



www.gatewayhorseworks.org

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Kristen de Marco **Executive Director**

[Kristen de Marco](#) has shown in a few years what can be accomplished by one woman with vision, commitment, and an understanding of critical unmet needs in her community.

Believing in the teaching and healing powers of horses, and wanting them to be accessible to everyone rather than an elite experience, she is leading the way in developing, promoting and providing Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) services throughout the area.

With a lifetime of experience riding and training horses, and an education in Communications Arts & Psychology from Villanova University, in 2011 Kristen learned about a cutting-edge, experiential therapy that incorporates horses for emotional growth and learning, and was inspired to gain certification as an Equine Specialist in the internationally recognized EAGALA Model®. The following year she founded [WorkHorse](#), an Equine Assisted Professional Development company serving the needs of teams in corporate, academic, and government organizations.

Kristen is also passionate about educating the mental health community about Equine Assisted Psychotherapy with a focus on underserved and marginalized populations. To ensure that all people in the community have access to EAP, she founded [Gateway HorseWorks](#), a nonprofit organization offering transformative EAP services to children, adults, and families in a healing, farm-based environment. Since its founding, Kristen and Gateway HorseWorks launched several innovative programs for: women in pre and post release from prison, girls on juvenile probation, survivors of human trafficking, men and women recovering from addiction, and grief & bereavement programming for children and families.

In addition to developing and managing [Gateway HorseWorks](#) as Executive Director, and [WorkHorse](#) as President, Kristen participates in sessions as a certified Equine Specialist. She is also working alongside colleagues to conduct research on the effectiveness of EAP, presents workshops to mental health practitioners on animal-assisted interventions, and co-authored a [manuscript](#) published in an academic, peer-reviewed journal. As she looks to the future, she aims for Gateway HorseWorks to provide increased access to EAP services in the community.

Kristen lives in Malvern, PA with her 8-year-old son, and spends as much time at the barn as she can.

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