

### **METS Seeking Donations to Continue Assisting Horses in Need of New Homes**

*by Jessica Avila-Franco*



The Maryland Equine Transition Service (METS)'s initial grant funding will be expiring in July 2021, meaning the program must then become self-sustaining and will be completely reliant on fundraising in order to continue helping horses. With \$70,000 of a \$170,000 annual budget still needing to be raised, METS is seeking grants, donors, and financial sponsors who want to see the program continue to help Maryland's horses for years to come.

For more information, visit [www.mdequinetransition.org](http://www.mdequinetransition.org), to donate go to [www.donatenow.networkforgood.org](http://www.donatenow.networkforgood.org)

METS is a statewide equine safety net initiative of the Maryland Horse Council Foundation (MHCF) that helps owners identify and select the most responsible options for their Maryland-based horses when they can no longer keep them. A horse can change homes upwards of seven times in its lifetime, increasing the chances of it falling into potentially dangerous situations, such as neglect, abuse, auction, or slaughter. Additionally, equine rescues across the nation are often at or over capacity, and regularly have to say "no" to owners requesting to surrender their horses. METS strives to address these concerns so that Maryland's horses can move safely and directly from one home to the next, effectively keeping

them safe while also assisting Maryland's rescues by diverting potential owner surrender cases.

Since its start in 2018, METS has been able to provide guidance to the owners of over 200 horses. In 2020, METS was able to transition 60 Maryland-based horses despite the pandemic restrictions, utilizing our virtual assessment program. Of note, METS' largest single case to-date involved a group of 23 Thoroughbreds on the Eastern Shore. Their safe placements were truly a triumph in collaboration throughout the equine community. Neil Agate, President of the Maryland Horse Council, recounts the efforts made to ensure the safety of the horses, "It took patience, transparency, and assistance from industry partners, Maryland rescues, and private owners to find safe, appropriate home for each of the horses. As our program continues to grow, we strive to keep that spirit of collaboration strong in every transition we facilitate."

METS is a program of the Maryland Horse Council Foundation, a 501(c)(3) equine nonprofit organization. METS is currently accepting corporate business sponsors interested in supporting our Maryland-based program.

Companies are also encouraged to participate in our donation matching campaign, where every dollar donated to METS, would result in a matched donation from the company sponsor. For more information about participating, or questions please contact Jessica Avila-Franco, METS Development Officer at [jessica@mdequinetransition.org](mailto:jessica@mdequinetransition.org).

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