



“Ensuring excellence and changing lives through equine-assisted activities and therapies”

For more information, contact:

Cher Smith, Communications Coordinator
(800) 369-7433, ext.123
csmith@pathintl.org

November 2018

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Honored to Again Be Granted Funds From the Bob Woodruff Foundation

Denver – The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) has been awarded funding by the Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF) to support, in partnership with the Man O’ War (MOW) Project at Columbia University, the development of curriculum for mental health providers in equine-assisted therapies (EAT) working with veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder (EAT-PTSD).

PATH Intl. was granted funding to help develop, implement and evaluate the training program for delivery of a first of its kind, evidence-based equine-assisted group treatment for veterans with significant PTSD symptoms. The overarching goal is to disseminate the EAT-PTSD program to the larger field of equine-assisted mental health professionals, thereby significantly increasing the availability of the only existing research-based EAT curriculum and treatment for veterans with PTSD.

The EAT-PTSD program was developed by Drs. Prudence Fisher and Yuval Neria, co-directors of the Man O’ War Project at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. The Man O’ War team, prepared a well-specified manual, the first of its kind in the field of EAT/EAAT, which they then tested in an open trial of veterans with PTSD, demonstrating a measurable reduction of PTSD and depressive symptoms (Hillburn et al., 2017, Fisher et al., 2018).

MOW and PATH Intl. will partner on this project, each bringing their expertise to make this curriculum and training effective and ultimately available to EAT providers all over the country. This in turn will provide access to this proven treatment to hundreds of veterans with PTSD and other trauma and stressor-related symptoms. The PATH Intl.–MOW partnership is a perfect match of verified curriculum, subject matter experts, training experience and a network of experienced EAT providers. Together, they have the vision and experience to successfully create, implement, evaluate and disseminate a training program to deliver EAT-PTSD.

“PATH Intl. is proud of its partnerships with two such highly regarded organizations—BWF and MOW at Columbia University Irving Medical Center—and looks forward to piloting the program to make it available to equine-assisted mental health professionals and ultimately veterans who might truly benefit from the services,” said PATH Intl. CEO Kathy Alm.

BWF announced a total investment of \$2.8 million awarded to 22 organizations with programs that serve post-9/11 veterans, service members and their families. These grantees address the Foundation’s key focus areas of education and employment, quality of life, and rehabilitation and recovery.

“We’ve focused our investments on programs that meet the urgent and emerging needs of the military-veteran community,” said Anne Marie Dougherty, executive director at the Bob Woodruff Foundation. “We’re excited that this fall’s grant recipients represent a balance of both programs new to BWF and also longstanding partners, with whom we effectively address our priorities for this year and beyond. These outcome-oriented programs all help ensure that the post-9/11 community will thrive after service.” As part of BWF’s ongoing partnership with the NFL, the fall portfolio includes programs that BWF supported through funding from the NFL Foundation. The NFL-BWF

partnership supports healthy lifestyles and communities, and reflects our shared goal of ensuring meaningful support for veterans, service members, their families and their caregivers.

-30-

About PATH Intl.

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International® (PATH Intl.®) was formed in 1969 to promote safety and optimal outcomes in equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) for individuals with special needs. At 881 member centers, more than 66,000 children and adults—including 6,200 veterans—may find improved health, wellness, fun and a sense of pride and independence through involvement with horses. Therapeutic horsemanship at member centers may include hippotherapy, equine-facilitated mental health, driving, interactive vaulting, trail riding, competition, groundwork and stable management. Through a wide variety of educational resources, the association helps individuals start and maintain successful EAAT programs. There are more than 62,000 volunteers, 5,011 instructors, 7,800 equines and thousands of contributors from all over the world helping people at PATH Intl. Member Centers.

About the Bob Woodruff Foundation

The Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF) was founded in 2006 after reporter Bob Woodruff was hit by a roadside bomb while covering the war in Iraq. Since then, the Bob Woodruff Foundation has led an enduring call to action for people to stand up for heroes and meet the emerging and long-term needs of today's veterans. To date, BWF has invested more than \$57 million to Find, Fund and Shape™ programs that have empowered impacted veterans, service members and their families. For more information, please visit bobwoodrufffoundation.org or follow us on Twitter at @Stand4Heroes.