

HORSES AND HUMANS RESEARCH FOUNDATION (HHRF) FACILITATES UNIVERSAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE OF HORSES ON HUMANS.

Scientific Advisory Panel and Advisory Council Established

Two new advisory committees were simultaneously established recently to aid HHRF in decision making and planning. The Advisory Council looks at all aspects of the organization, acting as direct advisors to our governing board and staff. They will provide perspectives and recommendations related to governance, administration, finance, fundraising, research priorities and more.

The Scientific Advisory Panel specifically concentrates on research-related advising. This group of leading researchers and experts from equine assisted activities and related fields counsels and assists the HHRF staff and board in scientific strategic decision making, educational outreach and in areas related to grant applications and assessment. Their contributions help sustain the most relevant and highest quality research possible.

Advisory Council:

Renee Casady, Belle Center, OH
Marjorie Kittredge, Boxford, MA
Nancy McGibbon, Green Valley, AZ,
Kitty Stalsburg, Lyme, CT
Leeda Fletcher, Mt. Kiscoe, NY

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Victoria Haehl, Chelsea, MI
Brad Lewis, Laytonsville, MD
Karyn Malinowski, Manville, NJ
Paul Spiers, Danvers, MA
Jose Szapocznik, Miami, FL
Clare Thomas, Dover Foxcroft, ME

Update from 2006 HHRF Grant Recipient Tim Shurtleff:

Preliminary analysis of the movement data for the first three patients who just finished their initial hippotherapy (HPOT) intervention shows changes in head and trunk control which are very similar to those seen in the pilot study. This is very encouraging because if the others show the same results, we will be able to report results to the medical and scientific community which are statistically powered.

All subjects are very happy with the HPOT experience and want to continue (In fact, they wish they did not have to wait the three months for the final testing before they can go back to riding horses!). They all report better balance, strength and control and feel it improves other parts of their lives.

Based on pilot results and strengthened by this extended effort, we have submitted a grant to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to extend the study of hippotherapy further. We will not only assess motor control changes, but also functional improvements, gait, self-concept, participation and occupational performance. We will also have a control group who get an equivalent amount "traditional therapy" as the HPOT group.

The support of the Horses and Humans Research Foundation to allow us to further refine our methodology strengthens our application to NIH--for what will be the first randomized clinical trial of hippotherapy--the gold standard for medical research.

-Tim L. Shurtleff, OTD, OTR/L, St. Louis U.

Second HHRF Grant Cycle Completed on June 30th 2007.

Upon preliminary inspection, we are especially impressed at the consistent quality of rigorous, scientifically designed research.

A higher percentage of projects have made it past the first round of evaluations and will now proceed to the next level of review by our 2007 appointed scientific review committee members.

Our sincere gratitude and respect is extended to every applicant who has taken the impressive strides of developing thoughtful, professional research.

You are instrumental in paving the way to an enlightened future in this industry.

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President's Perspective:

Dear Friends,

The Horses and Humans Research Foundation was founded on two key premises: 1) the field of equine assisted activities/therapies (EAA/T) is in extreme need of solid scientific research and 2) if we put the money out there, the research would come.

We all know how important research is, but I do not think we can even begin to imagine the impact that quality research could have on the industry.

After several years of establishing a Board of Directors, building financial support, constructing a strong administrative base, engaging researchers, and spreading the word, HHRF was able to award it's first grant, for \$50,000, to a team of St. Louis University researchers in 2006.

The bar has been set at a very high level of research competency and we are looking forward to awarding another \$50,000 in 2007, possibly to one of the proposals we received for the June 30 deadline.

With the basics of the grant cycle now established, the Board turned to governing for growth. Thanks to the support of the William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation, we recently released a strategic plan (available at horsesandhumans.org) to direct that growth and promote our vision of the future.

The wheels are now turning, and that momentum is due in part to every single contribution, big and small. Thank you for yours, whether you've made a donation, helped to get the word out, submitted a proposal for research funding or served as a volunteer. We are so very grateful for your help.

In appreciation,

Molly Sweeney

President, Board of Directors

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

HHRF is pleased to welcome two new members to the Board of Directors.



Alan Young, of Punta Gorda, FL is former Vice-President and CFO of Westwood Squibb, a Division of Bristol Myers Squibb. He brings to the table specialized expertise in finance and business planning. Young has served as President of The Financial Executives Institute-Buffalo Chapter, President of the Accounting Council at Canisius

College, President of Lotlorien Therapeutic Riding Center and as Treasurer of NARHA. Young says: "I have personally observed the benefits that horses have provided to children and adults both physically and emotionally. It would be rewarding to utilize my business skills to assist an organization that is dedicated to promoting research that will demonstrate the effectiveness of equine assisted activities."



Octavia Brown, Gladstone, NJ, is Associate Professor of Equine Studies at Centenary College in Hackettstown and director of Therapeutic Riding at Centenary. She was a member of the founding board of directors of NARHA, serving several terms from 1969 to 1990. A NARHA Master Instructor, she has served as chair of several NARHA committees, most

recently the Certification Committee. Octavia joined the board of the Federation Riding for the Disabled International in 1997, and was President from 2000-2003. Octavia was named winner of the NARHA James Brady Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998 and other honors include New Jersey Horse Council Horse Person of the Year 1981, NARHA President's Award 1989, NARHA Special Award for work on Accreditation 1990 and NARHA Directors' Award 1990. Says Octavia: "Bona fide research is perhaps the least well supported area and also the least explored area, due to the very nature of the subject matter: we all know it feels good to ride, but how and why remain mysterious!"

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THANK YOU 2006 DONORS!

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Hot From the Presses: Dolan Foundation commits \$50,000 to HHRF research.

Our largest ever granted donation will be matched dollar for dollar by HHRF's anonymous challenge fund! The vision of the Dolan Foundation is demonstrated by their early investment in HHRF's mission, and will ensure continued research and advances.

HHRF has been out and about! You may have seen us at a North American Riding for the Handicapped Association regional conference, the American Hippotherapy Association national conference or NARHA National Conference. We'd like to introduce HHRF's plans and activities at your conference or meeting as well! Contact us for more information.

☞ I will gladly support Horses & Humans Research Foundation. Enclosed is my check for \$_____.

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Please make checks payable to
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 Foundation**

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Thank you for your support!

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Recent Honors:

HHRF Advisory Council member **Marj Kittredge** received the NARHA Founder's Award and Executive Director **KC Henry** received the NARHA James Brady Professional Achievement Award for industry service at the 2006 NARHA National Conference. Kudos!

COLLABORATION...

Those who most understand the need to verify the effectiveness of equine assisted activities are equine assisted activities programs. You know that your riders' insurance companies often refuse to reimburse their therapy sessions; their doctors hesitate to prescribe the treatments; even donors are sometimes affected by the lack of solid evidence to support the benefits of EAA programming.

Evidence based research will deliver the needed verification. If you haven't already, please consider adding 'research' to your organizational budget as a line item. To be sure those funds are effectively invested into competitive, rigorous and influential scientific research, perhaps you will consider contributing directly to HHRF research programs. Your investment would be utilized through an open award process to competitively selected projects.

...Can you really afford not to?

www.horsesandhumans.org receives a facelift!

In the coming month, the newly updated Horses and Humans Research Foundation website will go live. As part of the update, HHRF will take online credit card donations via pay pal. The new site also features updated grant application information, listing of advisory committees, news and deadlines and more. The site update, as well as HHRF's new logo and database software was made possible by a grant from the William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation. Thanks to Ohio Photographs for design work and Cassidy Web Creations for continued web administration.

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