



# HORSEBACK SKILLS CAMP

BLUE STAR CAMPS SINCE 1948

**A WEEK-LONG EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM AT BLUE STAR CAMPS | JUNE 8–14, 2025**

# DEVELOPING FRIENDSHIPS AND EMBRACING ADVENTURES...

## In the Ring and on the Trail!

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina, Blue Star's magnificent 500 acre campus and adjoining 10,400 acre forest preserve inspire campers to connect with the natural world while providing every opportunity for summer adventures.

Our campers spend their days immersed in camp life: enjoying exciting new activities and sharing happy moments with camp friends. Blue Star campers make summer memories that will last a lifetime!

Our goals for this innovative program are to have campers benefit from the development of their equestrian skills, enhance knowledge of equine care, build a relationship between horse and rider, and work together as a team with other camp participants.

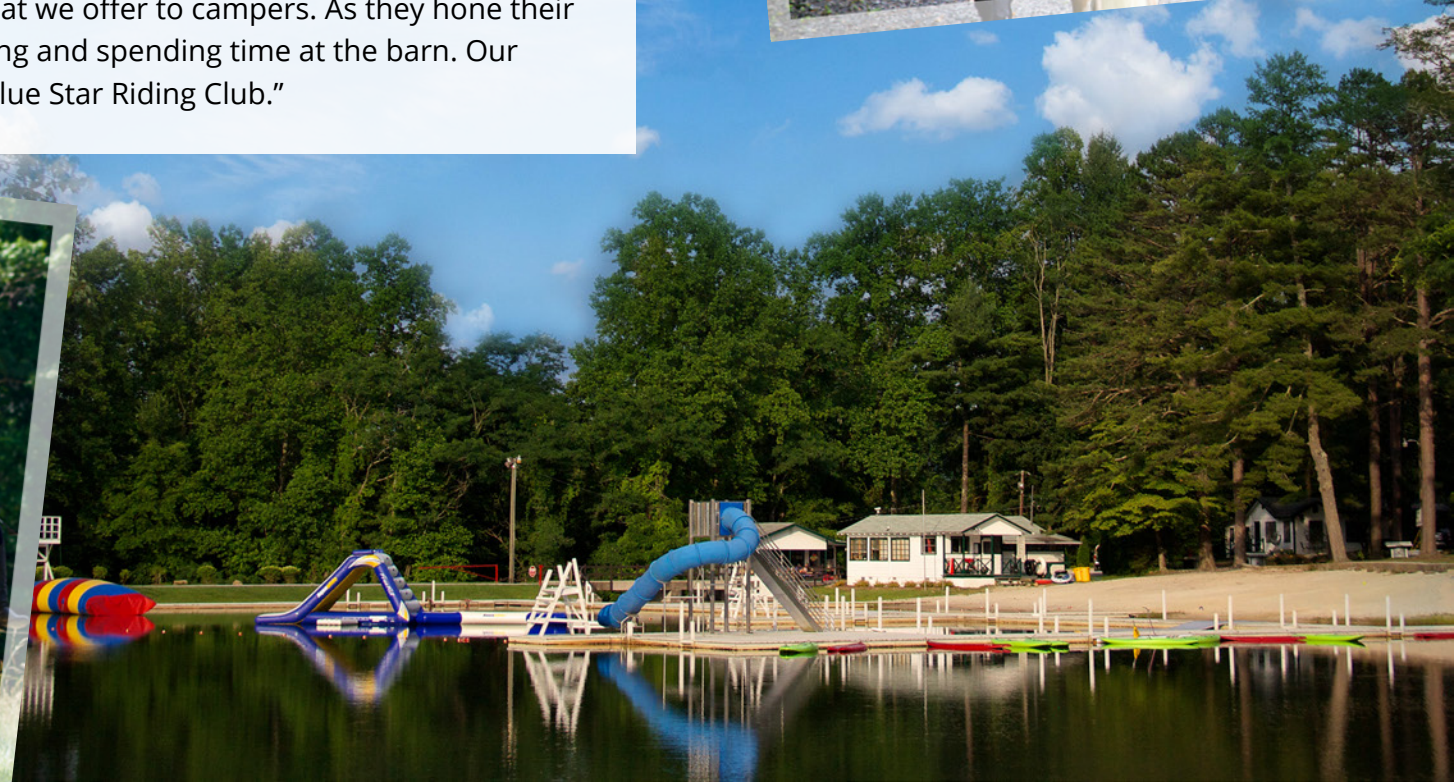


# OUR RIDING PROGRAM

**Blue Star's Equestrian Program offers campers high quality English riding instruction and an opportunity to interact with and care for our specially trained, camp-owned horses.**

As part of Blue Star Camps' national accreditation process through the American Camp Association, our Equestrian Program is additionally accredited by the Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA). Since 1967, CHA's mission is to promote excellence in safety and education through certified instructors and the accreditation of equine facilities.

Our modern barn, six riding rings, plentiful trails, and expansive stable of horses help to create the excellent program that we offer to campers. As they hone their skill sets, they also enjoy the fun of riding and spending time at the barn. Our campers love being members of our "Blue Star Riding Club."



# THE HORSEBACK SKILLS CAMP EXPERIENCE

**The Horseback Skills Camp Experience is all about SAFE RIDING, HORSEMANSHIP and FUN!**

## **What to Expect**

Each camper will be assigned to their “own” horse for the course of the camp (horse and rider appropriately suited). Working together, the camper and horse will become a team by concentrating on the skills of riding. The rider will also be encouraged to understand what their horse is thinking and feeling.

The goal is to better understand and communicate with your mount, so that both horse and rider enjoy their riding time together. In addition to the excitement of riding a horse of their “own,” the camper will learn the responsibility and work involved with properly caring for the horse. After each morning lesson, campers will exhibit the proper care of their horse including tacking, un-tacking, bathing, grooming and stabling.

Campers will be grouped according to age and experience in order to offer the most fine-tuned and highest quality riding instruction. Our instructor to camper ratio is never more than 1:3.



# THE HORSEBACK SKILLS CAMP EXPERIENCE



## Does my child have to have previous riding experience?

Our beginner group will consist of campers who have no to very little experience, or those who have only progressed to the trot. Beginners will focus on learning the correct position and skills necessary to become a balanced rider. The more advanced beginner riders will work towards learning their trotting diagonals, pole work and cross rails.

Novice riders are comfortable with the walk, trot and have limited to no experience with the canter and jumping. Novice riders will focus on improving their basic riding skills, strengthening their core, preparing for cantering and cross rail courses, and working towards the goal of cantering small fences.

Intermediate riders are solid in the walk, trot, canter and jumping up to short/long stirrup (up to 18"). Instruction will be tailored to each individual, building on the rider's skills and adding the finer point of riding.

Advanced riders are confident with all of the above and instruction at this level will emphasize mastery of course skills, linking broken lines, rollbacks, lead changes, lateral work and gymnastics.



# PROGRAM FOCUS

## Horsemanship, Barn Management, and Horse Care

The program will cover safety around horses, horse handling and lessons on colors, markings and breeds. It's our goal for our campers to create a natural bond with their horse and gain a basic understanding of how horses think. Additionally, skills learned will include correct leading, grooming, haltering, saddling, braiding, bathing, stall cleaning and feeding.

## Trail Riding

Campers will participate in a trail ride to suit their ability, which will reinforce the daily lessons learned.

## Blue Star Horse Show

All campers will participate in an on-site horse show that will showcase each rider's abilities and riding skills. Parents are encouraged to attend. This culminating event on Saturday will showcase each individual's abilities and riding skills, focusing on their progress and achievements.

## More Than Just Riding!

Out of the ring, campers have the opportunity to experience a range of other camp activities. Alongside their everyday equestrian activities, campers will also have the opportunity to experience other camp activities such as rock climbing, high ropes, kayaking, waterski and more. Off-camp field trips may also be included!



# CAMP DIRECTORS

## LOUISE HARDMAN Equestrian Program Director

Louise C. Hardman is a long time employee of Blue Star Camps. She brings her extensive knowledge and equestrian background to our program, spending five years as the lead instructor and Assistant Riding Director, Louise has been Director of Riding since 2012. Continuing with Blue Star's fifty year tradition of an established riding program, Louise has continued to develop and strengthen the program based on equitation, good sportsmanship, responsibility and hard work.

Louise brings to Blue Star over fifteen years of teaching and management experience in the equestrian field having managed equestrian programs and camps around the world.

She finds that working daily with each student individually and in a group helps foster a camaraderie and basis for development of talent that can only be achieved through dedication and passion for riding and horsemanship.

With her diverse educational background earning degrees with Honors in Health and Science, specializing in Anatomy/Physiology and Psychology/ Sociology along with her amusing, energetic personality, Louise imparts on our campers a wealth of knowledge, creativity and innovation mixed together with elements of fun. She truly believes that each rider "should be a partner, not a passenger."

Louise is supported by a wonderful team of riding instructors who have extensive knowledge and training in equestrian skills, including CHA coursework and certification. Our team of riding instructors share expertise in their skill areas and create opportunities for campers to improve their riding abilities in a fun and supportive setting. Louise met her husband Ben Prosser at camp. Ben is a Blue Star Camp Director and both Ben and Louise are year round team members, and love spending the summers with their two kids, Harry and Isla. Guiding campers to make friends, take on new adventures and develop their confidence and skills is the mission of the Blue Star staff.



## LAUREN POPKIN HERSCHTHAL Owner / Director

Lauren rose through the Blue Star ranks as a camper, Counselor, and Camp Leader. In 2005 she joined Blue Star's year-round leadership team as an Owner/Director. Lauren graduated from Florida State University with a BS in Anthropology and Sociology and later earned a Master's Degree in Art Education from Pratt Institute in New York. While in New York, she taught art to inner-city children with special needs.

## SETH HERSCHTHAL Owner / Director

Seth has had a wide range of camp and educational experiences prior to joining Blue Star's leadership team in 2007. Seth graduated from Duke University and earned a Master's Degree in Education from Harvard University's School Leadership Program. Seth is an experienced educator having taught Middle School students in both the Dominican Republic and in North Carolina. He also has experience as a Middle School Director and has served on the American Camp Association's Southeastern Board.



# CAMPUS SAFETY & SECURITY

The health, safety and security of our campers is our primary focus.

## Supporting and protecting our camp community are:

- On-site Health Center staff, including registered nurses
- Full-time Health Care Administrator
- Two daily health calls
- 25 bed, air-conditioned facility
- 222 bed hospital—10 minutes away
- 800 bed teaching hospital affiliated with UNC Medical School in nearby Asheville (“Life Flight” accessible)
- Camp entrance is monitored by video surveillance camera
- Staff training with pre-camp distance learning technology
- 7-21 days of pre-camp on location staff training
- All camp staff are pre-screened through personal interviews and staff reference checks including the required Criminal Record checks
- Continuous staff evaluation
- All cabins equipped with Smoke Detection Devices
- Staff practice scheduled fire, aquatic and emergency skills
- Two fire hydrants located around our lakes
- Security, in-camp emergency response team and “911” in-camp emergency line
- Accredited by the Certified Horsemanship Association since 1967
- Annual compliance with the Insurance Safety Audit





# DELICIOUS, NUTRITIOUS MEALS


Blue Star's kosher meals are designed with the interests of kids and parents in mind! Like everything at Blue Star, our food is kid-friendly and includes tons of great options to accommodate every camper's needs. Choice is always a part of the Blue Star menu as we have a full salad bar every day at both lunch and dinner, and fresh fruit as well as other healthy options at every meal. Healthy snacks are also available throughout the day. Campers can choose from apples, granola bars, and other selections if they get hungry between meals.

Blue Star can accommodate special dietary needs including food allergies, vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, and lactose intolerant diets. If your child requires specific food considerations, please let us know.



## CONTACT

[info@BlueStarCamps.com](mailto:info@BlueStarCamps.com)  
828.692.3591



**We welcome all riders entering 2nd – 8th grade!**  
In order to insure quality instruction, we keep our camper-to-instructor ratio low. Please register early to reserve your camper's space in our Horseback Skills Camp.

**JUNE 8-14, 2025    \$2,250**

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW!**