

## The Deb Peet-Walker Hippotherapy Fund

For 24 years, Deb Peet-Walker provided physical therapy services to hundreds of patients at Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center. For many who she helped, Deb was the face of Little Bit. To honor her years of service, Little Bit has created the Deb Peet-Walker Hippotherapy Fund.



### Overview

The Deb Peet-Walker Hippotherapy Fund will be used to support the Therapy Department at Little Bit as it grows and expands to serve more patients. The fund may be used for opportunities such as improving the therapy rooms used for treatment; adding to and caring for the horses used in the Therapy program, including both regular and emergency care; training and development for staff; therapist co-treatments; purchasing and maintaining therapy equipment and supplies; and financially supporting patients in the Little Bit Therapy program.

### Remarkable Patient and Therapist

William endured a premature birth and both pulmonary and brain hemorrhages in 2005, resulting in cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus. The doctors told William's parents, Lori and Paul, that William would not likely walk, talk, or develop typically. Like many riders and patients, William proved that initial expectations were wrong.

Hippotherapy, recommended by one of his doctors, provided long-term benefits to William, including standing independently for longer periods of time and eventually taking longer steps. Deb Peet-Walker was William's physical therapist for eight years, and during that time they developed a strong bond. Cerebral palsy caused significant stiffness in William's body, yet following a therapy session at Little Bit, the improvement in his muscle suppleness and upright posture was obvious. Among Deb's many strengths is the exceptional knowledge of how to incorporate hippotherapy into physical treatment sessions. Neurodevelopmental Treatment and Sensory Integration are just two of the many treatment strategies available to her clients. Deb shows the capacity to think "outside the box," and is always analyzing the effectiveness of any treatment strategy to stay on course for establishing functional improvement. Her deeply empathetic nature allows her to bond with both the children she treats and the horses who serve her in this mission.



The Deb Peet-Walker Hippotherapy Fund (continued)



“I really liked my physical therapy sessions with Deb, especially the hippotherapy portion, where I worked with an entire team of people and of course the wonderful horses I experienced through many years. After the hippotherapy portion of my ‘PT’ treatment, my leg muscles felt more relaxed, but also energized and more in my control. It was easier than doing yoga,” shared William. Lori also shared, “Deb was almost able to predict what was going to happen during a therapy session before it actually occurred. She has a natural affinity for kids, horses, and parents. I wish that every child with special needs who could benefit from Little

Bit had the same opportunity as William. And the best part of therapy at Little Bit is that it doesn’t feel like therapy.”

## A Leading Gift and How You Can Help

Jordan Olerud had the privilege of participating in physical therapy, including hippotherapy at Little Bit, for over 13 years. Jordan started therapy, utilizing hippotherapy as part of her physical therapy plan of care, at the age of two, with Deb walking by her side for each session. Deb’s energy, enthusiasm, and love of what she was doing were a constant, making each session they shared together the highlight of Jordan’s week. John and Kelly Olerud, Jordan’s parents and founders of the Jordan Fund, are thrilled to have the privilege to honor Deb for all her years of faithful service to hundreds of kids like Jordan with gifts towards the Deb Peet-Walker Hippotherapy Fund totaling \$75,000.



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Please join the Jordan Fund in honoring Deb with a gift of your own. Contact Little Bit Director of Development Sharon Soldenwagner at (425) 882-1554 or [sharons@littlebit.org](mailto:sharons@littlebit.org) if you would like to contribute to the fund.