



OCT. 8–11 | THE KENTUCKY HORSE PARK

Thank you for deciding to start a personal fundraiser as part of our Make the Makeover campaign! And congratulations on your acceptance to the Thoroughbred Makeover trainer class of 2025. Committing to both endeavors is commendable and courageous, and we couldn't be more excited to partner with you on this journey until we meet at the Kentucky Horse Park this fall.

What is Make the Makeover?

Make the Makeover (MTM) is a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign whereby Makeover trainers individually raise money to support the Retired Racehorse Project's (RRP) production of the Thoroughbred Makeover. Fundraisers are encouraged to use the campaign to share training updates and their personal milestones as they prepare for this landmark event. Every trainer who raises \$1000 or more for the RRP will be awarded a \$350 refund on their entry fees to the competition.

When we launched this initiative in 2024, we had a few goals in mind.

We hear firsthand from trainers about the triumphs and hurdles that come from preparing a recently retired Thoroughbred for the Makeover, and wanted to encourage you to share these stories with your personal communities. By committing to this journey with your OTTB you are truly transforming the aftercare landscape and paving the way for greater opportunities for Thoroughbreds in their post-racing careers – that is a feat worth celebrating! **Make the Makeover creates a platform for you to share what this experience means to you, and for your community to champion you through these challenges and victories.**

We also know just how deeply invested, both emotionally and financially, each of you are in the Makeover. While scholarships, prize money, and special awards are incredible ways to support or incentivize this process, many of these are dependent on the horse's racing or adoption history, your placement in preliminary competition, or are contingent on making it to the show at all. **With rising costs in all sectors, our aim is to remove as many financial barriers to participation as possible by creating a refund program available to every eligible trainer at any stage in the preparation process.** As a non-profit, the RRP also feels financial strain as we rely on the support of donations, grants, sponsorships, Makeover fees, and merchandise sales to raise the funds we need to produce the Makeover and our other services. That's why we

put the call out to Makeover trainers, inviting them to share their experience with the process and expand the reach of our mission-driven work.

Ready to get started? Here's what you need to know.

Eligibility

You must be an individual trainer or team captain accepted to the 2025 Thoroughbred Makeover to create a MTM fundraiser.

Team members are encouraged to share the pages created by their team captain. Individual fundraisers cannot be combined.

All fundraiser pages will be reviewed by RRP staff to ensure eligibility requirements are met. Once created and approved, fundraising pages will be linked to your horse's profile at therrp.org/entries

Prizes

All trainers (individuals or team captains) who raise \$1000 or more will receive a refund of \$350 in entry fees from the RRP. The top three highest fundraisers will earn the following additional prizes:

1st place: 52" Exmark Radius S Zero Turn Mower from Equine Equipment (\$10,000 value)

2nd place: HERO Pico PEMF machine + accessory bundle by Magnus Magnetica (~\$4000 value)

3rd place: \$500 cash prize from RRP

Fundraising Guidebook and FAQ's

Fundraising does not fall into everyone's comfort zone, and that's ok! The peer-to-peer structure of Make the Makeover is designed to make fundraising manageable and your goals achievable.

So, where do I begin?

- There is no “one size fits all” template for how to share your MTM campaign. Your journey to the Makeover is unique – as is your relationship to your family, friends, coworkers and others you might ask to support you. To be successful with fundraising, you’ll want to get more personal than a template anyway. **Start by reflecting and truly understanding your why.** The Makeover is not the destination after all, it’s simply a steppingstone on your retraining journey. So, what’s your why? Why does the RRP’s mission resonate with you, why have you chosen a Thoroughbred as your riding partner, why is the Makeover an important benchmark towards your goals, what do you hope it teaches you (or perhaps, what has it already?). Your “why” doesn’t perfectly mirror anyone else’s, and that is a beautiful and compelling thing worth sharing.
- **Be specific with the what.** The money raised produces this unique competition, but it also benefits you, our trainers! Be honest about your remaining needs and share that, along with your “why,” with specific people! Think of your horse's track connections, barn or horse show friends, coworkers, family, etc. and don't be afraid to follow up. Be consistent, patient, and intentional.

Can I use social media?

Your MTM GiveLively page can (and should!) be posted on your social media pages, but keep in mind that open asks are likely to be scrolled past and lost. Instead;

- **Try a targeted, specific ask** (“I’m looking for ten friends to donate \$10 this week”) – don’t forget to update your post or add a comment thanking public donors as you progress!
- **Give a status update on your fundraising total** when you post an update about your Makeover horse (“This week, we headed to our first horse show, etc etc. Our Make the Makeover fund is at \$350! Only \$650 to go to reach our goal!”)
- **Include public acknowledgement of your donors** (“Thank you to my friend @MeganGarlich for supporting my journey to the Makeover!”)
- **Provide specific details** about why the work of the RRP is important to support, or why you’re participating in the Thoroughbred Makeover this year

What if I’m not seeing results from social media?

Tips for a direct approach

Make personal asks of your family, friends, or coworkers for their support. Here’s an example of how making targeted asks of your networks can get you to \$1,000:

- Five family members at \$50 = \$250
- Ten friends at \$25 = \$250
- Ten coworkers at \$10 = \$100
- Five of your fellow boarders at \$30 = \$150
- An employer donation of \$250

There are plenty of ways to break \$1,000 into smaller chunks and make a smaller, more manageable ask of the individuals in your life! People are more likely to donate to something they have a personal connection to (you!). Your personal touch is what makes this effective, so make sure your network knows that you stand to benefit from reaching your goal, too!

Previous Horse Connections

Your horse likely had a team of individuals rooting for them before embarking on their second career. Many of these individuals would enthusiastically offer their continued support if given the opportunity, especially because a donation to Make the Makeover also shows their support of the biggest movement in aftercare through the RRP.

Reach out to those racing connections! Work on getting in contact with your horse's breeder(s), trainer(s), and former owner(s).

Some good places to start are Equibase and Equineline. If you are struggling to find direct contact information, use the TB Makeover Trainer Facebook group to see if anyone is familiar with your horse's connections.

You may also email us at secretary@therrp.org and we will do our best to pass along any contact information we have.

Once you have obtained their contact information, introduce yourself to your horse's connections! Let them know how your horse is doing in his/her second career, your goals for this year's Thoroughbred Makeover, and how their donation to your Make the Makeover campaign would support your journey with the horse they so thoughtfully raised.

Tips for a creative approach

Fundraising doesn't mean ONLY that you have to keep asking people for money, nor does it have to be painful or boring. Consider putting your own spin on one of these strategies:

- **Treat your donations as mini-sponsorships:** offer to list your donors' names on a stall banner or print them on a shirt that you'll wear for your public outings
- **Make a tiered thank-you system:** tell your networks that all your \$50 donors will get a batch of home-baked cookies as a sign of your gratitude!
- **Build a unique "sponsorship" model into something you're already planning on doing:** going to a local horse show for your Makeover horse's first trip over fences? Ask your friends to sponsor every jumping effort you'll attempt for \$20 each
- **Challenge your circles:** pick a safe but fun challenge that you'll video for your followers if they can help you reach a fundraising goal by a particular date. 2024 Makeover trainer Rebecca Gershowitz took this approach and found it to be both fun and successful;

"My MTM fundraiser started strong with the generous help of my mare's track connections and some awesome friends. But I hit a plateau...I made an Instagram page specifically for my horse, but I wasn't great about continuing to ask there either. I finally decided I needed to offer something in exchange for donations. I put out a challenge to family, friends, and followers: help me pass the \$1000 goal, and I promised to run around cross country on a stick horse in a tutu. And what do you know, within days, I surpassed the goal! People like to help, but they love to laugh! Training horses can be stressful; fundraising doesn't have to be!" - RG, 2024

How can I use the MTM goal tracking template?

Save this track and feel free to use it on your social media or share with your network. Sometimes a visual metric of progress is helpful for inspiring people to participate, and it's a fun way to remember to share more consistent updates as new donations come in!



How does it work? Instruct your family, friends, and followers to select a square and donate the amount that corresponds to the number they've chosen. Let's say someone chooses the \$50 square and donates accordingly - go ahead and mark that off on the board (with an emoji, an X, etc.) and be sure to post updated tracks to demonstrate your evolving needs. Give your donors a shoutout or tag them in your updates to show your appreciation. If every square is purchased, you will have raised \$1500!

Thank you!

We hope this guide aids and empowers you as you get started with your fundraisers. As always, don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions! Stay tuned for further tips and guidance throughout the year.

Megan Garlich | Development Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Megan Garlich". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Megan" written in a larger, more prominent style than the last name "Garlich".