan, Dixie, Bonnie, and Raquel, who are very supportive and encouraging, and bring new jokes to share with her each week.

Diagnosed with a rare brain malformation called schizencephaly that affects her motor skills and speech, Abigail first arrived at Shea at age three and at the time, was unable to sit up straight on a horse. After riding for just a year, Abigail's self-confidence improved so much she was performing exercises on the horse that she previously wouldn't have tried on the ground.

Abigail's physical therapist Jen Hawke, notes, "Abigail currently rides two times per week through our physical therapy utilizing hippotherapy and adaptive riding programs. In physical therapy she works on the postural control, core strength, and upper body mobility needed for her to be a successful student and teenage girl through therapeutic activities and purposeful manipulation of equine movement. In adaptive riding she learns riding skills such as stopping her horse and two-point."

Due to schizencephaly, the focus of Abigail's therapy and adaptive riding teams is to maintain her independence and mobility. Her teams celebrate each of her successes, such as more upright posture, holding her reins, and mastering the trot. Due to the nature of Abigail's diagnosis, she has secondary impairments of scoliosis and instability in her hip joints. Through riding, Abigail realizes improvements in posture and balance, resulting in improved confidence. Abigail has limited control of the muscles involved in speech causing it to be slurred, but her family and teams at Shea understand her.

Abigail's mother, Allison, says at this point, their goal is to maintain the progress Abigail has made, and thankfully to date, she has not had to have surgery.

Abigail's adaptive riding instructor, Jamie Smartt, remarks, "Abigail is one of the most motivated riders I have worked with at The Shea Center. I have her perform tasks on her horse that will help her build her core strength and balance, which is very important in riding, as well as everyday life."

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Jamie continues, "Abigail meets every challenge and typically goes beyond any expectation I set for her. If I ask her to hold her two-point position at the walk for 10 strides, she will hold it for 20. Abigail not only continuously works on bettering herself but is also very competitive! During games and races, Abigail is always a very good sport and makes sure to cheer on her peers. This passion for riding and overall joy is inspiring to witness every week, not only for me, but her entire volunteer team."

Allison says, "A favorite part of riding for Abigail, other than playing games, is steering her horse through obstacle courses, which engages her and helps with planning. She likes to bring apples and carrots to feed the horses and also enjoys trail rides, barn walks, and visiting the new horses."

At The Shea Center, Abigail is free to ride, to play, and be just like everyone else. She has had the opportunity to participate in a fun and social activity that has also helped her grow and maintain her strength and independence.

Allison and Abigail's grandmother, Carol, both comment on how the staff and volunteers at The Shea Center are so helpful. Allison says, "I would not trust anyone else to put my daughter on a horse. Here, I don't worry. If something happens, the staff and sidewalkers know exactly what to do. The Shea Center is an amazing place; we are really lucky to be here."

Captions clockwise from left:

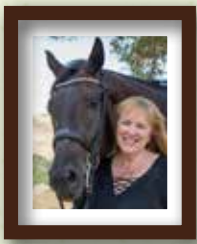
- At age 3, Abigail receives her first riding ribbon.
- Abigail with her friend Tess.
- The adaptive riding team: Jan, Sydney, and Don with Abigail



> Read more Shea Center client stories on our blog at SheaCenter.org/blog.

"The Shea Center is an amazing place; we are really lucky to be here."

~ Allison, Abigail's mother



Message from CEO Dana Butler-Moburg

"Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has."

~ Margaret Mead

Exceptional times require exceptional leaders. During the past four years, Susan Chaney-Purel has been our board chair and this past April at our Annual Meeting, Susan was chosen to lead The Shea Center board of directors for a third term, joining an elite group of Shea Center board chairs who have served three, two-year terms when the norm is two, two-year terms as a board chair.

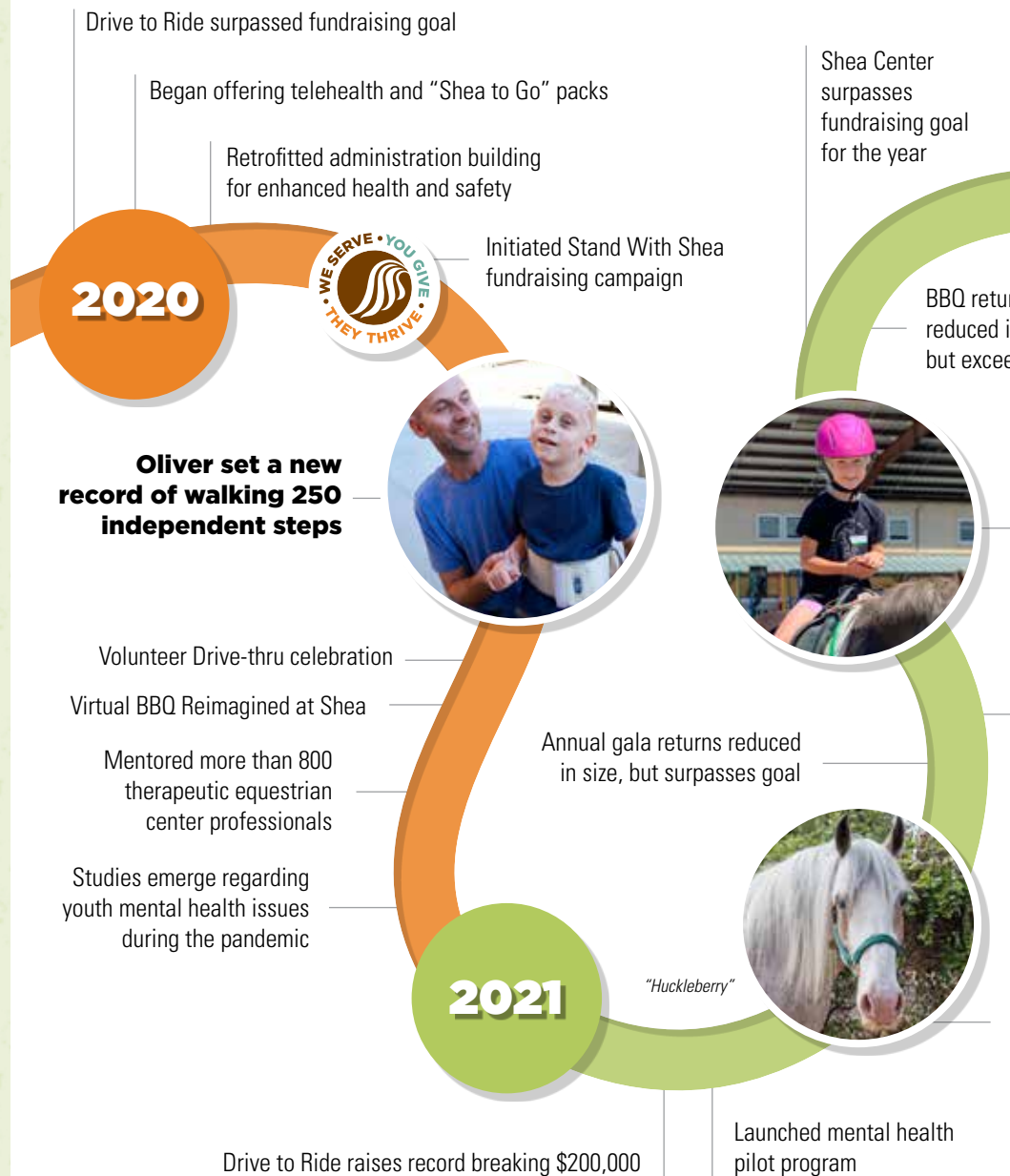
We also celebrated Susan's commitment to The Shea Center at our annual gala this past June. Her example of servant leadership is one that continues to benefit her exceptional board peers, but also manifests in the direct and positive impact on our clients through her advocacy on their behalf. You can view Susan's tribute video at: [YouTube.com/user/TheSheaCenter/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheSheaCenter/videos)

In the past two years, we have welcomed new board leaders to our midst. They join a tremendous group of leaders who continue to serve the mission of The Shea Center with distinction, honor and dedication. We are ever-grateful for those who serve – and have served – The Shea Center's clients through their time, treasure and talent so generously shared.

In any discussion of leadership within a nonprofit organization, professional staff are at the forefront of my mind. We've recently been chosen for a second year in a row as an Orange County Business Journal Best Places to Work. (Only three nonprofits were on the entire list.) For the past 25 years I have been at The Shea Center, the accomplishments we have been able to achieve have been the result of the partnership between outstanding staff and board leadership. It continues to be an honor to steward this organization as the CEO, but most especially, to see firsthand the transformative power of a group of people committed to changing the world for persons with disabilities through therapeutic equestrian programs.

Dana
Dana Butler-Moburg,
CEO

To our Shea Center News readers, we paused the publication of the printed form of our newsletter during 2020 – 2021, but increased our electronic and social media presence to keep up with the pandemic's affect on our need to be agile and flexible to serve our clients. Included here are brief highlights of the past two years. Behind these highlights remains a steadfast commitment to serve our clients and families and the recognition that our staff, donor and volunteer partners make that and more possible.



Holiday Giving to The Shea Center

As you make your giving plans this holiday season, please keep The Shea Center in mind. Purchase equipment, fund financial aid, sponsor a class, sponsor a client, or simply provide the precious gift of support to help others. The Shea Center's mission to improve the lives of people with disabilities is made possible by the generosity of our supporters.

Contact Agnes McGlone Swanson at 949-240-8441 x126

J. F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center Board of Directors

Officers

Susan Chaney-Purel — Board Chair; Community Leader ***

Bonnie Eastman — Vice Chair — Development; Bonnie Gonzales Interiors

Tony Gregory — Vice Chair — Planning; Custom Goods, LLC

Amber Offield — Secretary, Community Leader

Greg Talbott — Treasurer; Adelfi

John M. Frank — Immediate Past Board Chair; John M. Frank Construction, Founder & CEO **

Gilbert Aguirre — Member at Large; Rancho Mission Viejo, EVP of Ranch Operations

Mark Aldrich — Member at Large; Aldrich & Bonnefin, PLC, Past Board Chair ***

Jack Godard — Past Board Chair **

Monsignor Art Holquin — Member at Large, Pastor-Emeritus of Mission Basilica San Juan Capistrano

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Members at Large

Meg Appelgate — Gochbauer Family Foundation, CEO, Unsilenced*

Bryan Coniglio — Fidelity National Title*

Jeff Cunningham — Shea Properties

Penny Fosheim — Community Leader*

Carol Fox — Orange County Business Journal*

Marcia Jager — Community Leader; Past Board Chair**

Betsy King — Community Leader, Shea Center Volunteer*

Pam Moellenhoff — Community Leader

Paul O'Mara — Union Bank

Julianna Pyott — Community Leader

Jill Schriber — Community Leader

Aron Taylor — GMU Geotechnical, Inc.*

Jim Washburn — Community Leader

Key Staff Members

Dana Butler-Moburg — CEO

Wallace Chan — Chief Operating Officer

Agnes McGlone Swanson — Chief Development Officer

Janelle Robinson, PT — Chief Program Officer

* new board leaders in the past two years

** past board chairs

*** board chairs who have served three terms

Program services continue to grow year over year

Hosted in 2022:

- Exceptional Family Member Program event
- Foster Families Day
- Beyond Blindness Program event

| | Total Client Service Hours | Military Service Hours |
|----------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 2020 | 8,416 | 1,143 |
| 2021 | 14,024 | 2,742 |
| Projected 2022 | 16,180 | 3,324 |



BBQ and Family Faire returns at maximum capacity at The Shea Center

Gala returns at maximum capacity at Montage Laguna Beach and breaks all previous gala fundraising records

Awards:

- Five "Best of San Juan" People's Choice awards including "Best Annual Event" for the BBQ
- "Best Special Needs Camp" & "Best Special Needs Therapy" from *ParentingOC*
- *Orange County Business Journal* "Best Places to Work"

Awards:

- "Best Special Needs Activity" from *ParentingOC*
- Four "Best of San Juan" People's Choice awards
- *Orange County Business Journal* "Best Places to Work"

Expanded community outreach/support including first responders



2022

Kapono's fine motor skills are improving and he can now button and unbutton



Swallows Day Parade returns

Established permanent mental health program



...ns
...n size,
...eds goal

Sayler is overcoming her stutter through speech therapy

Summer camp returns

In 13 years, the Drive to Ride campaign has raised over \$1.7 million

Developing horse donation shortage.

First horse purchase by Knights of Columbus, Orange County Chapter

Shea Center in mind. Consider a gift for someone you love by contributing to help
sor a horse; all of these and other thoughtful gifts will make a lasting difference
change lives. We are thankful for our many friends who partner in support of
ities through therapeutic horse-related programs.

for more information on how to make a year-end or holiday gift.

SAVE THE DATES!

Annual Gala – June 17, 2023
Swallows Day Parade – March 25, 2023
Annual BBQ – September 23, 2023



A Tribute to Fran Joswick

After a long life devoted to the service of others, we are sad to share of the passing of Fran Joswick on July 22, 2022 at her home in Sequim, WA. Fran was our founding executive director who, along with our founding board leaders Derek and Nancy Lewis, started the Orange County Riding Center (OCRC), The Shea Center's original name, in 1978.

We are lucky we were able to celebrate The Shea Center's 40th anniversary at the Annual BBQ and Family Faire in 2018 with Fran in attendance as our guest of honor. She met many of our staff, volunteers, clients, and horses and saw the real-life impact of her life's work.

It all started in 1978, when Fran, a licensed Master Social Worker and ardent equestrienne was able to connect with the first therapeutic riding center in Michigan. She wanted to start something similar in Southern California and united with Nancy and Derek Lewis to found Orange County Riding Center, Inc.

Our first rider was Michael Lewis – Derek and Nancy's son. With a shared passion for serving persons with disabilities with the unique nature of equine assisted services, Fran, her husband Jerry, and the Lewis family found a common purpose that united them.

"Building the program and finding community support for the Joswick Center was Fran's priority," says her daughter Beth Evans. "The riding center was the air our family breathed."

The Shea Center has had three locations: a stable in Mission Viejo, then a facility off of Ortega Highway and then eventually we moved to our current San Juan Capistrano location in 1983. In 1989 when Fran retired and was planning her move to Hawaii, OCRC was named in her honor as the Fran Joswick Therapeutic Riding Center.

"Building the program and finding community support for the Joswick Center was Fran's priority..."

In 2002, when the J.F. Shea Co., Inc. donated the land where the Center is located to enable a permanent home, we were renamed the J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center, home of the Fran Joswick Program. Fran was characteristically selfless in her response

to the new name citing that the most important thing was for the program to have stability and a permanent home, and of course was thankful and praised the generosity of the donation.

The Shea Center celebrates 45 years in 2023 and we are deeply grateful for Fran's vision and tenacity, her selflessness, for her husband and family's unending support, and for the foundation laid for the thousands of lives touched each year by The Shea Center. We thank and honor Fran for her selfless dedication. Her positive impact continues to be felt each day in the commitment to excellence and passion for service to persons with disabilities. Fran is survived by two of her three children, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Thank you, Fran . . .

