

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RACING, GAMING AND WAGERING AND
THE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE**

SUBJECT: The Welfare of Racehorses.

PURPOSE: To Examine the Health of Racehorses While Training and Racing, and
Resources for Aftercare.

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

10:00 A.M. – 2 P.M.

Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room A, 188 State Street, Albany, NY 12247

Testimony of the New Vocations Racehorse Adoption Program

Anna Ford, New Vocations Program Director

New Vocations is the oldest and largest racehorse adoption program in the country. Our mission is to Rehab, Retrain, and Rehome both Thoroughbreds and Standardbreds retiring from racing careers. We currently have facilities in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky and Louisiana, which can house 150 horses at any given time. On average we take in over 450 horses and adopt out over 350 annually. For 22 years we have received horses from all Thoroughbred and Standardbred racetracks in New York as well as from training centers and farms located in the state.

In 2013 we were thrilled to partner with NYTHA's TAKE THE LEAD Program. The program has been instrumental in helping us greatly expand our New York efforts by more than doubling the number of horses coming from the state to one of our facilities. Prior to our partnership we were receiving an average of 45 horses from New York and are now taking in on average 100 horses from the state. We are very thankful for the services and support that the TAKE THE LEAD Program provides to New Vocations and the other TAA accredited organizations in the state.

We take great pride in our policies for screening potential adopters, our transitional training, our adoption and follow up process. Horses that enter our program are carefully evaluated, receive rehabilitation from injuries and then once both mentally and physically sound start transitional training. We then place the horses up for adoption. On average we receive over 800 adoption application from potential adopters. All applications are processed by calling and fact checking with references and through receiving a recommendation form from the servicing veterinarian. If a potential adopter is unable to provide such references, we do not allow them to adopt.

All horses adopted through New Vocations leave the program with a signed Adoption Agreement stating that the horse cannot be sold at a public auction or return to racing and that the adopter agrees to provide three updates during the first year. The agreement also states that the horse can always be returned to the program if needed. This is something we encourage and have seen adopters use even 5-6 years past the original adoption date. We feel it's important for donors and adopters to know that once a horse is in our program that we are committed to it and its future. We have a full-time person who ensures that all updates on horses are received and sent on to their

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previous connections. They also assist in helping any horses that need to come back into the program.

All of our policies and procedures are greatly monitored by the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance or TAA accreditation process. New Vocations was one of the first program to receive accreditation in 2012. The accreditation process is very extensive as it involves a financial audit as well as review and audit of all of our policies and procedures. The accreditation also includes annual site visits and quarterly inventory checks of all of our facilities.

In closing, since the start of our partnership with both TAKE THE LEAD Program and TAA we have seen a great increase in the number of horses we have been able to serve coming from the New York racing industry and we are grateful to have the support from both programs.