

Martha's love of horses began at 6 yrs. old when her father took her to a local stable for monthly trail rides together. This eventually led to weekly Hunter/Jumper riding lessons and then at the age of 12 she switched to an Arabian show stable where she was trained to ride Saddleseat & Western Pleasure. Martha became a self-proclaimed "BarnRat" every day after school & on weekends & learned how to do just about every chore on the farm (including putting up hay, driving a dually with a loaded 4-horse trailer attached, handling the mares while they were being bred, helping to build a round pen and indoor arena, kneeling on the horses' necks while the Vet did castrations, being the "CrashTestDummy" while young horses first learned to accept weight on their backs, etc...). She enjoyed competing in Central New York's Arabian horse shows with her beloved leased 1/2 Arab gelding Grand Tobias (aka: Toby). She also landed a spot on the Empire State Arabian Horse Association's Junior Judging Team & traveled to Louisville, KY with her teammates to compete at Nationals. While a Senior in high school, Martha's trainer assigned her a 4 year old unbacked "project" horse that nobody else had time for. Within 6 months she had backed & trained the purebred gelding for the Jr. Horse show ring where he had great success.

Martha holds two Bachelor Degrees (BA in History w/ a minor in Spanish & BS in Nursing) and has worked in the fields of Education (teaching Jr./Sr. High School Spanish) and Nursing (working in the Medical/Respiratory ICUs, Oncology & Hospice settings). In the beginning of 2015, after an almost 30 year sabbatical from working with horses, she reconnected by volunteering with a local therapeutic riding program and was impressed with how the interactions between challenged riders & horses changed lives. Volunteering with a TR program as a consistent member of a team helping individuals work towards their goals felt incredibly rewarding & she was hooked. This led to her restarting her own riding lessons (dressage this time around), working at the barn part-time and eventually becoming a Board Member of the nonprofit. After encouragement from her mentors (a particularly BIG thank you to Lisa James), Martha began an intense process of training to become a PATH International Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor, which she completed in October of 2017. She is so happy to be a part of the Rise Up Therapeutic Horsemanship team and is looking forward to Rise Up's first 2018 Session at their new host location, Bryan Pond Stables.

Martha is owned by her Dalmatian "Hubble", her Great Dane "Sula", and is happily married to husband Troy. Favorite hobbies include reading, collecting vintage card catalogs and rescuing dogs. Martha loves to travel internationally & thus far has been to England, Wales, Canada, France, Greece, Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Mexico, Curacao and the Dominican Republic. A Rhine River Cruise is planned for the Spring of 2018 (with stops in Sweden, Germany, France & Switzerland).