

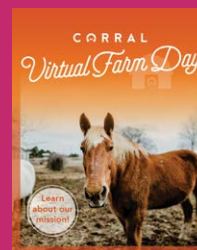


## *This Community is* **AMPLIFYING** *the Voices of Our Girls*

This past October, CORRAL set out to amplify the voices of our girls after hearing that the majority of them didn't feel truly heard outside of CORRAL. The journey began with *A Leg Up*, a collection of short stories and poetry written by the CORRAL girls and published by partner NCSU's Literacy and Community Initiative in the spring of 2020. Then, in December, we held *A Night of Stories*, a virtual fundraiser to provide a space for our girls to share their stories publicly. This was a huge step in their healing journeys as it required deep vulnerability to share such personal experiences. More than 200 community members tuned in live to hear our girls on this unforgettable evening.

Thank you to our matching donors, including 4Others Foundation, and 456 CORRAL champions who collectively raised \$320,609 during the holiday season to secure a second semester of services for our girls. The impact of your gifts is already visible. Our Neuse River Campus girls' average GPA has climbed 40+ points and stands at 82 percent. And, our Cary girls just hit a record-high 89 percent average GPA. But beyond academics, they're learning to advocate for their needs and making tremendous progress in their emotional intelligence goals. Knowing they are thriving in this environment despite the ongoing challenges brought forth by the pandemic, we are *turning up the volume* with our spring fundraiser: Walk.Run.Ride for CORRAL to continue to meet our girls' needs that aren't being met elsewhere.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### VIRTUAL FARM DAYS

Saturday, May  
15th: 9:30–11am

Saturday, June  
19th: 9:30–11am

This is a great first-timer event for anyone who is interested in learning more about our mission and getting involved as a volunteer, supporter or networker. You'll go on a virtual farm tour, hear from our founder and find out about the various volunteer opportunities and other ways to get involved. Sign up in advance at [corralriding.org/events](https://corralriding.org/events)



### WALK.RUN. RIDE FOR CORRAL

Friday, May  
21st–28th

Join the entire CORRAL community in continuing to amplify the voices of girls through CORRAL's first-ever virtual 5K! Pick a day(s) during the week to walk, run or ride a 5K or more in support of our girls at your location of choice. Register today as either an individual or team fundraiser to help us meet our total goal of \$100K. We will equip you with all the fundraising tools you need to help you hit your goal! Learn more and register at [CORRAL5K.com](https://CORRAL5K.com).

# RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

*By Carson Magno*



I grew up being bullied severely. They would call me fat, not good enough, and laugh at my speech impairment. They would mock me for my anxiety, calling me a “pathetic, drama queen” and “stupid” for my ADD. I was picked on so much that it led to a panic attack. As early as age six, I developed a passion for animals, which was somehow seen as a negative trait. I was called “a pet killer” because my friends and I tried to domesticate wild frogs. My dad created a waterfall pond to attract frogs, and I’d turn them into pets. All I wanted to do was take care of them, not knowing that it wouldn’t work. I was so afraid of getting close to people that I pushed myself into a corner, hoping people might forget me. I was very lonely and broken, and I eventually became suicidal: my anxiety, my depression, the bullying. I wanted a quick out. Before CORRAL, I thought I was worthless, unloveable and a disappointment to society.

On my first day at CORRAL, I remember seeing big beautiful oak trees blocking the sun and a wooden round pen. It was the first time I felt at peace. In the barn, I found a group of teenagers, like myself, and a group of older women. I instantly put my guard up, as I was used to doing, and started to fidget and slightly panic. I put myself in the furthest corner I could and spoke in the lowest level I could without being rude. We started out introducing ourselves. I remember the staff saying to use animals that start with the first letter of our names; since my name is Carson, I used Cougar.

And, then, there they were: I saw the horses for the first time! I held my breath, and my eyes got wide in amazement. There were a total of 12 horses, all grazing peacefully, and all with one eye on us — aware of who we were and why we were there. I felt my body slowly start to calm down. The adults welcomed us into the field, and I slowly made my way to the biggest horse there. Still to this day, I don’t know how I was drawn to this horse but at that moment, I knew I had found my match. I hesitantly walked up to the big light brown fur with the blond wavy mane in anticipation and a little fear. I felt my hands shake as I reached up to touch Bob on the stomach. His fur was slick but soft; there was dirt, and he was slightly damp from the sun. He turned his

head towards me, and I knew at that moment he was telling me that he was going to be there for me no matter what. I made eye contact with Bob and it was like I suddenly got amnesia. I completely forgot about my anxiety and depression and all my problems; even the world around me. It was like it was only me and Bob; I matched my breath with his.

When I’m at CORRAL, I can be myself and I’m free to face my problems without embarrassment or shame. That was a hard lesson I learned much later in the program. I was still getting better with coping and facing my problems. I’ve learned so many lessons at CORRAL but one of the most important for me is “self love is the best love.” My anxiety doesn’t define who I am; I’m so much more. CORRAL makes me feel free. Bob gave me purpose and direction that I haven’t found anywhere else.

I knew I wanted to study animal behavior when I first walked with Bob. I was in the arena on a hot evening; the sun was just coming down. I had been working with him for almost an hour and almost gave up. I remember walking away, and as I was, I felt something in my heart telling me to turn back and give it another try. I slowly turned around towards Bob. Once faced, I felt my body slowly loosen up; my heart rate slowly went down. I started to walk towards him. He looked at me; I walked up to his shoulder, took a deep breath, lifted the carrot stick and calmly asked Bob to walk with me by swinging the stick up and down and pointing forward. I wasn’t expecting a response, but he lifted his big, heavy hoof and another and slowly but surely matched his steps with mine all on his own. At that moment I felt.... gosh, words can’t describe it. I felt like I was on cloud nine and winning the billion-dollar lottery. I am not the same person I was at the beginning of my story. I’ve grown into an independent, successful woman who can use my story to better understand people. I don’t tell this story to get sympathy. I tell it to show people that recovery is possible. My experience helps me be empathetic and compassionate towards people and understand better what they might be going through. I am now very proud to say that I am going to Unity College in Maine to study animals and open my own animal conservations worldwide. I want to create a safe haven for animals so they can feel as safe and loved as CORRAL taught me.

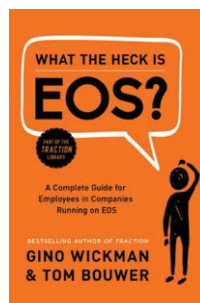
## WHAT WE’RE *Reading*

### *What the heck is EOS?*

By Gino Wickman and Tom Bouwer

“EOS provides a well-defined structure in which teams can foster a growth-oriented mindset and create organizational alignment that allows for CORRAL to achieve our long-term vision and goals more effectively. The underlying framework magnifies our employees’ unique contributions to our mission, while creating an organization that strives to be 100% strong in the EOS components: Vision, People, Data, Core Process, Resolving Issues, and Achieving Traction.”

~ Neyra Toledo-Osorio, *Director of Operations*

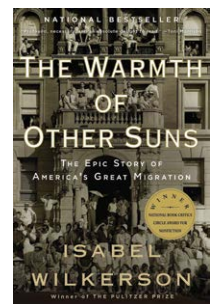


### *The Warmth of Other Suns*

By Isabel Wilkerson

“Being from the south, this book hits extra close to home. Of particular interest to me was Dr. Robert Foster, who fled Monroe, Louisiana in 1953, just two years before my father was born in the very same town. I love that this book isn’t just an anti-racism how to. Those books are important, and we should read them, but this book helps us understand the history of our country often left out of classrooms. Hearing, knowing, and absorbing these stories is so important as we build empathy and understanding for what Black citizens in this country have and continue to experience.”

~ Camille Brown, *CORRAL Corporate Strategist*





# INTERRUPTING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON Pipeline

by Julia Soplop,  
CORRAL  
Champion  
and Author

We often think of education as protective. In reality, however, some schools are delivering the opposite of protection for their most vulnerable students: a path toward incarceration. This phenomenon, known as the school-to-prison pipeline, drives students out of schools with overly harsh punishments that directly or indirectly put them in contact with the justice system. The pipeline disproportionately affects students of color and those with disabilities, placing them on a perilous trajectory rather than offering them the support they require to succeed as students.

## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES

Researchers have identified and begun to piece together the origins and mechanisms of this criminalization of America's youth. Zero tolerance and other punitive policies enacted in the 1980s and 1990s are thought to be the main culprits.

The federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 ushered in a wave of zero tolerance and punitive disciplinary policies in schools. Then in 1994, the Gun-Free Schools Act, intended to protect students from violence, led to the channeling of resources toward law enforcement presence in schools — and away from other support services — and contributed to further changes in the nature of school disciplinary practices.

Soon zero tolerance and other punitive policies meant to target especially dangerous behaviors broadened in many schools to include all sorts of minor behavioral transgressions. **Rather than funding school support staff to handle trivial, non-violent infractions in productive, evidence-based ways, schools began to depend on law enforcement to manage these issues, contributing to a staggering increase in youth arrests and referrals to the juvenile justice system.** A Children's Defense Fund report documented cases in which many students were incarcerated for such minor infractions as dress code violations, tardiness, and the use of vulgar language. Schools with police presence report 3.5 times as many student arrests as schools without police presence. Even when police are not involved in discipline, overly harsh punitive policies can indirectly place students on a path into the justice system. **Suspension and expulsion have been linked to higher likelihoods of dropping out of school and entering the juvenile or criminal justice system.**

## DISPARITIES: RACE AND DISABILITIES

Disparities in student arrests, suspensions, and expulsions related to race and disabilities are longstanding and well-documented.

For example, a 2019 ACLU report showed that in North Carolina, **Black girls are eight times as likely as white girls to be arrested in school once they enter the juvenile justice system.** Black girls also receive more punitive treatment than their white peers. They and other children of color are more likely than white children to be transferred to the adult criminal justice system and tried as adults.

- In N.C., Black girls are 8x as likely as white girls to be arrested in school.
- Native American girls are 3x more likely as white girls to be suspended in school.
- Students with disabilities are 3–10x more likely than their peers to be arrested in school.

## HOW CORRAL INTERRUPTS THE PIPELINE

by Katie Zucco, CORRAL Mental Health Services Manager

CORRAL works to interrupt the pipeline in a variety of ways. We have girls and parents sign releases for their teachers and schools, so we can bridge a communication gap. **We also work with teachers to explore the WHY behind our girls' academic disruption.** We advocate with parents and their daughters to ensure their IEPs & 504s are followed, and girls are getting access to the support they need. Intrinsicly linked with academic disruption is mental health and resource needs.

We serve girls in high risk situations, which often means their housing or food sources are not stable. Asking a child to sit still in a class when they haven't eaten meals is incongruent to supporting the child. **Research shows that justice-involved adolescents are more likely to have a psychiatric diagnosis than youth in the general population.** We teach our girls the emotional skills they need to navigate these situations. And, about a third of children in the juvenile justice system have at least one disability that qualifies them to receive special education services. More importantly, we can advocate to all the people (teachers, school social workers, administrative staff) serving our girls the link of mental health needs with academic success or support.

**When we think about the school-to-prison pipeline, we also need to understand the mental health component.** It's not as easy as understanding a diagnosis and implementing a treatment. Diagnoses can have overlapping symptoms and some diagnoses have a stigma attached. Studies have shown that Black youth are more likely than their white peers to be diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or Conduct Disorder (CD). This is important because there are very different attitudes and stigmas attached to a mood disorder (depression or anxiety) vs. a disruptive or impulse disorder (ODD, CD, & antisocial).



## SCHOOL LAW ENFORCEMENT *vs.* SUPPORT STAFF



**1.7 million students** attend schools with police but no counselors



**3 million students** attend schools with police but no nurses



**6 million students** attend schools with police but no school psychologists



**10 million students** attend schools with police but no social workers

### References:

J Youth Adolescence; Child & Youth Services; The Professional Counselor; End Seclusion Organization; Test, Punish and Push Out; Thought Co; Children's Defense Fund; Georgetown University; U.S. Department of Education, 2015–2016 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)

## ONE SEMESTER OF HOMESCHOOL PODS:

### *What We've Learned*



#### *Kildaire Farm* CAMPUS

"Our first big challenge was going from an after-school and weekend program to a full-time program. We wanted to keep the same proven structure but adapt it to make it more successful. It was a bit of trial and error, but we quickly realized we had to prioritize daily contracts, structure, time management, and taking consistent and mindful breaks. It was hard for our girls to transition from hopping out of bed and turning on their laptops to getting dressed and coming to CORRAL for a full day. **But, this environment has been really helpful for them.** They're not constantly bombarded with peer pressure they face at school; our girls don't have the skills to ignore these pressures. They also appreciate the quiet space here to do their work, free from distractions and their siblings. We also have a no-phone policy, so they've come to rely on the farm for their breaks and our staff when they are dealing with rough times. The girls also have the option to do rhythmic riding on bad days, instead of depending on unhealthy coping mechanisms. Finally, they have consistency and stability here. They have trusted and trained adults whom they can turn to anytime. And, they motivate each other. If their herd GPA average is above 80 percent, the girls are treated to an incentive. While the future is uncertain, this experience has raised the possibility of making day programming a permanent component of our program, especially since we've been successful."

~ J'Naya Marville, CORRAL Education Manager

#### *Neuse River* CAMPUS

"The first semester started off rough at Neuse River Campus. We found that our girls weren't logging onto classes at home, which prompted an increase in CORRAL time for them. The underlying issue was that the schools were not effective in equipping our girls with hotspots, computers and other tools when COVID first hit. **Virtual schooling is set up similar to college classes, where students need to know how to take notes, ask questions, advocate for themselves and practice time management. Our girls don't have the refined executive skills to know any of that without prior training.** We stepped in to help our girls create routines and structures at home, to equip parents with resources for their kids and to help families work around housing and food security crises. All of these factors play into education access. But, despite the early and cold mornings in the red building on our campus we call 'the mansion' they're starting to thrive. **They're asking questions in class, they're engaged, they're reaching out for extra help, leading classes and waking themselves up with alarm clocks.** One of our girls has ADHD and is hyperactive and normally would be kicked out of class for moving around in class, ultimately cutting off her access to education. But, instead of being punished, she can take breaks, eat, fidget, sit in a beanbag, move chairs, spin around and the entire time, she's maintaining her engagement. **It's been empowering to see our girls have full access to the education they deserve instead of being kicked out of class for a behavioral or racial bias.**"

~ Katie Zucco, Neuse River Campus Mental Health Services Manager



# Volunteering at CORRAL

Providing a holistic program with the current extent of services and care would not be possible without our volunteer force. Our volunteers have stood by us throughout this pandemic while we prioritized safety and stepped up in ways that make us feel blessed every day.

## VOLUNTEERS IN NUMBERS



- 219 active volunteers in 20–21

- 93 new volunteers in 20–21



- 26,000+ service hours all-time

## CURRENT TEAMS



**Equine Team:** Horse feeders and horse assistants keep our horses fed and healthy, while Equine Specialists work alongside our therapists to provide EAP for our girls.



**Education Team:** Tutors, lunch providers, and drivers ensure that our girls have the tools they need to get to CORRAL and to do well in school.



**Facilities Team:** Volunteers maintain the farms, land and gardens on a weekly and/or monthly basis.



**Corporate Development:** Volunteers with diverse skills support in the following areas: Marketing, Administrative, Grant Writing, Volunteer & Donor Management, and Sponsorship Support.



**Prayer Team:** This team continues to keep CORRAL's girls, their families, our staff and our mission lifted before the Lord.



"I volunteer as a horse assistant and feeder; I also hold the role as lead horse assistant. Some leadership skills that I have learned from CORRAL are gaining confidence and persevering once times get tough. I'm driven by the community that CORRAL has built and how everyone supports each other."

~ Sonora Caldwell, CORRAL's youngest volunteer



"We have a tight-knit community of 27 volunteers at Neuse River. They're all really awesome because they keep a lookout for the farm and don't just stick to their roles. When they see something that needs fixing, they'll just do it and look out for what else needs work since they know we have a small team that we couldn't grow in a pandemic."

~ Lauren Clements, Neuse River Campus Managing Director

## Kingdom Diversity

CORRAL has always had the heart to serve the marginalized population. As stated recently by our Board of Directors statement, we are to seek justice, defend the oppressed, and take up the cause of the fatherless.

*We believe that Jesus can redeem anything and that He has called us to be His hands and feet. This means that He intends for us to participate in His redemption of our broken world by caring for the most vulnerable in our community by "seek(ing) justice, defend(ing) the oppressed, take(ing) up the cause of the fatherless." (Isaiah 1:17)*

Our goal is to not only serve girls of color, but to be an organization that embraces diversity and deliberately and intentionally champion this effort. In the fall of 2019, we enrolled in the Kingdom Diversity Training led by Ericka James, CEO, Trainer and Prophetic Strategist. The mission of the program is to build truly diverse and inclusive organizations. Research shows that 80 percent of nonprofit staff leverage personal and professional networks, which are consistently ranked as the most popular and most effective recruitment channels. But, 75 percent of white Americans have social networks without any minority presence. There are numerous reasons to have a diverse organization, one being it lends to a better business model. According to Harvard Business Review, companies with higher-than-average diversity had 19 percent higher innovation revenues. At CORRAL, we see the gaps in diversity among our wider community, and we're taking action and making progress. Our staff placed our organization at stage 3 where diversity is tolerated but lacks full implementation of the Better Together Model but ranked our culture at Stage 5 of Intention where diversity is accepted and celebrated. So, we've summoned a task force that meets regularly to help us in our journey toward becoming truly diverse and inclusive.



# CORRAL

## RIDING ACADEMY

3620 Kildaire Farm Road, Cary, NC 27518



Follow us:   

**CORRALRIDING.ORG**

WRAL VOTERS' CHOICE AWARD WINNER:  
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

### WHAT'S INSIDE

Walk.Run.Ride:  
A Virtual 5K

Recovery  
is Possible

The School-to-  
Prison Pipeline

What We've  
Learned

Kingdom  
Diversity

