

History of City To Saddle

City To Saddle was founded by Barbara Zenker and Kim Summers in 2004. Barbara, a devoted rider, and Kim, an experienced equestrian instructor, had both witnessed - and personally enjoyed - the many benefits derived from the unique and powerful relationship between human and horse. Together, they committed themselves to providing economically disadvantaged youth the same access to these extraordinary opportunities and rewards.

In June of 2004, the first City To Saddle initiative was launched at the Dana Hall School Riding Center Summer Horsemanship Program in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Eight youngsters from Dorchester participated in the pioneer program. In addition to riding, they helped to care for their ponies alongside other Dana Hall campers - learning how to groom, tack, and feed their equine partners. These experiences fostered patience and compassion, while building confidence and trust in both people and horses.

Utilizing the core elements of this pilot City To Saddle program, Barbara and Kim generated an adaptable program template which could be tailored to the particular needs and constraints at other barns. Collaborating with City To Saddle, these venues offered additional riding opportunities to diverse populations of under-served children throughout Massachusetts.

Here is some additional information on some of our inspiring leaders!

Barbara Zenker's love for horses began at age ten while attending an equestrian camp. Though she rode each summer through her sixteenth year, Barbara did not return to the riding arena until age 50. Having retired from corporate real estate development in 1996, Barbara decided to reintroduce herself to the horse world at the Dana Hall community riding program. Her instructor was CTS co-founder Kim Summers. Delighted by the complete horsemanship experience, its uncompromising athletic challenges, and spiritual rewards, Barbara is now focused on the discipline of Dressage. She rides daily with partner, Moretti, a Swedish Warmblood schoolmaster. Barbara boards and trains at Elysium Farm in Harvard, Massachusetts. Barbara, a Trustee of the Weston Forest and Trail Association, resides in Weston, Massachusetts with her husband Arnold. Their daughter, Jennifer is an attorney residing in New York City.

Kim Summers began riding as a six year old on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. At age ten, she became a working stable assistant to help pay for huntseat riding lessons and showing expenses. After moving to a recognized show stable, Kim began training with top professionals – leasing her first horse as a working student – and earning many show championships. She obtained her first instructor's license in 1980. Kim attended the University of Massachusetts, Amherst's Equine Studies Program and, upon graduating, began breaking and training young horses for the racetrack. After many years in the corporate world, Kim returned to the riding arena full-time. For ten years (1994-2004) she taught at the Dana Hall School Riding Center in Wellesley, Massachusetts, serving as Camp Director and year-round instructor to community riders, Dana Hall and Wellesley College student equestrians. Kim directed the purchase and sale of horses for clients, and successfully trained and coached students at the hunter-jumper and equitation horse shows. Kim, and her son Patrick, who is now a student at Avon Old Farms School, live in Avon CT. Kim is President of Student Concierge Services, a business she started which augments the services available to international and out-of-state boarding students at private schools in CT.