

Team Wesley Makes an Appearance at North Ed Career Tech

By Writers Studio

Traverse City - Wesley, a friendly 28 ½-inch tall horse who regularly visits veterans, kids, and hospital patients, is the face of an anti-bullying campaign for Reining Liberty Ranch. The campaign mainly aims to promote upstanding behavior among kids and to encourage them to stop being bystanders to bullying.

Wesley, although small, has a big heart. “You can just see the anxiety bleed out of people when they pet him. We all need that,” says Becki Bigelow, one of Wesley’s eight handlers, and the executive director at Reining Liberty Ranch. “He has a way of connecting with people who need it.”

Reining Liberty Ranch has a decade-long history of helping spread goodwill and kindness in its community. It was founded in 2012 with the expressed intent of helping veterans with physical, social, and emotional health through various therapeutic programs related to horses. Since its founding, the programs have been a magnet for praise. The Ranch was recently recognized for its exemplary work with veterans at the 2023 Memorial Day Detroit Tigers game.

Wesley’s visit to North Ed Career Tech was helpful in giving Britta Olshove, a second-year student in Career Tech’s Graphic Arts program, a fun face to put on the logo for Reining Liberty’s anti-bullying campaign.

An artsy adolescent, Olshove has a large amount of prior experience in drawing animals like cats, foxes, and dragons, so her skills fit the job perfectly. Olshove was specifically chosen for the task because of her willingness to do extra projects and the reliability that she has shown in her past work. “I like it here because the classes sort of make you work through things,” Olshove said.