

Press Release

21st March 2015



'Get Going' at Greatwood

Established in 1993, Greatwood is the longest standing racehorse welfare charity in the UK and the only organisation that uses ex-racehorses to educate disadvantaged children and young adults aged 5-24 with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities.

'Changing Lives...Creating Futures'

Greatwood's 'Get Going' innovative intensive educational programme develops key workplace skills for NEETS (not in employment, education or training), who potentially may have struggled at school; have been in care; are long-term unemployed; or have been in trouble with the law. Get Going is an intensive British Horseracing Education & Standards Trust (BHE&ST) accredited course and provides an introduction to careers with horses and the horse racing industry with an Entry Level 2 Award in Assisting with Basic Care of Horses.

James' Success Story



The Druid's Nephew, 10th March 2015
Winner of the Ultima Business Solutions Handicap Chase (Grade 3)

Just three years on from his first ever contact with a racehorse at [Greatwood Charity](#), James has realised a dream that few ever do – leading in a Cheltenham Festival winner.

"Before I went to Greatwood I had never had any contact with horses but as soon as I walked through the gates I knew that I wanted to work with horses for the rest of my life"

James attended Greatwood's Get Going programme during the summer of 2012; James came to the charity from the Amber Foundation (a residential charity that offers a fresh start to homeless unemployed young adults and helps them gain employment and accommodation) via the Princes Trust.

"I was living in a hostel when I met someone that had been to the Northern Racing College (NRC) when my ears pricked up and I thought that may be something I would like to do. Also when I got talking about racing one of the members of staff at the hostel informed me that he used to be a jockey. Through the Princes Trust I went to [Greatwood](#) where they gave me the opportunity to apply to come to the NRC on their 12 week residential foundation course."

After successfully completing the Get Going programme and gaining an accredited qualification in 'Basic Care of Horses', through Greatwood James was then given a place at the NRC. ***"My first week was really interesting and I liked the fact that they had you doing everything from mucking out to riding within the first week. I'm not so keen on the mucking out but when I rode for the first time it makes the mucking out well worth it! The first 6 weeks have gone so quickly I can't believe it, I'm looking forward to the next 6 weeks of working hard and getting a placement with a racehorse trainer as I now know it is definitely what I want to do!"***

After completing 12 weeks at the NRC, James successfully gained more qualifications and subsequently went on to secure full time employment and now has a career within the racing industry. Now working for Bath based trainer, Neil Mulholland, James is going from strength to strength and is in charge of Festival winning **The Druid's Nephew** who is now vying for the most illustrious prize in National Hunt racing with an entry in the **Crabbies Grand National** next month.

Speaking to James at Newbury Racecourse on Friday 20th March, he had this to say about Greatwood Charity and his career in racing:

"Before I went to Greatwood I had never had any contact with horses but as soon as I walked through the gates I knew that I wanted to work with horses for the rest of my life"



The Get Going programme, along with the other five educational courses on offer at Greatwood, has produced more inspiring stories, just like James':

- **Ashley W** – just like James, Ashley also came to Greatwood from the Amber Foundation, in April 2014. Directly after completing the programme at Greatwood, Ashley went to Bulgaria to volunteer in an orphanage for 3 months. After returning to the UK, Ashley was accepted and completed a RONA sailing course last August. Ashley is now enrolled on a course at the Northern Racing School and hopes to start a career in the racing industry after completing the course in 2015.
- ***'Kerry, 17, from Swindon has experienced family troubles during her time at school which disrupted her education. As a result Kerry underachieved at school. She also experienced bullying and found her self-esteem and confidence was very low and she found that she was depressed. Kerry was extremely shy and found new social situations very scary. Kerry had always had an affinity with horses and when she heard about the Get Going course she immediately showed interest. Kerry felt very intimidated by the large group but after the taster day she felt more at ease with the group. She attended the Greatwood programme and completed the Level 2 Horse Care qualification attached to the week. Completing the week long course represents a huge achievement in itself for Kerry. But she surpassed herself and went on to join the Princes Trust Team programme. She is now in week 9 of the Team programme and is feeling more confident and has come out of her shell and has made more friends. She feels she can achieve her goals now and wishes to go on and volunteer.'*** Jaison Van Den Bosch, Programme Executive, The Prince's Trust Bristol Centre
- ***"I am writing to express both my appreciation and my gratitude for all the wonderful work that you do supporting children in Wiltshire with significant social, behavioural and emotional needs... The impact of your interventions can be significant in raising these children's self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. It helps develop their learning and their ability to learn new skills through listening, following instructions and co-operating."*** Strategy Manager Primary Behaviour Support, Wiltshire Council.
- ***"Our students attending the Horse Power programme at Greatwood have found their voice. It has developed their communication, confidence and self-esteem, providing a safe, whilst challenging environment to enhance their learning potential."*** Vivienne Fitton, Inclusion Co-ordinator, Devizes School.



EDITOR'S NOTES

Established in 1993, Greatwood is the longest standing racehorse welfare charity in the UK and the only organisation that uses ex-racehorses to educate disadvantaged children and young adults with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND) through Equine Assisted Therapy. Greatwood is also the only racehorse welfare charity that does not have criteria for entry; the charity will never turn away a horse at risk; in danger of neglect; or suffering. Greatwood operates a 'Cycle of Rehabilitation and Change': horses helping young people & young people helping horses.

As a Wiltshire Council Accredited Alternative Provider of Special Educational Needs programmes, Greatwood offers a variety of unique resources to schools, teachers, parents, carers and local authorities to meet the needs of vulnerable and 'at risk' children and young people aged 5-24 in the community. Greatwood works with children and young adults with a variety of SEND ranging, but not limited to: autism, ADHD, Down Syndrome, Global Development Delay, Attachment Disorder, Asperger Syndrome as well as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The charity aims to help those who are, or have previously struggled in mainstream education.

Greatwood's SEN Programmes aim to:

- Provide socially inclusive opportunities to transform the lives of disadvantaged young people from challenging environments by re-engaging them back into education/training/work.
- Offer young people wider horizons by providing a unique learning and sensory experience.
- Educate young people with first hand experiences of farming, animal welfare and horticulture.
- Identify future job opportunities by bringing alive the countryside as a place of work and understanding the career landscape.
- Work towards reducing young people at risk of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training); crime; anti-social behaviour by offering children and young people a fuller meaning to their lives as well as enhancing their appreciation of and respect of others.



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For photographs from our extensive library, interviews or more information,
Please contact Sasha Thorbek-Hooper on fundraiser@greatwoodcharity.org

Photographic acknowledgement: with grateful thanks to GJ Multimedia

Links:

- Greatwood Charity: www.greatwoodcharity.org
- The Amber Foundation: <http://www.amberweb.org>