



# Thoroughbred Retirement Placement Program Best Practices

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# Introduction

The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance accredits, inspects, & awards grants to approved aftercare organizations to retrain, retire, & rehome Thoroughbreds using industry-wide funding. Currently, 81 organizations with approximately 170 facilities hold TAA accreditation in the United States, Puerto Rico, & Canada.

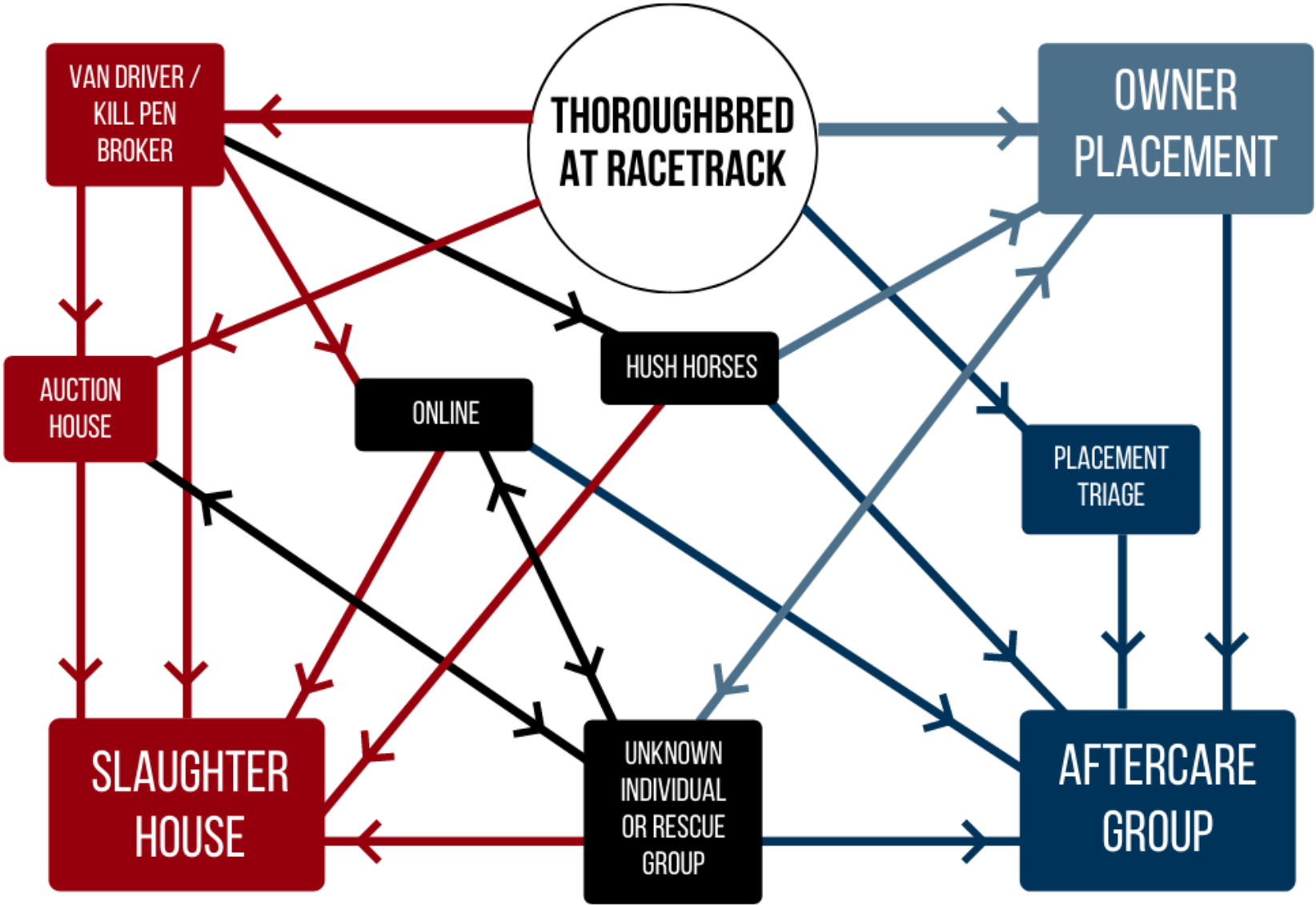
Several TAA-accredited organizations maintain relationships with their local placement programs, which operate out of specific racetracks or racing jurisdictions to facilitate Thoroughbreds in transition.

The TAA interviewed five successful placement programs and compiled their best practices. The need for placement programs is proven by their success.

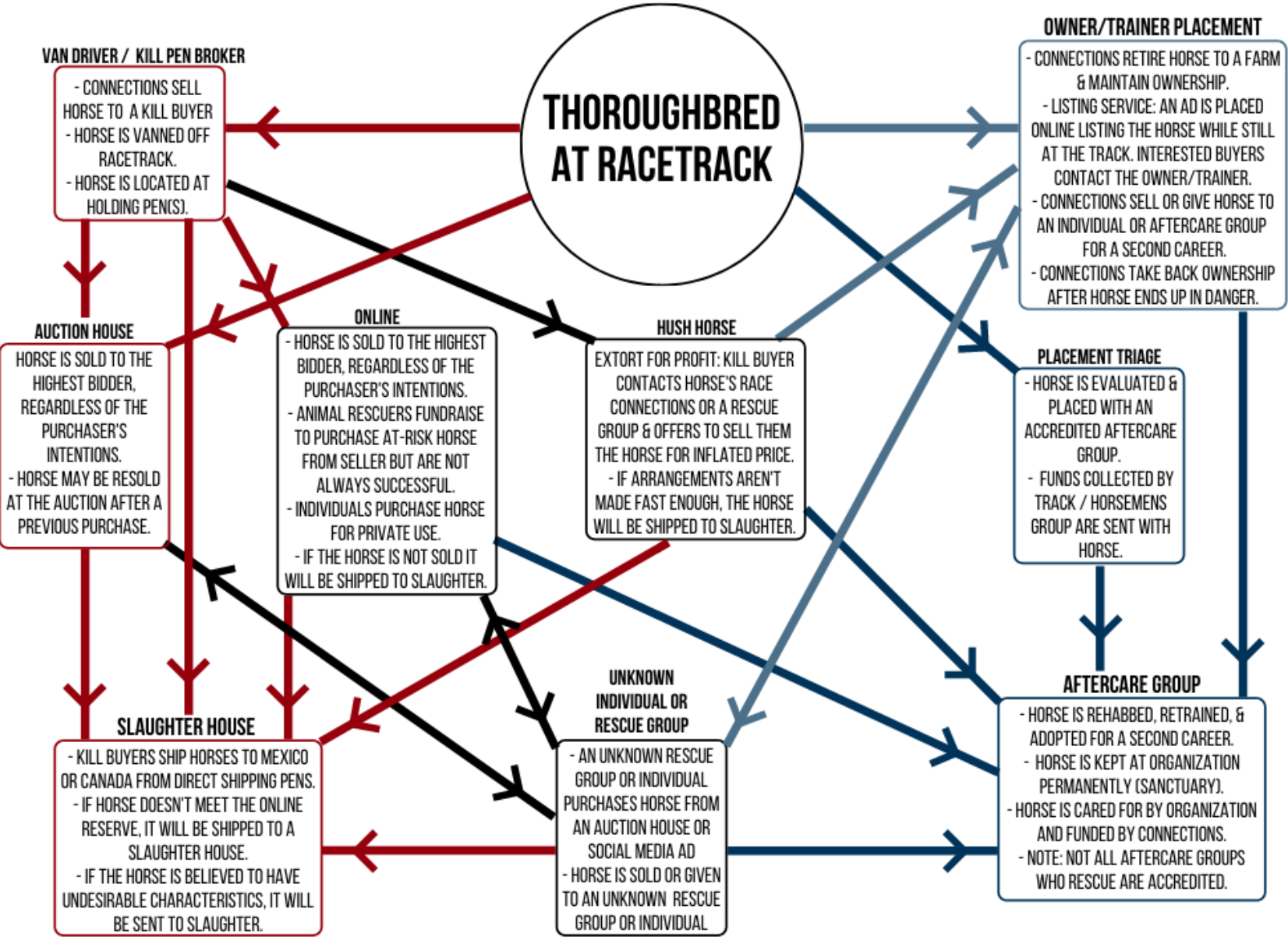
Without advocating for improved methods of retirement and providing owners and trainers more options, the future of many horses in transition and the future of the sport remain at risk.

# Introduction

## WHAT WILL BE YOUR THOROUGHBRED'S FIRST EXIT FROM RACING?



## WHAT WILL BE YOUR THOROUGHBRED'S FIRST EXIT FROM RACING?



Source: Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance

# Scope

## Goal

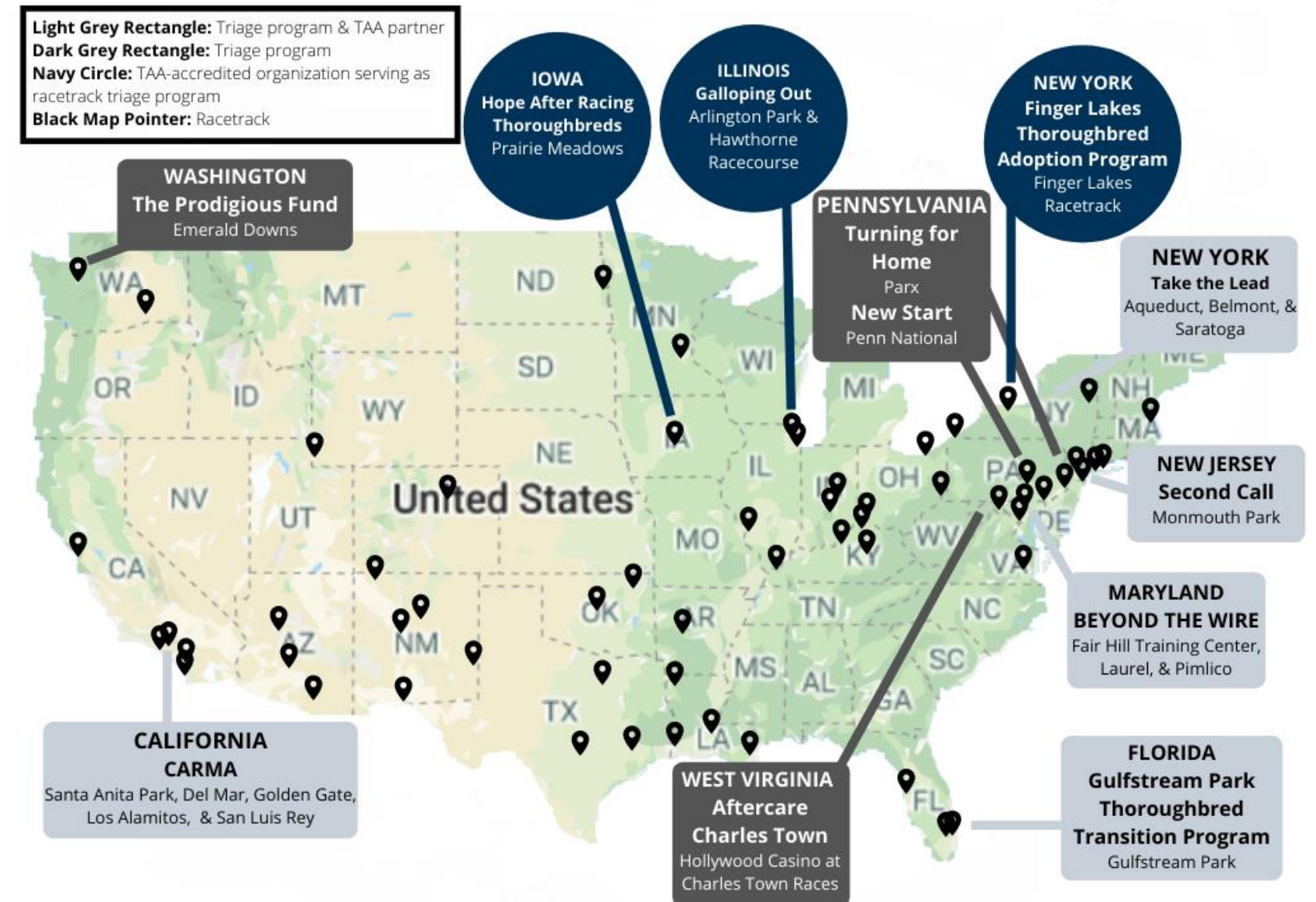
To gain an understanding of existing Thoroughbred retirement placement/triage programs' operations and compile best practices.

Information found will be used as a learning tool for both newly and previously established placement programs seeking advice.

## Process

Each contributing program completed a questionnaire and corresponded via phone and email to answer follow-up questions. This information was collected, evaluated, and condensed.

## U.S. Racetracks & Triage Placement Programs



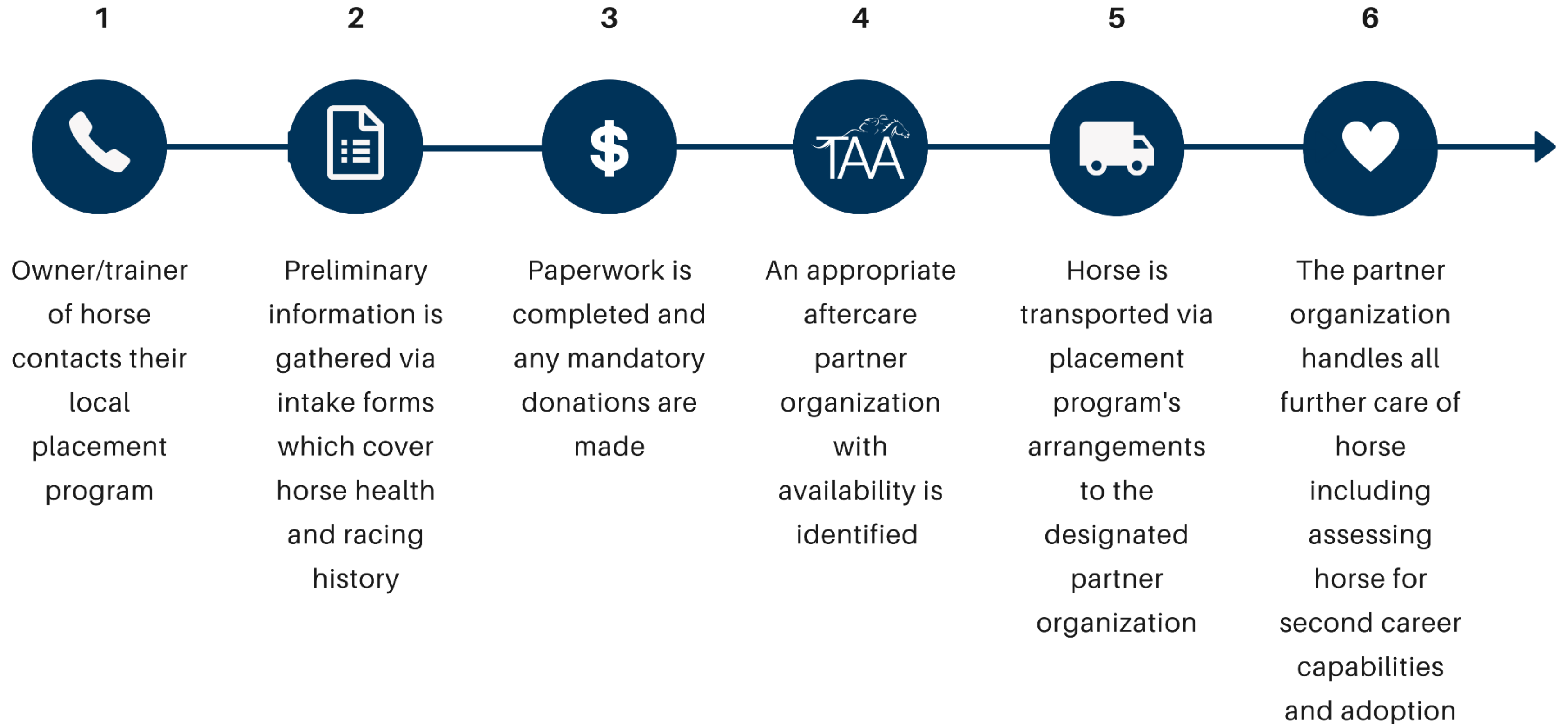
Contributing Programs: Beyond the Wire, CARMA, Gulfstream Park, Second Call, Take the Lead

# Questionnaire

The following questions were answered by the contributing programs:

- 1) What are the steps involved in the retirement and placement process?
- 2) Discuss the importance of intake forms? Do you utilize a waiting list? What, if any, software do you use for keeping track of the horses?
- 3) Does your program provide adoption forms or is it passed on to the organization where the horse is placed?
- 4) How are you funded?
- 5) Do all your horses go to TAA-accredited organizations? If not, what criteria do you have for approving these groups?
- 6) Do you require Jockey Club Certificate of Foal Registration and who retires the horse from racing?
- 7) What Marketing do you do? Do you list all the horses on your own website?

# Placement Timeline



# Intake & Adoption Forms



## TAKE THE LEAD Thoroughbred Retirement Program

Sponsored by the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association  
P.O. Box 21028 • Floral Park, NY 11002  
Contact: Rick Schosberg (516) 528-1360 or Andy Belfiore (732) 673-2855  
Email: ttlhorse@gmail.com Fax Number: (888) 478-2042

### HORSE INTAKE FORM

Owner(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Trainer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Veterinarian \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Horse \_\_\_\_\_ Tattoo # \_\_\_\_\_  
Currently Stabled at \_\_\_\_\_ Barn # \_\_\_\_\_ Stall # \_\_\_\_\_  
Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_  
Date, Track and Finish of Last Race \_\_\_\_\_  
Why is the horse being retired? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Is the horse on any medication? \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Medications/Dosage \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Vaccinations/Dates \_\_\_\_\_  
Injury Report (past and current) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Provide a brief description of the horse's personality, manners and vices on the track and in the barn/stall:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE RETIRING RACEHORSE MUST UNDERGO A VETERINARY EVALUATION AND BE APPROVED AS SUITABLE FOR A SECOND CAREER TO BE ACCEPTED INTO THE TAKE THE LEAD PROGRAM

An example of an intake form from Take the Lead

## Intake Forms

- Initial point of contact between owner/trainer and placement program
- Collect horse's health and history information
- Key to evaluating the horse's needs and arranging transportation and destination

## Adoption Forms

- Typically handled by the partners who take in the horse long-term



# Funding

## Racing Contributions

Claiming assessment, per start contribution, and purse contribution programs. This form of funding is relatively stable and predictable but requires a partnership or agreement with a racetrack or racing group.

## Intake Donations

Required monetary contributions from connections for a horse to be brought into a placement program. This type of funding is sporadic and most useful for covering initial evaluation and transportation costs for the horse.

## Partnerships

Typically made with owners' associations, horsemen's associations, etc., these partnerships can result in periodic donations made by the partner. It may take time to form partnerships, but they can be reliable streams of funding.



# TAA-Accredited Organization Relationships

The placement programs that contributed to this project work with TAA-accredited organizations.

Non-accredited partners must meet criteria established by the racetrack placement program. Horses at these facilities may be transferred to TAA-accredited organizations when space becomes available.



Suzie Picou-Oldham

# TJC Retired From Racing

The process of retiring a horse from racing through The Jockey Club is often handled by the adoption organization, as the process requires notarized signatures from the buyer and seller of the horse. Upon completion of the "sold as retired from racing" process, a horse is no longer eligible to be raced.



# Communications

Communication plays a crucial role in the success of triage/placement programs.

Key components: website, social media, press release, print & digital advertisement.

## Information Provided

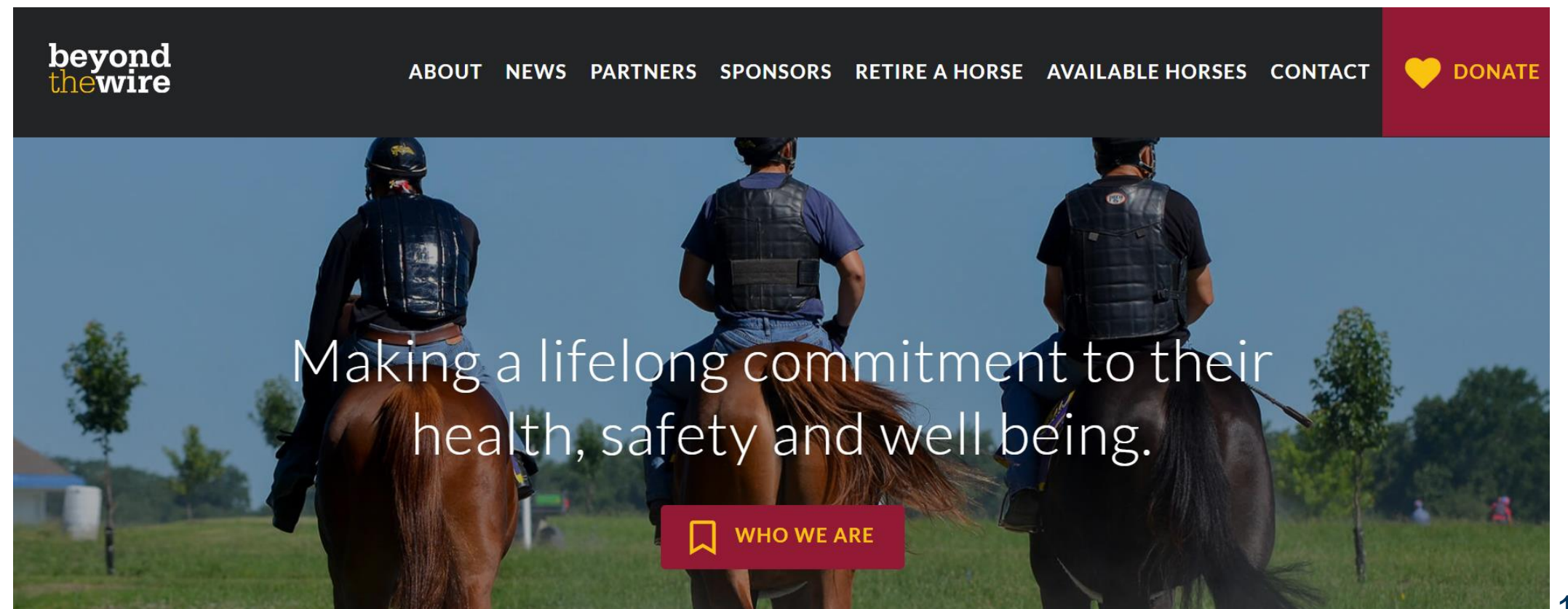
- Program's mission
- Process to retire a horse
- Horses available for adoption
- Important news updates
- Thank supporters & affiliates
- Why & how to donate

Not all components have the same purpose and audience, the intention for each should be made clear in a formal marketing plan.

# Website

## Overview

- Include overview of the placement program, mission, impact, board, staff
- Provide details on how to retire horse through program
- List horses available for adoption
- Regularly post news and updates
- Placement program fundraisers and events
- Provide multiple links to donate



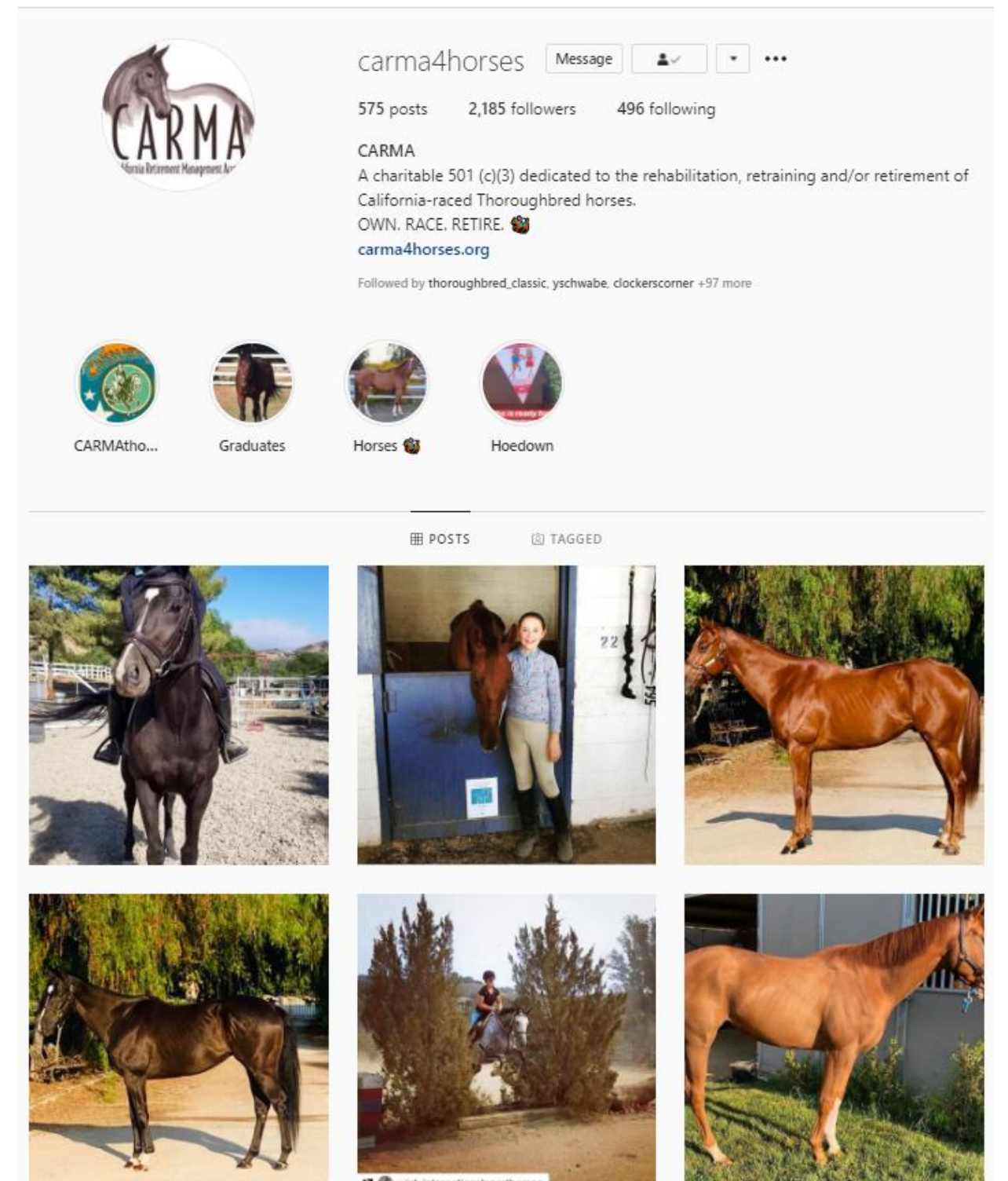
Source: Beyond The Wire website homepage  
<http://www.beyondthewire.org/>

# Social Media

## Overview

- Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram
- Keep followers regularly informed:
  - New horses coming into program
  - Horses available for adoption
  - Adoptions
  - Updates from adopters
  - Important news & updates
  - Acknowledge supporters & aftercare partners
  - Promote fundraisers & events
  - Educate followers on mission of placement/triage program & Thoroughbred aftercare

Source: CARMA Instagram account (@carma4horses)  
<https://www.instagram.com/carma4horses/>



# Press Releases

## Overview

- Email release to industry publications, local media, national media, other equine media, and other individuals as appropriate
- Post release on website
- Share release via social media
- Share release via email newsletter, if appropriate

Source: Press release distributed by NYTHA via Mailchimp email  
<https://mailchi.mp/nytha/record-year-for-nythas-take-the-lead-retirement-program>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 5, 2020

### RECORD YEAR FOR TAKE THE LEAD!

*Uncle Sigh showcases success of NY's Thoroughbred Retirement Program*

New York racing has been on a rollercoaster, but horsemen at the New York Racing Association (NYRA) tracks know they can count on the TAKE THE LEAD Thoroughbred Retirement Program (TTL) through the ups and downs. New York's owners and trainers called on TAKE THE LEAD in record numbers during the organization's 2019-20 fiscal year, which ended May 31, with 135 racehorses transitioning to second careers through the program. That smashed the previous mark of 98, which was set in 2016-17.



TAKE THE LEAD, which was created by the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association in 2013, also celebrated its 500th retirement last year, and hit the 600 milestone by the end of the term. The total number of TTL retirees now stands at 603.

The horses travel many different paths en route to aftercare. Uncle Sigh is a perfect example. The popular New York-bred was second in the Withers and Gotham Stakes in 2014, earning himself a trip to the Kentucky Derby. Fortune did not favor him on the first Saturday in May and he finished 14th, but he went on to a very productive career that saw him win seven of his 42 starts and \$648,686. He made his final appearance at Belmont Park in September of 2019, running seventh, and owner Ronald Brown and trainer Chris Englehart decided it was time for the gelding to bid the racetrack goodbye.

# Advertisements

## Overview

- Digital advertisements
  - Racing publications
  - Affiliated websites
  - Social media
- Print advertisements:
  - Brochures, flyers, etc.
  - Race day & sales programs

Source: A trifold brochure from the Gulfstream Park Thoroughbred Transition Program distributed on the backside to provide owners & trainers an introduction to their services and contact information.



The network that works for you and your horse.

**CONTACT US**  
Raina Gunderson  
(954) 682-1294  
Raina.Gunderson@gulfstreampark.com  
Follow us on Facebook!

**NEED ASSISTANCE RETIRING YOUR HORSE?**

Gulfstream Park Thoroughbred Transition Program

1/ST

FLORIDA HORSEMEN'S BENEVOLENT & PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

Thoroughbred AFTERCARE ALLIANCE

### OUR MISSION

Facilitating safe placements of retired South Florida Thoroughbred racehorses through a network of trusted aftercare partners.

---

The versatility of Thoroughbreds make them exceptional partners for a number of disciplines after racing.

Many OTTBs find great success in second careers and have fulfilling lives.

For assistance placing horses, contact  
Raina Gunderson  
(954) 682-1294  
Raina.Gunderson@gulfstreampark.com



### RAINA GUNDERSON

-Aftercare Liaison-

Mediates the aftercare operations and agreements between 1/ST and Florida HBPA in conjunction with the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, its 74 accredited organizations, and numerous partners for the purpose of easing the complications for South Florida horsemen seeking to retire horses.

### TESTIMONIALS

"Thoroughbreds are at the core of us all and upon completion of their racing careers, we want to use this program's platform to transition our horses to other disciplines, giving them every opportunity to be successful in their new careers."

- Aidan Butler  
Chief Strategy Officer, 1/ST

"Working together with our industry partners, the Florida HBPA proudly supports Thoroughbred aftercare."

- Stephen Screnci  
President, Florida HBPA





“

When you are starting an aftercare program, it helps to have the understanding that these programs are now a societal requirement of the racing industry, not just a luxury. Don't be afraid to ask for what you need from stakeholders. Also, don't be afraid to get started. You can adjust policies and procedures as you go--just get started.

”



**Lucinda Lovitt**

Executive Director  
California Retirement  
Management Account

lucinda@carma4horses.org  
(626) 574-6622  
www.carma4horses.org

“

The most important thing you can do when starting a program at the track is to evaluate the needs of horsemen. Tailoring the program to those needs will give you a greater chance of it being well-received by horsemen and of it becoming successful.

”

“

Establishing trust with the horsemen, solid networking with TAA-accredited organizations, transportation companies, and the veterinary community, and an industry-based funding mechanism are the keys to an effective racetrack-based retirement program.

”



**Jessica Hammond**

Program Administrator  
Beyond The Wire

Jessica@mdhorsemen.com  
310) 776-0404  
www.beyondthewire.org



**Richard Schosberg**

President  
Take The Lead Thoroughbred  
Retirement Program

rsracing2@aol.com  
(516) 528-1360  
www.take2tbreds.com

“

Every horse deserves a dignified retirement, and working with TAA-accredited organizations provides our horses with the security and resources to live long, fulfilling lives.

”



**Laurie Lane**

Co-Founder & President  
Second Call Thoroughbred  
Adoption & Placement

llane2calltap@yahoo.com  
(908) 216-2329  
www.sctap.com

“

Collecting detailed and accurate intake forms, pictures and any other information on the horse is crucial. Documentation and communication is imperative. I also like to follow up on the horse and follow their second career if possible.

”



**Raina Gunderson**

Executive Director  
Gulfstream Park Thoroughbred  
Transition Program

Raina.Gunderson@Gulfstreampark.com  
(954)682-1294

# Thank You

1/ST



# Index

- Accredited Aftercare: Organizations assisting Thoroughbreds in transition from racing careers to retirement who have applied and been approved by the TAA.
- Adoption Form: The form to be kept on file once a horse has been adopted from an aftercare organization which provides details on the adopted horse & the person who adopted it.
- Claiming Fee: Amount paid when a horse is claimed in a race with a donation going to aftercare.
- Contributing Program: Triage/placement programs that the TAA interviewed - Beyond the Wire, CARMA, Gulfstream Park Thoroughbred Transition Program, Second Call, Take the Lead.
- Incompass Solutions Inc.: “Technology solutions & software provider (owned by TJC) for racetracks & simulcast facilities throughout North America. InCompass offers consulting to racing facilities to help them take advantage of statistical racing & customer data.” ([source](#))
- Intake Donations: Money provided by the owner or trainer to accompany a horse being accepted into an aftercare program.

# Index

- Intake Form: Initial form to be submitted by an owner or trainer to the placement/triage program with which they wish to retire their horse.
- Per Start Fee: Amount to be paid by owners to enter a Thoroughbred in a race.
- Purse Contributions: A percentage of purse earnings to be contributed towards an aftercare program.
- Sold As Retired From Racing: “If an owner desires a Thoroughbred to be considered retired from racing, the completion of a Sold As Retired From Racing allows the owner to retire a Thoroughbred from racing without affecting its breeding privileges.” ([source](#))
- The Jockey Club: The breed registry for Thoroughbred horses in the United States, Canada & Puerto Rico.
- Placement Program: Thoroughbred aftercare operations who serve specific racetracks or racing jurisdictions to facilitate horses transitioning from the racetrack to an aftercare organization.