



## **PATH Intl. Celebrates Ensuring Excellence and Changing Lives for 50 Years**

*Kaye Marks*

Obviously, fifty years ago life on planet Earth looked quite different for its inhabitants. In 1969 the average cost of a new house in the U.S. was \$15,550; average income per year \$8,550; rent \$135 per month; and a new car might cost a consumer \$3,270. While the world economy has changed exponentially, so many familiar constants remain. On January 1, 1969, the Ohio State Buckeyes football team beat the USC Trojans in the Rose Bowl to win the national championship. Today, Ohio State plays in the same game against the Washington Huskies as people celebrate the promise of a new year and take stock of their blessings. Good books are still authored. (In 1969 Mario Puzzo's novel *The Godfather* hit the shelves.) And entertainment continues to fuel our imaginations and keep us laughing at the brighter side of life. (Monty Python's *Flying Circus* first aired on BBC One in 1969.)

As we kick off 2019, terms like artificial intelligence and virtual reality are commonly used parts of our vernacular, and we see technology evolving faster than we can think. Thankfully certain consistencies continue to keep us humans grounded to the planet, like an appreciation for nature, love of animals and striving for a healthy lifestyle. These inspirations, plus hope and having loving, open-hearted humans around us, are the types of ideas that continue to fuel our spirits. Equines happen to check all those boxes. They've been serving humanity as a companion and as a colleague for those in the workforce for centuries. This amazing, seemingly deep-souled, unpredictable, beautiful creature is also at the heart of the staying power of equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT). They didn't, however, do it alone.

When the founders of PATH Intl. (then NARHA) first gathered to discuss formalizing an organization, the distant future must have felt so, well, distant. Through both the lean and prosperous years, and everything in between, one industry invariable in addition to the horses remains, and that's the PATH Intl. members—a smart, savvy, multi-talented, resourceful, dedicated, innovative community of some of the finest humans the planet has to offer. They continue to cultivate their skills, meet the changing needs of society and strive for optimal quality of life for their participants and equines alike. And it's these extraordinary members with hearts bigger than the expanse of time whom the association will honor and celebrate in its 50th year.

To commemorate its golden anniversary, PATH Intl., its members and stakeholders will join together in a year-long 50th anniversary celebration that begins now and will carry through to the 2019 PATH Intl. Conference to be held in the city of the association's headquarters—Denver, Colorado—from November 8-10, at The Westin Westminster.

PATH Intl. will be focusing its celebration around four cornerstones—evolution, individual members, center members and new initiatives. These themes will be highlighted throughout 2019 as the foundation for that which has made PATH Intl. what it is today, and sets the course for reaching its vision of being a global authority, resource and advocate for equine-assisted activities and therapies and the equines in the work that inspire and enrich the human spirit. Let's celebrate!