The summer months provide an opportunity for us all to savor what God has done yet again in the lives of children and families. As you may know, at the end of each school year, we celebrate children and families who have accomplished the goals of our program and we launch them back into their lives together as a family at home.

The five children and families featured in this newsletter are only a sampling of the many children and families we serve, but are illustrative of the miraculous healing that has taken place by God’s power and grace for nearly 40 years. Charlie, Jordy, Faith, Ryland and Chloe all came to the Ranch around the same time that I did in 2021. It has been a joy and privilege to walk alongside them and their families as they’ve hoped for healing and realized that it is possible. These families have demonstrated incredible courage to rebuild the foundations of their family relationships to last a lifetime.

In a world constantly demanding our attention to all of the negative, broken things around us, I hope you’ll take a moment to pause and savor the goodness of these stories.

Blessings to you. Know that I and the rest of the Eagle Ranch family are grateful for you and for your partnership in this meaningful work.

Appreciatively,

John H. Shackelford
Eagle Ranch Executive Director
Celebrating family renewal

Family renewal of relationships is central to the Eagle Ranch mission.

Our Spring graduates and their families share about their experiences working to achieve goals that promote whole family healing and strengthening bonds that will last into future generations.

“At Eagle Ranch, I have learned how to manage my anger and express my emotions. I know that I have to get out of my comfort zone to reach goals. Even through hardship, I learned that change is good.”

Faith

“We’d tried everything, and it still felt like we weren’t able to be a happy family. Through what we’ve learned at the Ranch, our relationship has transformed. We have the tools and self-awareness to communicate more effectively. We’ve grown together as a family. We’ve grown in how we handle conflict, struggles and navigate challenging things. We don’t feel desperate anymore. Now we know it’s okay. We’ve been trained in this. We can get through it.”

Sarah & Jonathan, Faith’s Parents

“The reason I came to Eagle Ranch was because I was battling screen addiction and was always angry and yelling at my parents. I didn’t know what else I would do if I wasn’t playing video games. It was my escape from reality, and I enjoyed it a lot. My time at the Ranch has allowed me to find other interests and make friends outside of gaming. I now have the motivation to engage in other activities, and I have the skills to make new friends.”

Charlie

“I have never seen a place quite like Eagle Ranch. Everybody is there to support your child, and the role models that Charlie had are incredible. We were trying to control Charlie instead of training him, and now we are able to step back and give him choices. Our communication is better and our home is calmer. We now have the tools to face what comes our way. I’m not exaggerating when I say Eagle Ranch saved our family.”

Jodi & Bruce, Charlie’s Parents

GRADUATION 2023:
Two years ago, I came to Eagle Ranch because I would argue with people. I would have a lot of anxiety, and I never knew how to handle it. Since coming to the Ranch, I have learned how to talk about my feelings, manage my anger and talk to people. I have made great friends who I will never forget.

“Jordy has become more self-aware of her feelings and learned how to better express them. Since being at the Ranch, I have seen Jordy mature. I have learned through the program that both the parent and the child have to put in the work to see change.”

JORDY

Cassie, Jordy’s Mom

“Jordy has become more self-aware of her feelings and learned how to better express them. Since being at the Ranch, I have seen Jordy mature. I have learned through the program that both the parent and the child have to put in the work to see change.”

Both the parent and the child have to put in the work to see change.

Jordy

Chloe

“I struggled with mood swings and was failing all my classes. Now, I’ve learned to control my emotions and be mindful of what I say and how I say it. I’ve also learned to manage my anger.”

“Chloe struggled with making bad decisions, and we were concerned they would only become worse as she became older. We have learned to let Chloe make choices on her own, and if it’s the wrong choice, she has learned to accept the consequences. Now, Chloe is a different child. She makes better choices, and there is a lot less tension in our relationship.”

Chloe

Tim & Amy, Chloe’s Parents

“Two years ago, I came to Eagle Ranch because I would argue with people. I would have a lot of anxiety, and I never knew how to handle it. Since coming to the Ranch, I have learned how to talk about my feelings, manage my anger and talk to people. I have made great friends who I will never forget.”

Chloe (Pictured Right)
Ryland arrived at Eagle Ranch in July 2021. “I’ll never forget that day because it’s the day I realized that God wanted me to push forward and keep going with my life,” she recalled. “It was the day I told myself that I wanted to change.”

Middle school was tough on Ryland. She was failing most of her classes and struggled making healthy friendships. Fear resulted in letting herself be led by others, even when it was to her detriment. “I was scared of people disapproving of me, invalidating me or dismissing me. It kept me from standing up for myself in stressful situations, and I would just shut down.”

Seeing their daughter’s decline and worried for her future, Ryland’s parents presented the idea of Eagle Ranch to her, knowing it was a choice they needed to make for their family, which includes three siblings in addition to Ryland.

“I realized I wanted to pursue this, that it was actually going to help me,” she said.

Early on, the family recognized that Eagle Ranch is about restoration and working with the whole family.

“It really is a family therapy program,” said Ryland’s dad, Michael. “I think so often, at least when we first looked at it, we didn’t fully understand how much we had to change our whole family dynamic.”

While Ryland lived on campus as part of Eagle Ranch’s residential program, her family came to the campus for counseling sessions, training and fun activities. While they stayed connected, there was enough separation to provide space for healing.

“One of the biggest benefits to the program is that it gives your family the space you need to step back and approach things differently,” Michael said. “When you’re in the middle of the chaos, it’s very difficult to make changes and to see the hope and the light ahead. It’s much harder in those moments to really focus because you’re just trying to keep things moving. Once we had space to step back and approach it with a little more time, energy and intentionality, it really helped us navigate things better.”

Ryland’s mom, Kerri, appreciated that things never felt forced. She felt equipped to address their family’s struggles.

“Eagle Ranch is a place that promotes healing,” Kerri said. “You can’t force anything but you have all the ingredients: space, reflection, putting down old tools that don’t work and picking up new ones, with the goal of looking forward and having hope.”

A large part of Ryland’s healing was understanding how to sort through complex emotions and express them in a productive way.

“Before the Ranch, I felt lost and rejected. Now I feel found and accepted. There’s still so much I have to work on, but I’m proud of what I’ve accomplished,” Ryland said. “I’ve worked really hard to get where I am now. I was determined that I could change, that I could have joy.”

A lot of kids these days don’t actually know what they’re feeling,” she said. “They just know the overall feeling, like angry, happy, but when you break it down, it makes a lot more sense, and you understand why you are having an outburst.”

Being able to express herself and not allow emotions to build up, helped Ryland be more open to rebuilding her family relationships and also learn how to make positive friendships.

She feels like she has a solid foundation to continue growing in her faith, relationships and life goals.

RYLAND IS THE INAUGURAL RECIPIENT OF THE CHUMA FAMILY “BELIEVE IN ME” ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP. The scholarship is awarded to an Eagle Ranch graduate who has displayed tremendous growth throughout their time in the program and a desire to pursue a unique academic passion, while maintaining an unwavering commitment to the fundamental values and core beliefs of Eagle Ranch.
THIS YEAR’S RUN THE RANCH EVENT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Eagle Ranch welcomed over 350 participants in the annual 5K, Fun Run and Nature Walk on June 3, 2023. Participants of all levels, from experienced runners to casual walkers, joined together to enjoy the outdoors and support our mission to improve the lives of children, families and the community. We want to give a big thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and sponsors whose generosity and time made this event possible! To view pictures and results from the day’s events, visit EagleRanch.org/RTR.
Hoisting Main Sails: The Journey of a Lifetime

Sailing into Summer with Fun & Learning

The sailors-in-training will put their newly acquired skills to the test. They will learn essential safety, rigging, tacking and even recovering a capsized vessel. This interactive experience will be provided by America's Boating Club in collaboration with Eagle Ranch. Over two weeks, the children and houseparents will be immersed in the art of sailing. The program is designed to be enjoyable and educational, ensuring a memorable summer experience.

Members of the University Yacht Club and the Atlanta chapter of America's Boating Club teamed up to offer an interactive "Intro to Sailing" course to Eagle Ranch children and houseparents. Over two afternoons, participants gained instruction and hands-on learning about safety essentials, rigging, tacking and even receiving a capsized sailboat. They also enjoyed a chapel service, brunch and swimming. The sailors-in-training will put their newly acquired skills to the test, sailing back to camp from the sailing season.

A huge thank you goes out to Atlanta Boating Club, UYC and UYC Maritime Foundation for investing in our community.
**(BRIDGING OUR missions)**

The Scott Family Bridge was dedicated in May recognizing The Scott Bridge Company, which generously donated the bridge construction in partnership with numerous suppliers who donated materials and services. The bridge connects The Wings Center to the Eagle Ranch campus and serves as a symbol to bridge our shared mission of helping children and families to impact the future for the glory of God.
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

I want to support Eagle Ranch children with a gift of:

☐ $1000 ☐ $500 ☐ $100 ☐ $50 ☐ $25 ☐ $_______

Please designate this gift toward:  ☐ General Operations
☐ Honor Gift  ☐ Memorial Gift  ☐ Greatest Need

This gift is made by______________________________

Address ____________________________________________

City ______________________ State _____ Zip ________

In honor/memory of ________________________________

City ______________________ State ________________

Please send honor/memorial card to:

Name ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City ______________________ State _____ Zip ________

Relationship to honoree/deceased ____________________

CB23

Eagle Ranch is reaching more families
than ever with new services to help renew
and restore families.

LEARN MORE IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER.

STAY TUNED FOR BIG NEWS