

## Cheff Center of Augusta, Michigan



The Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center opened its doors in 1970 as the first therapeutic riding center in the United States. Ted Cheff from Holland, Michigan, an avid horse lover and member of the Battle Creek Hunt Club was the benefactor. Lida McCowan was the center's first Executive Director and was instrumental in the creation of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA).

The original "Cheff Center for the Handicapped" offered its services to individuals with physical disabilities, touching the lives of many participants from the surrounding communities.

The Cheff Center's mission today is to improve the emotional and physical well being of individuals through the therapeutic use of horses. Students who struggle with a wide range of disabilities

and special needs including physical, cognitive, behavioral and emotional challenges participate in weekly riding lessons or therapy sessions. Five days a week, you will find Cheff staff, horses and volunteers devoted to making life better for their students. Focusing on what individuals can accomplish, rather than their limitations, the goal is to help them realize their full potential. The parent of a Cheff student captured the heart and spirit of what takes place daily when he said, "When children mount their horses and guide them into the arena, they sit taller, prouder, and so much further above the troubles and challenges that fill their days."

Cheff, a Premier Accredited member center of NARHA, also serves as an international training and education center for therapeutic riding programs. Training others ensures that therapeutic riding will continue to grow and flourish and improve the quality of life for so many.

Michigan Horse Council is proud to recognize the Cheff Center with a 2008 Catalyst Award.