

**Dr. Alyssa Adams** is the operations manager for the Office of National Veterans Sports Programs & Special Events at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Adams is a clinical psychologist, and she completed her internship and post-doctoral fellowship at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Washington, DC. She has specialized in behavioral medicine interventions, with a particular interest in the psychological and social factors that impact mental health and rehabilitation. Her doctoral training was tailored to dually specialize in health psychology and neuropsychology. She has a strong background in working with patients with chronic pain, spinal cord injuries, amputations, psychological trauma, neurological illnesses and injuries, as well as other disabilities. She is licensed in both the District of Columbia and Virginia.

**Kathy Alm** began her service as chief executive officer of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) in August 2014. For the previous 16 years she served as executive director of Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center in Woodinville, WA. She grew the previously grass roots organization from a \$280,000 annual operating budget to a professional \$2.1 million organization. Kathy's board service includes the PATH Intl. board from 2005 – 2013, including the office of board president, founder/board member of the Director of Disabilities Organization, board member of the Alliance of Eastside Agencies as well as founder/board member of Theatre Puget Sound. Throughout her tenure in equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT), Kathy has served as a PATH Intl. region representative, chaired the PATH Intl. administrators' committee, and presented at numerous regional and annual conferences all over the country. She holds a BA degree from Pacific Lutheran University. Her dedication to the field of equine-assisted activities and therapies spans more than 19 years with a passion that was ignited the moment she walked through the door at her first therapeutic riding center.

**Debbie Anderson** has been on the cutting edge of the equine-assisted learning and therapy industry for over 35 years. Debbie has specialized in creating EAL programs in partnership with schools, corporations and many mental health associations. Debbie is also responsible for co-founding Strides to Success, the first center in the United States to become accredited in PATH Intl. mental health standards. Debbie has authored and co-authored many EAL curricula and resources that are considered industry staples. In addition to being involved on a program level, Debbie has dedicated her energy to PATH Intl. for the last 25 years serving on many committees as well as serving on the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees. She also serves as a lead site-visitor. Debbie is a well-known conference presenter, motivator, mentor and facilitator within the EAAT industry. Debbie was PATH Intl. certified in 1996 as a therapeutic riding instructor and is also certified as an equine specialist in mental health and learning. Additional certifications include Certified Equine Interaction Professional in Education, Equine Experiential Education Association (E3A) certified corporate trainer, Master HorseWork trainer and is also EAGALA trained. Today, Debbie serves as the founder/executive director at Strides to Success with a mission of spreading knowledge and assisting centers worldwide by promoting best practices within the EAAT industry.

**Joann Benjamin** is a physical therapist, with a pediatric practice in the Los Angeles area. She has a particular interest in words and how we use them, whether writing curriculum for American Hippotherapy Association, Inc. (AHA), teaching courses, working with USEF and FEI

in the para disciplines, or sharing the many benefits of using equine movement with patients. Her membership with NARHA (now PATH Intl.) began 35 years ago. She is a founding and lifetime member of AHA, having served in many roles, and was the AHA Therapist of the Year in 2017. She looks forward to participating in this project.

**Dr. Octavia J. Brown** is a professor of equine studies at Centenary University in Hackettstown, NJ, where she directs Therapeutic Riding at Centenary, a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center. She teaches a PATH Intl.-approved instructor certification course as well as various courses in the equine studies department. She holds a Master's of Education degree from Harvard Graduate School of Education and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Centenary University. She is a PATH Intl. Certified Master Instructor and ESMHL and also holds EAGALA level 2 certification. Dr. Brown was a founding board member of NARHA, serving four terms on the board of directors.

She served several years on the board of Horses and Humans Research Foundation, which led to exposure to funding applications from other countries and people/organizations not affiliated with PATH Intl. She is past president of the Federation Riding for the Disabled International (now HETI). She therefore brings significant international experience of terminology to the table as well as an historical perspective on the development of the entire field of EAAT in the United States.

**Nina Ekholm Fry** is director of equine programs at the Institute for Human-Animal Connection and adjunct professor at University of Denver where her work focuses on horses in clinical services and on equine behavior and welfare. For the past 12 years, she has specialized in inclusion of horses in psychotherapy in the United States and Europe and is a certified clinical trauma professional. She currently serves on the boards of the American Hippotherapy Association, Inc. (AHA) and the Certification Board for Equine Interaction Professionals (CBEIP). In addition to client work and teaching, Nina conducts facilitation workshops and is chief editor of the HETI Journal, published by the International Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy. Nina is a practitioner member of the International Society of Equitation Science (ISES) and teaches equine behavior at Yavapai College. She is active in the equine welfare community in the United States and consults on equine behavior and facility design nationally. Nina brings national and international experience related to education, organization and regulation of professionals who include horses in their services.

**Michele Kane, Major, USMC (retired)** retired from active duty Marine Corps in 2011 and moved from North Carolina to Fort Collins, CO, in order to attend Colorado State University's equine sciences program. During that time, she also completed her master's degree in professional mental health counseling (LPC). Michele learned about therapeutic riding while at CSU and decided to pursue PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor certification. She was certified in December 2013 and hired by Hearts & Horses, Inc., in January 2014, mainly to work with veterans part time. Michele worked for the VA in Fort Collins until she was hired by Hearts & Horses as a full-time instructor and veterans program coordinator in January 2015. In January 2016, she was promoted to program director. She earned her PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL) certification in 2018. Michele spent over 20 years on active duty, deployed multiple times and brings many years of military experience to the table.

**Miyako Kinoshita** is the current farm education program manager at the Green Chimneys Farm and Wildlife Center. She serves as the key facilitator for over 200 children with psychosocial disabilities currently in residence and day school, and facilitates and co-supervises a wide range of animal-assisted programs.

She has a master's degree in educational studies, and specializes in animal-assisted activity and animal-assisted education. She looks back on over 20 years of working in direct service with children and animals as a PATH Intl. Certified Advanced Therapeutic Riding Instructor. Miyako is the former president of the Equine Facilitated Mental Health Association (EFMHA) and a former board member of PATH Intl., serving as chair of the board governance committee and as board secretary. Miyako was instrumental in reintegrating equine-assisted mental health programs back into PATH Intl., to cement the commitment to equines and equine welfare in the industry of therapeutic horsemanship. She is an author of several chapters in textbooks, including *Handbook on Animal Assisted Therapy* by Aubrey Fine.

Currently, Miyako is playing a key role in the clinical study on nature-based program and its effect on positive youth development, conducted by the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work. Miyako coordinates and supervises some of the data collection for the multi-year scientific study to assist the investigators from on site.

**Martin C. Pearce** has almost 25 years of PR/communications/marketing experience on both the agency and client sides. He has had the privilege of working for a diverse set of clients across many industries, including consumer (Barilla, Mars, Starbucks, Dove), technology (HP, T-Mobile), automotive (Nissan, Vespa), fashion (Ted Baker, Eddie Bauer), and cause-related organizations (The Omidyar Group, Humanity United, Seeds of Compassion, Omidyar Network). What he likes most about what he does is finding the best/right way to communicate to audiences he is focused on. Communications is important yet frequently under-valued and misunderstood. That said, all messages are only as good as those created with an understanding of the audience. Words matter as well as how they are delivered. Lastly, and personally, Martin really understands the power of equine-assisted activities and therapies as the parent of a 13-year-old boy who has benefited from it for 10 years.

**Lynn Klimas Petr, MS**, is the founder and executive director of Shangri-La Therapeutic Academy of Riding (STAR) in Lenoir City, TN. STAR is a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of operation. Lynn holds a bachelor's degree in special education and a master's degree in therapeutic recreation from the University of Tennessee where STAR was her master's thesis project.

Lynn is active in PATH Intl., being a lead site visitor for accreditation. She is a PATH Intl. Certified Advanced Therapeutic Riding Instructor, a mentor for instructors and executive directors, a certified equine specialist in mental health and learning, and faculty for both the mentor and standards courses as well as for the associate visitor training course.

Lynn assisted in the rewrite of the instructor certification test many years back and has taken on roles of state chair, region representative, education oversight chair, health and education advisory member as well as helping to start (and finish) the faculty development task force, AVTC training revamp and mentor training review and development. Lynn was also part of the

certification review and development task force, “Reinventing Certification” workgroup and the strategic initiatives review committee.

She is committed to assisting PATH Intl. in a constant quest for improvement in the equine-assisted activities and therapies industry and was awarded the National Volunteer Leadership Award in 2010.

**Lissa Pohl** holds a master’s degree in transformational leadership development and works in the University of Kentucky’s Department of Community & Leadership Development. She has facilitated equine-assisted learning workshops with students, nonprofits and executives across the United States, the United Kingdom, and in Qatar for the Qatar Foundation. In 2012, she conducted research on “The Effectiveness of Equine Guided Leadership Education to Develop Emotional Intelligence in Expert Nurses.”

Lissa is a certified level two Equine Experiential Education Association (E3A) Advanced Corporate Practitioner (2012), and became an E3A Master Trainer in 2015. Lissa served on the E3A Board of Directors from 2012–2018 with four years as vice president. As a member of the PATH Intl. EAL workgroup (2013-15), she assisted in defining terms and creating guidelines for the practice of EAL. She has been a volunteer at Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center in Seattle, WA, and Central Kentucky Riding for Hope in Lexington, KY.

**Laurie Schick** has been a physical therapist for over 24 years. In 2004, Laurie began developing her interest in the therapeutic value of horses and became a PATH Intl. certified instructor. In 2005, she brought hippotherapy to Forward Stride, a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center in Beaverton, OR, eventually expanding services to five staff therapists. In 2016, Laurie moved to Bend, OR, and started a private practice at Healing Reins, another PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center. During that time she was instrumental in removing hippotherapy as an exclusion under the state Medicaid plan. Laurie partnered with Treehouse Therapies, a nonprofit pediatric therapy clinic in 2017. There she led the effort to add equine movement as a treatment tool and helped open a new 3,000 sq. ft. clinic at Healing Reins. Through Treehouse Laurie now bills insurance for all of her sessions, with 30% of her caseload being Medicaid patients. Laurie is also an active member of the AHA Reimbursement Committee.

**Lynn Thomas**, LCSW, founded and serves as CEO of Eagala, a nonprofit association headquartered in Santaquin, Utah. Providing training and certification in the Eagala Model of equine-assisted psychotherapy and personal development, Eagala has over 2,500 certified members in 45 countries, with over 600 programs providing Eagala Model services globally. Lynn received her Master’s of Social Work degree from the University of Utah and has over 20 years’ experience working with adolescents, families, individuals and groups in various mental health settings. She served as executive director for Aspen Ranch, a residential boarding school for troubled adolescents, where she first developed a program integrating horses as the primary treatment component. After founding Eagala in 1999, Lynn continues to work with an incredible team developing and growing the organization’s training program, resources connecting the global network and presence within the mental health community at large.

**Wendy Wood** is director of research of the Temple Grandin Equine Center (TGEC) and professor of equine sciences and occupational therapy at Colorado State University. As the TGEC's research director, Dr. Wood mentors undergraduate and graduate students (MS and PhD) in research of equine-assisted activities and therapies. Guided by Dr. Wood, these students have partnered with interdisciplinary teams of educators, equine specialists and scientists, health professionals and social scientists to conduct: 1) systematic mapping reviews of literature pertaining to equine-assisted interventions; 2) research of a program of equine-assisted activities for older adults with dementia; 3) and research of equine-assisted occupational therapy for children with autism. Dr. Wood, her collaborators and students have presented their findings at regional, national and international meetings, and also published findings in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, and *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disability*.

Dr. Wood serves on the scientific advisory board for Horses and Humans Research Foundation.