H&H RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Horses & Humans Research Foundation

Newsletter, Edition 2, 2010

Supporting Research to Further Develop Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies

Two Research Projects Receive HHRF Funding

The board and staff of Horses and Humans Research Foundation are pleased to announce the exciting results of our 2010 grant awards. The HHRF board of directors have selected two very impressive research proposals!

The first proposal, Basic Neurobiological and Psychological Mechanisms Underlying Therapeutic Effects of Equine Assisted Activities (EAA/T), will be a joint effort by researchers from Germany, Austria and Sweden. This team of investigators led by Dr. Andrea Beetz of the University of Rostock, Germany will conduct two randomized trials investigating the benefit of EAA compared to conventional therapy with regard to the reduction of stress and the facilitation of trust and connection to others. The measures are based on attachment theory and known effects of the hormone oxytocin.

The second proposal, Effects of Hippotherapy on Balance and Gait in Ambulatory Children with Spastic Cerebral Palsy, is being headed by Debbie Silkwood-Sherer of Central Michigan University and Nancy McGibbon of Therapeutic Riding of Tucson, Inc. The purpose of this randomized controlled clinical trial is to determine if 12 weeks of hippotherapy, when added to the usual therapy for young children with CP, will improve their balance and gait more than their usual therapy alone. The investigating team will also evaluate the children's visual motor integration, activities, participation and quality of life before and after hippotherapy.

We were pleased to receive thirty-seven high quality applications from nineteen states in the United States and from seven different countries. Twenty-seven universities were represented as well as over thirty EAA/T programs. Interestingly, the vast majority of the applications were related to mental health. To see more details about the profile of our applicant mixture, you may visit our web site.

Researchers interested in applying to our next grant cycle are encouranged to check out our new webinar on preparing your HHRF grant application, which is also at www.horsesandhumans.org.

Molly Sweeney Wins James Brady Memorial Award

Molly Sweeney, President and Founder of HHRF, has been awarded the prestigious 2010 James Brady Professional Achievement Award. The award was presented during the 2010 NARHA National Conference and Annual Banquet held in Denver, Colorado. The award is presented only once a year, in the name of James Brady, by NARHA to a professional who has made a significant contribution to equine assisted activities/therapies (EAA/T).

Molly with her children Kelly McShane, Brian Sweeney and Kevin Sweeney at the awards reception.

Molly is a lifelong horse-woman, born into a strongly equine-focused family. She claims that horses simply are in her genes. When endorsements started arriving in the mail to nominate Molly for this prestigious James Brady award, the warm accolades were impressive and touching.

One of the endorsements read: "I write at this time to give my strongest possible endorsement and support that Molly Sweeney should be presented with the 2010 James Brady Award. Frankly, I am a little dumbfounded that we have not given it to her already! Her efforts on behalf of equine-assisted activities, SIRE, NARHA, and the Horses and Humans Research Foundation are legion, and legend. What is even more outstanding, however, is that she has accomplished all these things with exceptional grace and kindness."

Molly's affiliation with equine-assisted activities started in 1989, volunteering at SIRE in Houston, TX. By 1994 she was recruited to SIRE's Board of Directors and by January, 1997, she was elected president of the board, a position she held for twelve years, leading SIRE in tremendous program growth. Molly went on to serve six years on the NARHA board and also started other important projects like the master instructor's symposium.

Molly recognized early that all EAA/T progress relied on developing evidence-based practices through the highest levels of published scientific research. When it did not appear that any existing organization was positioned to put the needed focus and funding into research, she stepped forward and established a team to create a publicly funded foundation to assure the research would be developed. Her support as founder and president of Horses and Humans Research Foundation has helped spread interest in and commitment to rigorously developed research, opening doors to an exciting the future.

President's Perspective

In our short history, more than sixty equine-assisted activity programs and associations have supported HHRF research. In appreciation of their contributions, HHRF is dedicating this news letter to these visionary board and staff teams who have made this investment in the future a priority.

They have recognized the importance of data and statistics that show the full extent of the ability of the horse to facilitate healing and learning. These results are proving to be much greater than we thought in many areas. From these statistics, instructors and facilitators are gaining greater clarity on how to further develop best evidence-based practices related to their specific clients.

The stakeholders at these programs already know the value of EAA/T. Each one has a tight budget, yet they have found ways to contribute to this research. Their vision and commitment to the future of EAA/T makes them leaders in our field.

We, in turn, are committed to energetically continue our support of research that will scientifically validate the ability of horses to inspire, to empower, to heal and to teach. We will relentlessly pursue the research results that you need to reassure clients, to educate medical professionals, to write foundation requests, to entice donors and to convince insurance companies of the ability of a horse to improve the life of a person.

-Molly Sweeney

Contributions Support EAA/T Research

HHRF is a public 501(c)(3) corporation; all research funded is a direct result of contributions. Please let us know if you are aware of other foundations or individuals who might be interested in supporting this mission.

Three foundations have recently granted funds toward the HHRF mission. A $50,000 contribution designated for research was given by a foundation who wishes to remain anonymous. This type of support is extremely critical to advancing rigorously developed research and is very much appreciated!

The William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation recently awarded HHRF a $12,000 research strategy planning grant. This will allow HHRF to assemble a team to assess the present positions and needs associated with EEA/T research and then identify how to best invest research dollars in the coming years. We are excited to see the outcomes from this work.

HHRF was also honored to receive a grant in the amount of $5,000 from The EQUUS Foundation. This grant will support assembling industry leaders from academic, equine, research, EAA/T, medical and business backgrounds at a symposium focused on advancing the EAA/T efforts in areas related to research and research support.

EMPOWERING HORSE CHARITIES OF AMERICA — EQUUS FOUNDATION

EAA/T Program and Association Visionaries and Leaders - THANK YOU!

- Adventures in Awareness, LLC
- Astride with Pride, Inc.
- American Hippotherapy Association (AHA, Inc.)
- Bearwood Farm
- Bright Hope Riders of the Wabash Valley
- California State University in Northridge, Dept. of Physical Therapy
- Camp Berachah
- Central Kentucky Riding For Hope
- Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center
- Denver University, Graduate School of Social Work
- Discovery Riders
- Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Assoc. (EAGALA)
- Federation of Riding for the Disabled International (FRDI)
- Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center
- Freedomfarm
- Friends for Tomorrow
- G.A.I.T. Therapeutic Riding Center
- Giant Steps
- Good Hope Equestrian Training Center, Inc.
- Green Chimneys
- Greenlock Therapeutic Riding Center
- High Hopes Therapeutic Riding
- Highland Farms
- Horse Power, Inc.
- Horse Sense OTC, Inc.
- Horses for Healing
- Horses Help
- Humble Ranch Education and Therapy Center
- Idylwild Farm
- J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center
- Jack Pine Stables
- Loudoun Therapeutic Riding Foundation, Inc.
- Markel Insurance Company
- Misty Meadows Mitey Riders, Inc.
- NARHA
- Nine Oak Ranch
- Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program
- Project ASTRIDE
- Ride On
- Ride on St. Louis Equine Assisted Therapy
- Riding High Equestrian Program
- ROCK, Ride on Center for Kids
- Sarasota Manatee Association for Riding Therapy
- Sierra Pediatric Therapy Clinic
- SIRE, Houston's Therapeutic Equestrian Center
- Strides To Success
- Take Flight Farms, Inc.
- Talbot Special Riders, Inc.
- The Right Path Riding Academy
- Therapeutic Equestrian Center
- Therapeutic Horsemanship
- Thorncroft Equestrian Center
- Triple H Equitherapy
- University of Kentucky
- Victory Gallop
- Vinceremos Therapeutic Riding Center
- Walk On
- Washington International Horse Show
- Washington University School of Medicine
- Whispering Winds Ranch
- World Equestrian Games

Next HHRF Grant Application Deadline:

May 15, 2011

Tips on grant applications, informational webinars and more at horsesandhumans.org

Board and Advisory Transitions

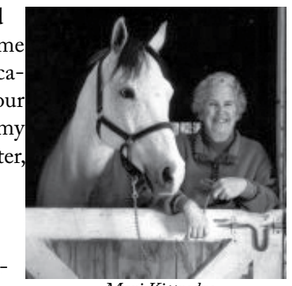
The HHRF Board welcomes Margaret (Peggy) Bass PhD, to our Scientific Committee. Peggy joins us from Miami, FL where she is the founder and executive director for Good Hope Equestrian Training Center, Inc. Bass has a master's degree and doctoral degree in special education. She is also a published researcher. Welcome! Stay up to date on board and advisory transitions by joining the email newsletter at horsesandhumans.org

Margaret (Peggy) Bass

IN MEMORIAM

"Recently, on the front page of the NARHA news, there, was a picture of Marj Kittredge from just a few years back during the 2006 conference in Indianapolis. She looks so present and so Marj, with her joyful, telling smile. You may not know that I "grew up" at Marj's Windrush Farm, it was my first "adult home" - my first son Andy was born there (almost in the barn - ask me some time!). In later years Marj often looked at me and claimed "I knew KC before anyone did, I taught her everything she knows", and then she'd laugh and hug me. I got to thinking; she did teach me almost all that I needed to know. Marj taught me about dedication, commitment, loving what you do, making colleagues your friends, making work fun, blending work and life... She was my introduction (after Cheff Center) to EAA/T, and 35 years later, I'm still thrilled to be here.

"HHRF has lost an advisory committee member who was exceptionally dedicated to this field; EAA/T has lost a great motivator, founder and guide. But many of us continue to follow her example and feel her impact - still." -KC Henry



Marj Kittredge

OUT & ABOUT

HHRF was selected by Averett University as the beneficiary of their upcoming event "Around the World in 80 Days: A Celebration of Dancing Horses to Music from Film and Stage, Representing the Cultures and Stories from Around the Globe." The event will take place on April 15th-17th 2011, in Danville, VA. Half of all proceeds will be donated to HHRF. For more details, please visit horsesandhumans.org.

HHRF representatives at the Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center reception in September.

HHRF board members recently cohosted outreach events with associates at Denver University, Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center, the NARHA Conference and at Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center (FFTRC) in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Special thanks to each of these groups for their support and their efforts to extend outreach for EAA/T research.

Please consider making a donation to support this critically needed research.

As a public foundation, we depend on contributions from individuals, businesses and foundations in order to operate.

Enclosed is my donation of: $50__ $100__ $300__ $500__ $1,000__ Other: $___

Contact Information:

Name:
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○ Please make the donation in honor/memory of:
(If desired, please also enclose a name and address to whom an acknowledgement letter should be be sent)
○ My company matching gift form is enclosed
○ Please contact me for other donor options (gift of appreciated securities, bequests)

Payment Options:

Please send a check to:
HHRF
P.O. Box 480
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022

Or donate with a credit card
at horsesandhumans.org

Horses and Humans Research Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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Give a gift with lasting sentiment

This holiday season you can give a gift that will have tremendous impact on people, equine and programs around the world.

When making a donation to HHRF in someone's honor, you support rigorous research, and the honoree receives a thoughtful acknowledgment note.

Special thanks to Julie Bender, who donated the image 'Peruvian Splendor' for HHRF's notecards.
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