

Stable Living

Horse lovers reside in coveted apartments at UNH barns

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Linsey Phelan '15 with Icing on the Cake, one of her favorite horses, at the UNH horse barns

From inside her apartment, Linsey Phelan '15 can hear the thundering of horses' hooves. Her neighbor Lynsey Tyler '15 has a paddock for a backyard.

Phelan's apartment is above the indoor riding arena off Mast Road. Tyler's is in the [Lou & Lutza Smith Equine Center](#) next door. Both UNH seniors say they feel incredibly lucky to live in some of the most creative student housing on campus.

"I love getting to know each horse's personality and behavior. It is rewarding to build a relationship and communicate with each one," Phelan says.

Adds Tyler, "I have always loved horses. I started begging for one as soon as I could talk."

But living at the stables is about more than getting their horse fix. It's a job. The students each work a minimum of 10 hours a week, seeing to the daily 5:30 a.m. feedings of some 40-50 horses, administering medications and supplements when needed and doing the nightly "tucking in" that has them giving the horses another serving of hay and confirming that they are properly blanketed and appear happy and healthy.

In addition to getting paid, Phelan and Tyler get a break on the rent. It's a mutually advantageous situation: works for them, works for the equine program.

"It's a huge benefit to UNH to have someone living on the property, especially during an emergency," says Brenda Hess-McAskill, UNH's equine facilities manager. "Because they see the horses all the time, they can tell if something is wrong and notify us right away."

Students from any major can apply for the housing (there's a waiting list for the coveted apartments), but they do need to have experience with horses or other large animals.

An [outdoor education](#) major, Phelan's experience began at 9 years old when she first started riding. She joined the UNH Intercollegiate Horse Show Association team her freshman year and moved to the apartment above the arena when she was a sophomore.

"It's a good deal and it's work that doesn't feel like work to me," the New Jersey native says. "The biggest problem I've had to deal with was a couple of loose horses that I had to go out and get."

Tyler is an [equine industry management](#) major whose only opportunity to take riding lessons came when she was 12. It turned out it was trick riding, but she did learn to stand up on a horse.



Lynsey Tyler '15 in the paddocks behind her apartment at the UNH equine center.

The Gilmanston resident will get plenty of riding in this summer with her job leading trail rides at the Dimond P Ranch in Montana, one of the few ranches that has permission to ride in the Gallatin National Forest bordering Yellowstone National Park.

Tyler started out at UNH in liberal arts then moved briefly to business before deciding to follow her passion. In addition to her job at the horse barns, she works with a rescued mustang at the Live and Let Live Farm in Chichester, where she will do an internship next fall. Up until very recently, she also had a job as a UNH Transit bus driver. Her busy schedule has kept her from being able to get on a horse as often as she would like.

“I want to get my hands more into horses. And before I go to Montana, I want to take Western riding lessons,” she says. “I didn’t grow up around horses so I’m making up for it now.”

Phelan isn’t sure where she will be next fall; outdoor education offers lots of options. For now, she is enjoying her last few months on campus.

“The best part of living here are those moments in the early morning and late at night when it is quiet and I feel like it's just me and the animals, not in the middle of a busy campus,” Phelan says. “But when I need to get to class, it’s only a short walk.”

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