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**TRI-CITIES HORSEBACK RIDING PROGRAMS RECEIVE NEARLY \$10,000 IN GRANTS
FROM RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES**

Saginaw, Mich., Feb. 10, 2009 – Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Outstate Michigan announced it will award \$5,000 to the Exceptional Horseback Riders of Saginaw County, Inc. to pay for more than 30 physically and mentally challenged students to participate in a seven-week horseback riding program. In addition, \$4,689 has been awarded to the 4-H Horsemanship for Handicappers program which will purchase riding equipment for 20 physically and mentally challenged students in Bay County.

Horseback riding has been found to develop self-awareness and build self-confidence as well as relax and strengthen their muscles. “We’ve learned that horseback riding is a very beneficial form of recreational therapy for disabled children,” said Lesa Dion, executive Director of RMHC of Outstate Michigan, “We’re glad to help provide these services to children in the Saginaw and Bay County areas.”

Ronald McDonald House Charities seeks, finds and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children. Since 1990, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Outstate Michigan, which serves 66 Michigan counties, has supported programs, projects and organizations that focus on the social, physical and emotional well-being of children. This past year, RMHC of Outstate Michigan has donated more than \$600,000 to children's programs, including \$50,000 donations to both the Ronald McDonald House of Western Michigan and the Ronald McDonald House of Mid-Michigan. For more information please visit www.michiganrmhc.org or contact Lesa Dion at 616-669-0953.

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