

EQUINE GUELPH: 20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Annual Report: Executive Summary

May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023

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Dear Partners and Supporters of Equine Guelph,

Equine Guelph, the global pioneer in online education for the equine industry, is celebrating its 20th year anniversary in 2023. It is indeed ironic that the words “pioneer” and “20” would appear in the same sentence! With warp speed, our world has evolved into a virtual one, connecting our horse community like never before – with Equine Guelph on the bit!

In May of 2002, amid a mix of skepticism and foresight, the first online course was developed and offered – a precursor to the official designation and opening of Equine Guelph in July of 2003. The vision? Equine Guelph would be the horse owner’s Centre at the University of Guelph, created by the industry for the industry, dedicated to improving the health and well-being of horses through research and education. Two short decades ago, who could have imagined that this small but mighty organization would serve horse people around the world?



This past year, 2,100+ students registered in Equine Guelph’s 12-week and short online courses with representation from 39 countries outside of Canada. Equine Guelph funded nine research projects at the University of Guelph which will contribute to the health and welfare of horses in Ontario and to the scientific communities, veterinary training and equine industries internationally.

Equine Guelph’s achievements in both its education and research programs at home and abroad have been made possible with the support of our industry associations and stakeholders. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2023, we also celebrate relationship milestones with our longtime partners.

Equine Guelph salutes its 10 “triple A” corporate sponsors for making possible the delivery of unique education programs to the equine industry. Most of these sponsors represent multi-year partnerships and a shared long-term vision. Of note, Workplace Safety & Prevention Services is our longest-serving sponsor for 18 years. This year, we share milestone anniversaries with 15-year sponsor, Kubota Canada, and 10-year sponsor, Boehringer Ingelheim. Equine Guelph salutes our corporate partners for their contributions to the advancement of the equine industry. For the research program, Equine Guelph thanks our longstanding funders for their support over the past two decades as part of our Council.

Please join us for our year-long anniversary party! It’s a celebration for all industry partners and stakeholders who supported Equine Guelph along the way in its 20-year journey of helping horses for life™. We’re champing at the bit as we look forward to the next 20!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Wichtel".

Dr. Jeffrey Wichtel
Dean, Ontario Veterinary College

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Patterson".

Mr. Al Patterson
Co-Chair, Equine Guelph

20 ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 20 YEARS!

1. Equine Guelph launched the **1st** online equine studies program in the world – a global pioneer
2. **Recipient** of 3 International, 3 National, and 7 Provincial awards and honours
3. Serving students from **40** countries
4. Equine Guelph has supported **100+** equine-related research projects since 2003 on industry-designated priorities for respiratory, lameness, gut health, surgical techniques and many more
5. **19** 12-week courses and **15** short online courses on offer, updated annually with new research
6. The EquiMania! youth exhibit has a permanent display at the Minnesota State Fair with over **2 million** visitors annually
7. Equine Guelph's free EquineJobTrack.ca employment search website received **37,000+** views last year
8. TheHorsePortal.ca was launched in 2017 – the **1st** online community-based platform of its kind for short, practical industry training, now including the Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program for new grooms and caretakers
9. **307** articles from Equine Guelph, published last year featuring horse healthcare and results of research studies funded through Equine Guelph
10. EquiMania! was the **1st** Canadian exhibit ever featured at the World Equestrian Games
11. **10** English-speaking provincial/territorial federations (PTSO's) from coast-to-coast are partners with Equine Guelph on TheHorsePortal.ca
12. Gayle Ecker was the **1st** Canadian to be awarded the Equine Industry Vision Award in the U.S.
13. Equine Guelph has **12** free online interactive healthcare tools to help horse people care for their horses. In just 10 minutes or less, top stable management tips are attained.
14. The full EquiMania! exhibit weighs over **5,000lbs** and can fill a **80' X 80'** space
15. Equine Guelph E-News enjoys a high "open rate" for articles – **10% higher** than the industry average
16. **1,032** Diploma/Certificate graduates in Equine Science, Welfare and Business ... and counting
17. Equine Guelph was the recipient of **Equestrian Canada's Health and Welfare Award** in 2019
18. Since 2014, Equine Guelph's Large Animal Emergency Rescue training program has trained **550+** people, e.g., first responders, animal control officers, horse owners, vets, associations, etc.
19. **39,971** YouTube videos have been viewed and page views for TheHorsePortal.ca was **487,219** this past fiscal year

20. Over **1,000** stakeholders from the Ontario racing industry have taken a free racing-exclusive online short course addressing racehorse healthcare priorities in the areas of respiratory, lameness and gut health with research updates added annually

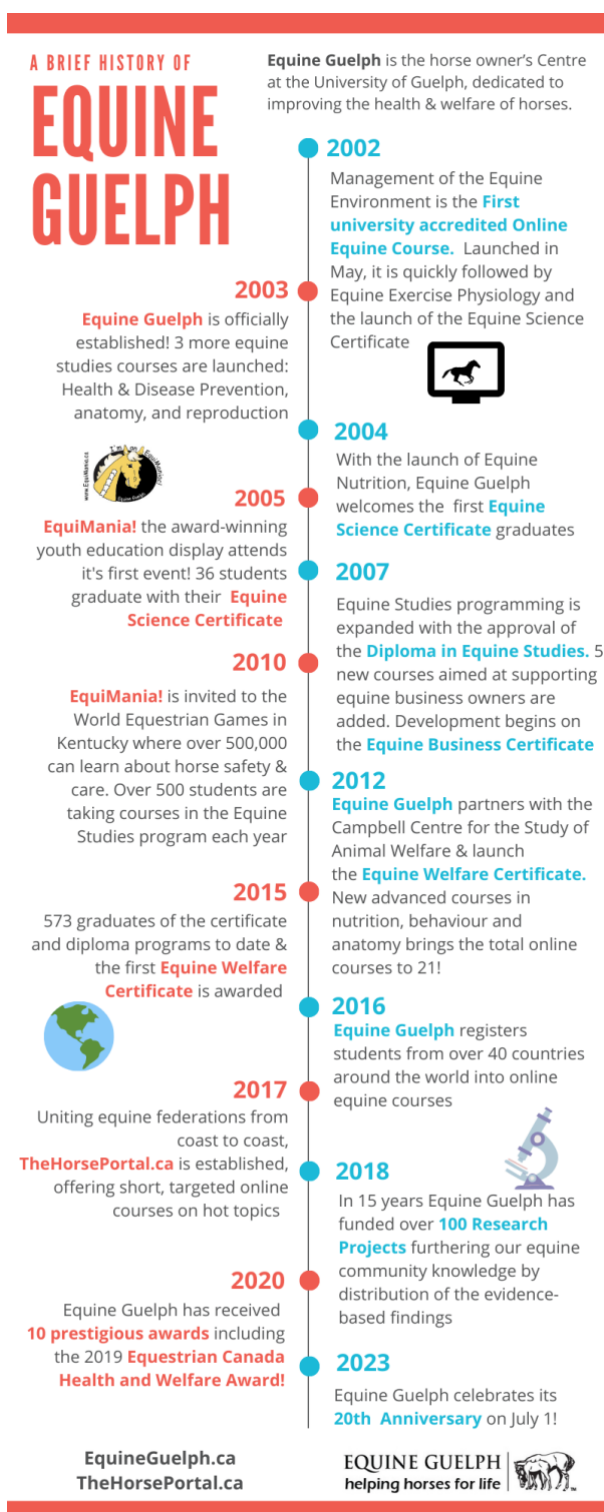


Figure 1 - This image is a graphic timeline of Equine Guelph accomplishments.

RESEARCH

Research funding from the equine industry continues to contribute to an effective research program making significant progress annually on priority areas by University of Guelph researchers. Research funding allocated was **\$329,308** for nine new priority-designated research projects for 2022-2023:

	Research Project	Researcher
1	Screening for biomarkers indicators of intestinal health among the equine microbiotax	Dr. Luis G. Arroyo
2	Macrophage responses of healthy and severely asthmatic horses to agents that exacerbate equine asthma	Dr. Janet Beeler-Marfisi
3	Evaluation of Non-invasive Electroarthrography to Predict Cartilage Quality in Equine Osteoarthritis	Dr. Adele Changoor & Dr. Judith Koenig
4	Efficacy of an Oral Supplement Containing Omega Fatty Acids for Treatment of Persistent Breeding-Induced Endometritis (PBIE) in Mares	Dr. Tracey Chenier
5	Evaluation of factors contributing to upper airway obstruction through repeated resting and dynamic respiratory endoscopies in 2-year-old Standardbreds	Dr. Nathalie Cote
6	Cardiovascular effects of rapid and slow intravenous administration of sodium penicillin in horses undergoing exploratory laparotomy for colic: A randomized clinical trial	Dr. Diego Gomez
7	New insights into immunomodulatory effects of Spirulina in vitro, and on local and systemic response to high-intensity exercise in horses	Dr. Wendy Pearson
8	Cardiac dysfunction and sudden death in horses	Dr. Greg Pyle
9	Fecal and serum metabolome and fecal bile acids and D-lactate concentrations in healthy horses and horses with colitis	Dr. Diego Gomez

There are also 31 continuing projects that have received their funding in full, and whose researchers will be updating the Research Committee with their progress in Fall of 2023.



How the research funding process works:

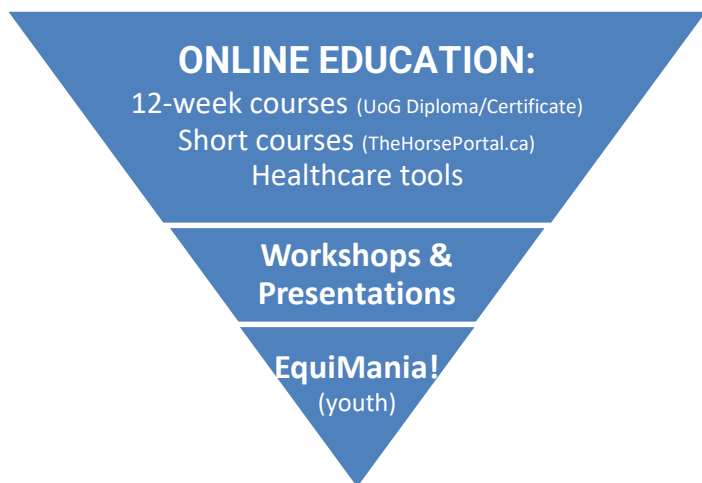
- ✓ Equine Guelph conducts an annual competition for research funding to be based on industry priorities as identified by the Research Committee – comprised of volunteer-designated industry representatives
- ✓ Proposals are sent out for external peer review from other universities for scientific merit
- ✓ Committee then allocates the funding according to priority area and merit – to ensure the development of new and developing evidence-based information to support health, welfare and performance of horses
- ✓ Information produced by publication of the studies gives further benefit to the program as it is distributed to the industry through the communications and education programs of Equine Guelph and to practicing veterinarians, students, and industry participants at all levels in both the racing and non-racing sectors
- ✓ Industry groups to further distribute this knowledge to their membership by sharing research stories, press releases and researcher interviews

Dr. Koch, Co-chair of the Research Committee, welcomes discussions with the industry partners to ensure that strategic directions and planning are ongoing to expand the research program in support of the industry. Equine Guelph would also like to acknowledge the dedicated service to this committee by Dr. Dorothee Bienzle (Prof., Ontario Veterinary College). Dr. Bienzle is stepping down from the Research Committee after many years of exemplary contributions to the competition process. Her insight and expertise will be greatly missed.

This research process supports the needs of the industry as met through available funding. Funding for the FY2022-23 research program was received from the E.P. Taylor Fund, the HIP/TIP funds, Ontario Racing, Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario (HBPA) and Ontario Equestrian – along with critical support from private donors.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

An industry grows and thrives when its participants are encouraged to engage in education and training. Industries that engage in ongoing learning and development of their workforce can thrive and survive during challenging times. Equine Guelph continues to respond to industry needs, with the development of the first online program for equine education that was sanctioned by the UofG Senate, with the first course on offer in May 2002. Equine Guelph provides education and training ranging from fun programs for youth to workshops to “deep dive” learning with our online courses. Online education tuition returned a total of **\$172,936** (compared to \$177,902 from last year). The following gives a topline summary of 2022-23:



12-week Online Courses: 19 courses on offer in partnership with Open Learning and Educational Support at the University of Guelph; **940** student registrations in Diploma (Equine Studies) and Certificate (Science, Business, Welfare) programs

Short Online Courses on TheHorsePortal.ca: 15 courses on offer; **1,163** student registrations in 1-week, 2-week and on-demand courses - including 302 youth in a free Horse Behaviour & Safety course

Portal Partnerships: 23 organizations across Canada and the US partner with Equine Guelph to

offer short courses to their members at a discount – including all 10 English-speaking provincial horse federations, 5 racing organizations and more ...

Special Partnership for Online Industry Training: Ontario Equine Education and Employment Program (OEEEP):

- Funded by the Ontario Government, Equine Guelph joined with the Ontario Harness Horse Association and VPI, Inc. to offer OEEEP. This program helps to answer the need for staff, a current issue in the Ontario industry.
- Six cohorts of up to 50 students were on offer and the first cohort commenced in November, 2021. Students received training in job preparedness and job interview skills from VPI for 2 weeks, 6 weeks of online learning from Equine Guelph and a placement program, matching potential employers with new students.

Online Healthcare Tools: As part of the pyramid of learning, Equine Guelph offers 12 free online, interactive healthcare tools for quick learning; visitors to these learning objects generally spend between 4-5 minutes.

Workshops & Presentations:

- Large Animal Rescue Program: A growing interest in emergency preparedness and response of first responders for assisting and rescuing horses and other animals in emergency situations continues to fuel the need for specialized, hands-on training offered by Equine Guelph; In 2022-23, the following **5** in-person initiatives were offered: three awareness level workshops and one operational level workshop and one presentation.
- Presentations: A total of **14** presentations were given by Gayle Ecker and Dr. Susan Raymond on various horse healthcare and safety topics throughout 2022-23



EquiMania! Things are starting to normalize for our EquiMania! exhibit after being “stall-bound” for several years during the pandemic. In 2022-23, EquiMania! attended the Minnesota State Fair, Can-Am All Breeds Expo and will attend fairs in Ontario this summer. EquiMania! Online for Kids is available on TheHorsePortal.ca and features interactive activities and learning objects for youth with new resources added each month!



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Direct industry funding for the Communications and Marketing program was **\$33,000** this year with support from the Horse Improvement Program (HIP) and Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario (HBPA) for the support of administration of and direct-to-industry communications on the research program.

Media | News Releases: Equine Guelph's media list continues to grow (**160+**) and engagement continues to increase – with open rates rising from an average of 47% in FY2021-22 to **49%** in this fiscal year (industry average is 36% for an educational institute).

- 33 media releases were sent out by Equine Guelph to equine media outlets, organizations, partners, etc. with **100% pick-up**; this generated **307** known articles in the industry in FY2022-23.

News Release Topics: FY 22-23	# Articles Published
Research	97
Education	110
Special Projects	92
EquiMania!	8
TOTAL	307

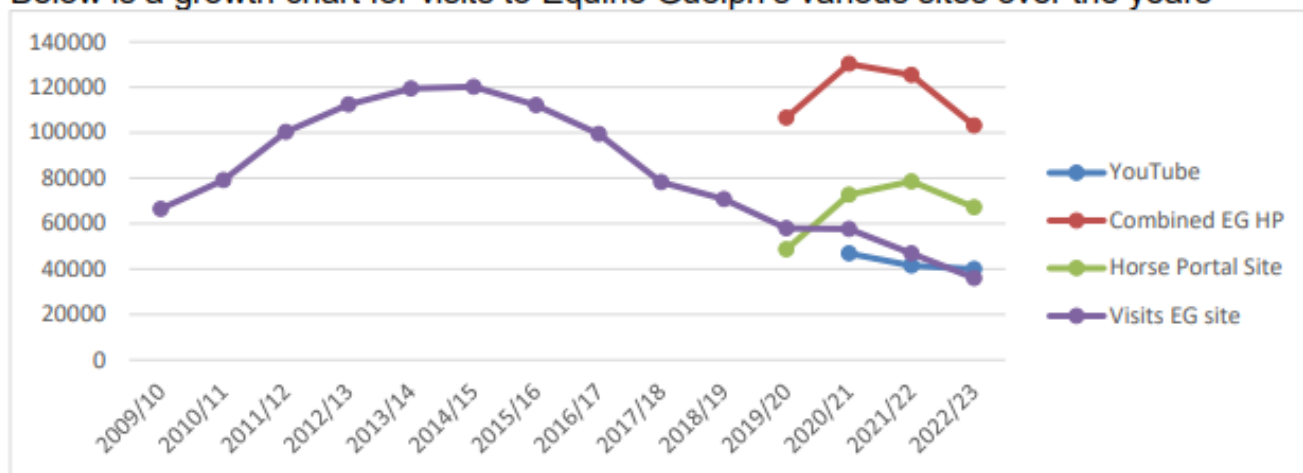
E-News & HEALTHflash: As Equine Guelph enters its 20th Anniversary year, our loyal E-News subscribers – **6,200** at the end of FY2022-23 – are more engaged than ever with open rates soaring from 39 to **46%** for our monthly e-communications (8 issues of E-News and 4 seasonal editions of HEALTHflash).

Annual Newsletter: Volume 20 of Equine Guelph's Research Update was released digitally in January 2023, featuring research by Dr. Judith Koenig and team, who are investigating the potential for stem cells in the treatment of equine osteoarthritis. The newsletter has a research focus (links to researcher videos) with updates on educational programs.

Equine Guelph Websites – EquineGuelph.ca, TheHorsePortal.ca, YouTube Channel:

- Equine Guelph's goal is to point traffic to TheHorsePortal.ca which acts as a virtual portal for a trusted
- source of information on research, special events, and opportunities for education and training for both racing and non-racing sectors of the industry.
- TheHorsePortal.ca page views for this fiscal year were **487,219** with the combined total of page views including EquineGuelph.ca is **540,154**, indicating signs of continuing growth (note: 2020-22 were outlier years due to COVID). Traffic to both websites is arriving primarily through organic and direct searches with Google as the #1 source.
- 39,971** YouTube videos have been viewed this past fiscal year (note: most popular was a video short from the Large Animal Emergency Rescue course).

Below is a growth chart for visits to Equine Guelph's various sites over the years



- Exciting videos of Equine Guelph Alumni are being featured through the 2023 E-News thanks to a partnership with University of Guelph, Bachelor of Bio-Management Resource students who conducted and helped produce this special feature series. Wonderful testimonials were shared by the Equine Guelph program graduates.

Social Media: Equine Guelph continues to maintain a presence on many social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube. In 2022-23, 385 tweets sent out garnered **44,689** impressions. Equine Guelph shared **413** posts on Facebook resulting in a collective reach of **219,167**. Of the traffic to visit EquineGuelph.ca and TheHorsePortal.ca from social media channels, over **90%** came from Facebook.

Equine JobTrack: Given the new reality of the difficulties finding staff, Equine JobTrack (re-launched in March 2021) has been an important free service for the industry, as well as playing a central role in the Ontario Equine Education and Employment program for matching students to facilities. In 2022-23, views to EquineJobTrack.ca was **37,790** with **14,215** clicks on "Start Job Search." Equine Guelph has been working on the Career Showcase – a digital learning object with videos featuring 78 roles in the horse industry – with an anticipated launch later in summer of 2023. Equine Guelph gives sincere thanks to HBPA, Grand River and Ontario Racing for funding.

DEVELOPMENT

Equine Guelph 'Helping Horses for Life' Development Campaign: The following information reflects a summary of fundraising initiatives, private donations and corporate sponsorship sales over the past fiscal year:

	FY21-22 Amount Raised	FY22-23 Amount Raised	FY22-23 No. of Unique Donors	FY22-23 Median Gift
Education	\$7,758.50	\$4,222.00	2	\$2,111.00
Equine Job Track, Large Animal Emergency Training and Youth Programming*	\$50,000.00	\$50,125.00	3	\$100.00
For The Herd Learning Community	\$212.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Kerr Fund for Equine Education and Community Outreach**	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	1	\$100,000.00
OE Welfare Education Fund	\$240.00	\$1,290.00	4	\$10.00
Research	\$2,785.00	\$4,340.55	15	\$100.00
Sponsorship***	\$78,800.00	\$106,800.00	10	\$8,250.00
Stuart Stocks Memorial Equine Award	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Greatest Need	\$26,716.80	\$34,587.00	78	\$30.00
TOTAL	\$167,512.30	\$301,364.55	110	\$30.00

* The Grand River Agricultural Society made a three-year commitment of \$150,000 in support of the following EG initiatives: EquineJobTrack.ca, Large Animal Emergency Training and Youth Programming. The donation for the second year, FY2022-23, was **\$50,000**.

** A generous EG supporter donated \$100,000 both in FY2019-20 and FY2022-23, which in turn, was invested. The purpose of the Fund is to support ongoing base operational funding for EG horse education, communication and community outreach initiatives. The expendable portion of the Fund is dependent on interest rates.

*** Includes an extra \$12,500 from Workplace Safety & Prevention Services whose payment for a sponsorship in FY21-22 was received in FY22-23.

Corporate Sponsorship: The FY2022-23 sponsorship program made gains from the year before (\$78,800), adding one new sponsor and maintaining existing sponsors. Total revenue was **\$106,800**. Sponsors included: Acera Insurance Services Ltd. (formerly CapriCMW) - \$15,000, Boehringer Ingelheim Canada - \$13,500, Central Ontario Standardbred Association - \$5,000, Kubota Canada Ltd. - \$5,000, Merck (Intervet Canada Corp.) - \$7,000, Ontario Racing Management - \$9,000, SSG Gloves - \$15,000, Standardbred Canada - \$2,300, Workplace Safety & Prevention Services - \$25,000, Zoetis (NEW) - \$10,000

Annual Spring Appeal: The 2022-23 spring appeal was mailed in June 2022. Its focus was on education, research and healthcare and its signatory was Sheryl Kerr – an EG student and major donor; the appeal included a letter, donation card and return envelope. The campaign raised **\$2,545** (compared to \$5,695 the past year) yielding 26 donors. The June mailing was followed by an e-mail chaser in July 2022 and raised \$160, including a monthly donor who set up a recurring gift of \$15/month.

Ontario Equestrian Annual Membership Mailing Fundraising Program: Each year Ontario Equestrian (OE), through its annual membership renewal form, gives its members an opportunity to donate to a cause (Equine Guelph is one option on a list of choices). OE raised **\$2,434.62** in the calendar year of 2022 and donated this amount to EG in FY2022-23. (Note: \$3,922 for the calendar year 2021 was also received in FY2022-23).

Equine Guelph Store: Equine Guelph retails laminated HHC barn posters at major events and through mail-order. Total poster revenue in FY22-23 was **\$169.83**.



FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

Revenue/Expenses: Equine Guelph revenue totaled **\$770,693** (compared to \$743,367 for previous year) for the fiscal year with funding provided by our funding partners, donations, and online course tuition. Program expenditures totaled **\$830,437** (\$654,958 last fiscal year).

Research: The research program allocated **\$329,308** for research projects, \$267,423 of which was distributed to researchers this fiscal year (the remaining funds will be distributed once researchers complete their Animal Use Protocols (AUP's) in the new fiscal year).

Education & Communications: Expenditures for the education and communications program were **\$563,014**, which included program development, online education programs, and marketing. Online education tuition returned a total of **\$172,936** (compared to \$177,902 from last fiscal year).

Industry Group Funding: While there are still challenges for ongoing stability in funding for the racing industry, due to the shutdowns, funding levels have been consistent in recent years. Industry funding was **\$38,000**, which equals what was contributed last year. This funding is used for the support of administration of the research funded program and direct-to-industry communications on the research program.

Challenges & Priorities: The majority of funding for the education/communications program continues to come from tuition, sponsorships and successful grant proposals. Research funding continues to be a source of significant concern going forward without specific designated funding identified and protected. While funding has remained somewhat steady in recent years, the goal of stable consistent funding for the programs of Equine Guelph, as a Centre at the University for the horse owner will continue to be an issue of high priority as the industry continues with its efforts to develop a re-organized model that provides it with a sustainable business model. Research and education/training of the members of the racing and non-racing community will continue to be an important part of future success.



The Numbers - Final Quarter Report: The following chart shows Equine Guelph's accounts at the close of fiscal year 2022-23:

OPERATING ACCOUNTS	
Operating Carryforward from 2021-2022	\$290,576
Revenue	
Tuition, Grants, Events, etc.	\$289,726
Industry Support	\$38,00
Interfund Transfer and University Budget Alloc.	\$133,254
	\$460,980
Expenditures	
Staff salaries, benefits	-\$476,785
Operating Expenditures	-\$86,230
	-\$563,015
Total Equine Guelph Carryforward	\$188,541

FUNDS HELD IN ALUMNI AFFAIRS & DEVELOPMENT	
Donations (Education, Area of Greatest Need)	\$88,989
Grand River Agricultural Society – Funding	\$50,125
Sponsorship Revenue	\$170,600
Total Funds held in Alumni Affairs & Development	\$309,714
TOTAL EQUINE GUELPH*	\$498,255
*Total operating C/F + Total Alumni Affairs	
RESEARCH ACCOUNTS	
Research Funding Carryforward from 2021-2022	\$208,611
Revenue	
EP Taylor Endowment	\$100,030
Horse Improvement Program	\$125,000
Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Assn.	\$65,000
	\$290,030
Internal Transfers	
Administrative Support	-\$38,000
Project Funding Returned to Equine Guelph	\$77,000
	\$39,909
Expenditures	
Transfer to Active Research Projects	-\$267,423
Peer Review Honorariums	-\$1,487
Charitable Donations	-\$1,373
	-\$270,283
TOTAL RESEARCH FUNDING**	\$268,267
**Carryforward is to be allocated to recently-funded projects, 2 nd year funding amounts throughout the upcoming FY.	

EQUINE GUELPH ADVISORY COUNCIL, PARTNERS, TEAM

Current Equine Guelph Advisory Council:

Al Patterson, Co-Chair - Industry Member at Large | qtfarm@allstream.net

Gayle Ecker, Co-Chair, Ex-officio - Equine Guelph | gecker@uoguelph.ca

Dean Jeffrey Wichtel, Co-Chair - University of Guelph | jwichtel@uoguelph.ca

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Dr. Thomas Koch - Ontario Veterinary College | tkoch@uoguelph.ca
Bill O'Donnell - Central Ontario Standardbred Association | bill@cosaonline.com
Peter Berringer - Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Ontario Division) | peterberringer@gmail.com
Walter Parkinson - Standardbred Breeders of Ontario Association | seelster@quadro.net

Equine Guelph Research Committee:

Dr. Thomas Koch, Co-Chair | tkoch@uoguelph.ca
Sandra Snyder, Co-Chair | ssnyder@ontarioracing.com
Dr. Adam Chambers, DVM - AGCO | adam.chambers@agco.ca
Dr. Wendy Pearson, Asst. Professor - University of Guelph | wpearson@uoguelph.ca
Dr. Dan Duncan, DVM - AGCO, Horse Improvement Program –Thoroughbred | danielduncan7@icloud.com
Gayle Ecker, Ex-officio - Equine Guelph | gecker@uoguelph.ca
Dr. Victoria Banks, DVM - Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Program | victoria.banks6@gmail.com
Dr. Dorothee Bienzle (retiring from Committee in 2023) - University of Guelph | dbienzle@uoguelph.ca

Equine Guelph Finance Committee:

Gayle Ecker, Ex-officio - Equine Guelph | gecker@uoguelph.ca
Al Patterson, Equine Guelph Industry Member at Large | qtfarm@allstream.net

Partners: Central Ontario Standardbred Association, Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Ontario Division), E.P. Taylor Equine Research, Equestrian Canada, Grand River Agricultural Society, Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario, Ontario Harness Horse Association, Ontario Equestrian, Ontario Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario Racing, Standardbred Breeders of Ontario Association, Standardbred Canada, Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario, Inc. , University of Guelph, Ontario Veterinary College

Equine Guelph Team: Gayle Ecker, Director - gecker@uoguelph.ca

Susan Raymond, Education Program Officer (Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training)
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Henrietta Coole, Corporate Sponsorship & Citizenship Consultant - eginfo@uoguelph.ca

David Finlay, Multimedia Design - finlayd@uoguelph.ca

Jackie Bellamy-Zions, Media Manager & Administrative Assistant - jbellamy@uoguelph.ca

Matt Houlahan, Education Programs Administrator - houlahan@uoguelph.ca



REMEMBERING: Equine Guelph celebrates the legacy of Jean Szkotnicki who served as a representative for Ontario Equestrian on the Advisory Committee. Her passion and dedication to the horse industry will always be remembered.