



Regional Conference

February 16-18, 2024

Presented by: PATH Intl. Region 7

**Hosted by:
Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy (HETRA)
Gretna, Nebraska**

PATH Intl. Region 7 welcomes you to an educational and fun weekend with your friends and colleagues in Nebraska. Your registration fee includes breakfast and lunch on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday.

CONFERENCE LOCATIONS

Friday & Saturday:

Venue 779

2523 River Road Drive
Waterloo, NE 68069

Sunday:

HETRA

10130 S 222nd Street
Gretna, NE 68028

LODGING OPTIONS

Hilton Garden Inn Omaha West

17879 Chicago St, Omaha, NE 68118

\$123 per night

(402)289-9696

<https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/omawegi-hilton-garden-inn-omaha-west/>

Residence Inn by Marriott Omaha West

18202 Cuming St, Elkhorn, NE 68022

\$125 per night

(402)289-9500

https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/omarw-residence-inn-omaha-west/overview/?gclid=CjwKCAiA98WrBhAYEiwA2WvhOpRwFrwQE7YWNlnGAxmOSLZTcot1Id_RhoEAynpLxN2dHLm-grbmzBoC2nlQAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds&cid=PAI_GLB0004YXD_GLE000BIM5_GLF000OETA

PATH INTL. REGION 7 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Online registration will be available December 8, 2023, through February 2, 2024. After February 2, 2024, registration will need to be completed on-site.

IF YOU ARE A PRESENTER OR CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER, DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER WITH YOUR CODE!

Registration December 8, 2023 through February 2, 2024:

Full Conference \$140 members \$190 non-members

Registration on-site after February 2, 2024:

Full Conference \$170 members \$220 non-members

Refund Policy:

No refunds due to weather unless the conference is canceled.

Written cancellation request is required for refund. Email manderson@pathintl.org

Deadline for Full Refund – Request received in PATH Intl. office by **February 2, 2024.**

Deadline for 50% Refund - Request received in PATH Intl. office by **February 18, 2024.**

Individuals who do not submit a written request to PATH Intl. by February 18, 2024 will not receive a refund.

Education:

This conference satisfies up to 11 hours of continuing education requirements.

COVID-19 Information:

HETRA follows all CDC and State of Nebraska guidelines regarding COVID-19 virus protocols. If you are ill or have been exposed to the virus at the time of the conference, we ask that you not attend. Please see the refund policy.

AGENDA

Friday, February 16, 2024

All times are Central Standard Time

Venue 779

11:30 – 12:30 p.m.

Registration & Welcome

Session A

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

A1, Partnering with Rehabilitation Centers CE

For many of our participants, riding and being in the barn is their "happy place." How can centers partner with hospitals and rehabilitation programs to offer meaningful activities? Learn how to help people find a new recreation or get them back in the saddle through partnership. Ed Armstrong, the coordinator of Adaptive Sports and Recreation at QLI, a nationally renowned neurological injury hospital in Omaha, NE, will discuss the importance of recreation and alternative therapies and how getting back to things that make people feel good is pivotal to the healing process.

Ed Armstrong is the coordinator of Adaptive Sports and Recreation at QLI, where he works on QLI's rehabilitation campus providing rehabilitation programming to young adults and their families recovering from brain or spinal cord injury. Ed completed his undergraduate degree in sport and exercise science at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, before moving to the United States in 2005. Ed's talents and rehabilitation expertise are invaluable to QLI's Life Path Services team, as he and his team work to ensure QLI's clients are able to participate in the meaningful recreation activities of their choice. The genuine passion that Ed possesses for promoting adaptive sports and recreation is palpable.

A2, Developing Relationships with Foundations CE

What can a community Foundation do for you? How do you get involved with a foundation? What are the 'need to knows' when it comes to requesting funding? Join John Levy as he answers each of these questions by giving valuable advice from his experience as a foundation president and previous nonprofit executive director. Join this presentation to find out how a good partnership with a community foundation can strengthen your organization.

John Levy is the president of the William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation where he has worked since 2015. Previously, John was an executive director for a social service agency and an attorney at two different law firms. In addition, John has served as a trustee or board director for more than 15 organizations in the last 10 years. John earned his bachelor's degree in Spanish, Latin American Studies and anthropology from the University of Kansas, his master's degree in history, his juris doctorate from the University of Nebraska College of Law and was a fellow at Harvard University. In his free time, John, and his much better half Bethany, are raising three boys ages 13, 11, and 8.

1:30 – 1:45 p.m.

BREAK

Session B

1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

B1, How to Advance Your Instructor Knowledge CR Riding

As an instructor it's easy to become complacent once you pass certification, but it is very important to continue to grow and learn in the various areas encompassed by equine-assisted services. Why is it important and how can you continue to grow as an instructor? Join this presentation to discover valuable resources and suggestions on ways to keep yourself moving forward with best practices in teaching, equine management, disabilities, and more.

Dionne Newton, PATH Intl. ATRI, CTRI, ESMHL, Mentor is also a CHA-IRD instructor with over 15 years of experience teaching adaptive riding and successfully mentoring instructor candidates. Combining her education degree and EAS experience, she truly loves teaching both adaptive riding participants and instructors. She is currently offering private in-person and remote mentoring services to instructors and instructor candidates, as well as consulting with PATH Intl. centers.

B2, Mindful Marketing CE

Marketing can be a huge undertaking and can be overwhelming at times. There are so many ways to reach your target audience, social media, websites, mass emails, direct mail and so much more. It is challenging to know what to focus on and what will give you the best bang for your buck. In this session we will discuss the pros and cons of different marketing strategies, and where you should be focusing your efforts if you have a small marketing budget.

Erin Bevington started working at HETRA in 1996, and has served many roles in the organization, from instructor to horse manager, volunteer coordinator, finance & administrative manager, and now chief operating officer. She has been a PATH Intl. Certified Instructor since 2000. Erin has her Bachelor of Science in Equine Science from Colorado State University. Marketing has been a huge passion for Erin, and throughout her many years at HETRA she has worked hard to build a strong brand and presence.

Megan Becker started at HETRA in 2023. She has over eight years of marketing experience. Her qualifications include a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska in Omaha for marketing and an associate degree from Metropolitan Community College for video/audio communications.

2:45 – 3 p.m.

BREAK

Session C

3 – 4 p.m.

C1, Other Duties as Assigned – Effectively Managing your Board of Directors CE

Nonprofit work and getting to change lives every day seems like a dream job until you read the fine print. This session will take participants on a journey to discover how they can effectively work with their board of directors/leadership and how to activate engagement. Learn how to recruit effective board members and how to ensure they stay focused on the work of the board. Take home practical tools that will empower each member of the team to succeed now and into the future.

Kimberly Thomas is the Executive Director of EPIC for Girls. Ms. Thomas brings more than 25 years of experience serving Nebraskans and working with diverse teams to ensure the needs of underserved communities are met. Most recently, she was the executive director at CASA for Douglas County for over nine years, where she multiplied its number of staff and increased the number of children served from 190 to nearly 600. She started KP Consulting in 2022 where she mentors and coaches nonprofit leaders. Her passion is ensuring executive directors and boards are equipped with the tools necessary to succeed and helping them to step into their roles with confidence. Kimberly is a graduate of Leadership Omaha Class of 43, a graduate of Lead Diversity Cohort 2, Women's Fund of Omaha Circles (2012), and TEAM Cohort 1. She actively volunteers with the Peaceful Hearts and the Dreamweaver Foundation.

C2, Mounting and Dismounting CR Riding

Have you ever felt nervous about the safest way to help your participant with mounting? Is your horse cranky at the mounting block? Have you ever discharged or not taken a participant because you felt it was not safe to mount or dismount them? Come explore techniques to ensure that mounting and dismounting are safe for participants, horses, staff, and volunteers.

Edye Godden, OTR/L, HPCS, PATH Intl. CTRI, ESMHL serves as the chief executive officer at HETRA. She has been with the organization for the past 30 years in various capacities. Along with being the CEO of the organization, she is an Occupational Therapist, and a Clinical Specialist in Hippotherapy. These other "hats" help keep her well connected to the programming offered at HETRA and give her first-hand experience of the impact HETRA has on the participants they serve. Edye has assisted in HETRA's growth from a small all-volunteer organization operating in boarding facilities to owning their own facility with a full-time staff of 18. Edye earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Therapy from Creighton University in 1991. In 2007 she was awarded the PATH Intl. Region 7 Instructor of the Year Award.

Cassidy Fredrickson is an Occupational Therapist and PATH Intl. CTRI with over 6 years of experience in the field of adaptive riding. She joined HETRA in 2014 as a volunteer. Today she works both in the therapy services and adaptive riding programs. Cassidy also developed and oversees the Miniature Horse On-Site Learning Program. Cassidy also works as part of the horse team and understands the importance of protecting horses' physical and mental health to keep them working for years to come.

4 – 4:15 p.m.

BREAK

Session D

4:15 – 5:15 p.m.

D1, Human Resources CE

Staffing continues to be a challenge throughout the country. Most industries are struggling to find people to fill a variety of roles. It can be particularly challenging in this climate where unemployment remains low (3.9% as of October 2023) and competition for employees remains high. In addition, many of the roles at centers are specialized, with even fewer qualified people available. Join Kathy Alm, CEO of PATH Intl., as she shares best practices for recruiting, retaining and developing your human resources. Topics will include defining your organization's culture that attracts and retains staff, where and how to recruit, how to build your team and get the right people on the bus, prioritizing competitive wages and staff development opportunities, and employment law considerations. Leave this workshop with next steps for recruiting, retaining and developing your human resources.

Kathy Alm began her service as chief executive officer of 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 grassroots organization from a \$280,000 annual operating budget to a professional \$2.1 million organization. Kathy served as the PATH Intl. board president in the 2010-2012 term, first joining the board of trustees in 2005. She has facilitated numerous workshops and presentations on board, staff, fundraising and strategic planning and enjoys the opportunity to share her experience as well as learn from others. Her dedication to the field of equine-assisted services spans over 19 years with a passion that was ignited the moment she walked through the door at her first therapeutic riding center.

D2, Embrace the Chase - Evaluating the Potential Horse CR All

What do you look for when evaluating a prospective horse for your program and how much does that free horse cost? Amy Cook, DVM will go over what indicators you can look for, and what to avoid when looking for that perfect horse.

Amy Cook, DVM grew up on a farm near Gretna, Nebraska. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and spent the next 10 years pursuing various animal science careers encompassing equine nutrition, feedlot work and race horse management. In 2013 she received her DVM from Iowa State University, receiving the Large Animal Clinical Excellence Award. Following graduation, she completed a rigorous one-year hospital internship at Kendall Road Equine Hospital in Elgin, IL. She enjoys riding, raising and showing working cow horses in her free time. Dr. Cook is a member of the American Association of Equine Practitioners, American Veterinary Medical Association. She and her husband and son reside near Ashland, Nebraska with their horses and dogs.

5:30 p.m.

Dinner on your own

Saturday, February 17, 2024

Venue 779

7 – 8 a.m.

Registration & Welcome

8 – 9:30 a.m.

Breakfast and the PATH Intl. Update

Session E

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

E1, Understanding ADHD & ADD in EAS: Effective Strategies for Success DE

ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders diagnosed in children; an estimated 6 million aged 3-17 years old (CDC, 2023). Partnering with horses can provide a powerful opportunity to practice skills that those with ADHD can struggle with, including executive functioning skills such as attention, concentration, memory and social skills. This presentation will provide clarification of the symptoms and differences between ADHD and ADD and explore the differences in learning that those diagnosed sometimes experience. We will investigate various adaptations and simple, effective ways to help participants with ADHD reach new heights with their equine partners in the arena.

***Kaiti Otte, OTD, OTR/L** is a licensed occupational therapist and PATH Intl. CTRI at HETRA. She has a background in pediatric clinical therapy, focusing primarily on sensory dysfunction and behavior modification. She is also a project coordinator at HETRA, producing numerous educational webinars, mentoring professional students and hosting HETRA's exclusive podcast, "Not Just a Pony Ride."*

E2, Succession Planning for Centers CE

Horsemanship and heart-felt compassion are often the foundation for a PATH Intl. Center, however, sustainability, strategic and succession planning are necessary to ensure your facilities, horses, volunteers, and participants are not left hanging if something were to happen to the founder. Join us for an interactive hour of ideas that will help founders and executive directors plan for the future of their center in a manner that meets IRS requirements, increases the chance of your mission being fulfilled, and encourages boards to provide the governance needed for an organization to be respected by funders.

***Julie Jones** has a background and education in non-profit management that gives her a different perspective on what it takes to run a successful, sustainable center and she looks forward to sharing the knowledge with others throughout the industry. After raising five amazing adults, God directed Julie to move to a little area of Oklahoma called Shamrock. He promised her a blessing if she went, and the blessings just continue to roll in. One of the best things to come into her Oklahoma life during the 2020 COVID-19 shutdown, was an introduction to EAS. She has fallen in love with the "business" of offering healing and empowerment through horsemanship. When she isn't helping nonprofits plan for their future, she serves as a Region 8 Ambassador for PATH Intl., works on improving her own horsemanship skills, goes on "Grandma Dates" with her nine grandchildren, and builds relationships with the people of Shamrock.*

10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

BREAK

Session F

10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

F1, Evaluation of Incoming Participants CE

Evaluation of incoming participants is an important piece of the puzzle in so many ways. Evaluation allows us to understand precautions and contraindications to riding. It helps us understand each individual and the goals they are trying to obtain. It also helps us understand if this participant is a match for the type of programming we offer or if we offer different programs, which program is the best match. We can also use it as a tool to show program progress which is vital when discussing program impact with our community and donors.

***Edye Godden** see bio in session C2*

F2, Networking: You Can Do It! CE

Networking for your center can be a little bit scary... but Kalynn is here to take all the stress away! Networking allows you to spread the word about your mission to help educate the community and cultivate volunteers, participants and donors. Helpful tips and tricks for successful networking within your communities and why we should all be planning and budgeting for this specific strategy will be shared.

Kalynn Sortino joined HETRA in 2022. Before coming to HETRA and the Omaha area, Kalynn was the resource development director for the Boys and Girls Club of Siouxland. She graduated from Briar Cliff University with a bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing and a master's degree in leadership management. Kalynn has an extensive background within the nonprofit world, bringing to HETRA her passion for special events, donor cultivation, and community partnerships.

11:45 – 1:15 p.m.

Lunch & Keynote: Recovering from a Traumatic Brain Injury with Horses CE

Lauren Taylor grew up around horses. She competed in all three rings as a junior and had a successful career in the circuit. While continuing to train her own horse and serving as a working student for another trainer, she was kicked in the head while hand-grazing one of her boss's horses. Lauren suffered a severe traumatic brain injury, collapsed lung, and broken nose and skull on May 12, 2019. She spent 12 days in a level-one trauma center, where they determined that her chance of survival was less than 7% with a less-than-1% possibility of enjoying any quality of life. Lauren was completely unconscious and then minimally conscious for almost three months. She lived off a ventilator, tracheostomy and feeding tube during that time. Every aspect of Lauren's brain was damaged, thereby affecting her speech, vision, balance, perceptions, memory, and the ability to reason and process emotions. She spent six months in acute care, followed by six additional months in the post-acute setting in Omaha, Nebraska. During her time in Omaha she was able to return to the saddle at HETRA for the first time since her injury.

1:15 – 1:45 p.m.

PATH Intl. Region 7 Awards

Session G

2 – 3 p.m.

G1, Grant Writing to Support Equine-Assisted Services CE

Beginner and experienced grant writers alike will have something to learn from this presentation. Learn how to increase the clarity of your grant writing, especially within subjects that specifically pertain to the EAS industry. You'll also learn the best tactics to use in order to keep your audience captivated and inspire funders to support your project. Get tips on staying organized, finding new grant opportunities, and much more.

Lucy Charvat, MPH, PATH Intl. CTRI first joined HETRA as a volunteer before becoming a full-time staff member with a focus on grant management. She also serves as a PATH Intl. CTRI. Lucy graduated from Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Agriculture in Animal Science & Industry and an Equine Certificate. She then went on to obtain her Master of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center with a focus on Environmental & Agricultural Health. There she obtained the Outstanding Student in Public Health Practice Award as well as the Outstanding Research Project Award. She has presented on HETRA's podcast and HETRA University webinars. Lucy currently serves as the PATH Intl. Nebraska Ambassador.

G2, How Many Ways Can We Say "Walk On?" Alternative Communication Strategies for EAS DE

Everyone communicates differently! This session will break down what it means to use alternative communication for some of our non-verbal participants or those with limited communication abilities. Whether it is a device, pictures or signs, expect to learn useful strategies and tools, and gain practical insights for fostering inclusive communication strategies. Helpful application and useful examples will be provided on how to help support individuals with communication challenges in our equine-assisted services sessions.

Julie Honan, SLP started at HETRA in May of 2023. She received a Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders through the University of Nebraska - Omaha in 2000. In 2002, she received a Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology through the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Julie is a certified Speech Language Pathologist through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association holding her Certificate of Clinical Competence for over 20 years. She is a licensed SLP in Iowa and Nebraska.

Kaiti Otte, OTD, OTR/L see bio in session E1.

3 – 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

Session H

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

H1, Seamless Transitions: Integrating New Horses into EAS Programs CR All

Let's talk about it! Change is hard for humans and horses and transitioning new equines into programming can be a BIG change. We all love Steady Eddie so how do we get the whole team on board with our newest equine partners. Instructors may be hesitant, horse leaders might be unfamiliar, parents and participants might

feel disconnected. This presentation explores the crucial process of transitioning new horses into programming and provides a comprehensive overview of the steps, considerations, and tried and true practices for successful transition.

Shelby Schult, PATH Intl. CTRI, ESMHL, Mentor grew up riding and showing American Quarter Horses in a barn where adaptive riding and therapy services were being offered every day. Upon graduating with her bachelor's degree in animal science, she took a full-time position at HETRA as the equine operations manager and has most recently moved into the role of program manager. She was selected as the 2023 PATH Intl. Region 7 Equine Caretaker of the Year. Shelby is driven by building and maintaining a herd that is healthy, happy, sane and sound, and strives every day to learn from the horses and to share that knowledge with others in the EAS industry.

H2, Best Practices for Working with Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder DE

Those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have a different way of learning and communicating. Dr. Olsen will break down ways to improve that communication and give further tips on best practices for teaching those with ASD. This includes using visuals, simplifying speech, how to handle meltdowns, how to use motivators and much more!

Dr. Darren Olsen is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City and associate professor of pediatrics at University of Missouri Kansas City. He conducts assessments and treatment of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Neurodevelopmental Disabilities with a variety of presenting problems including aggression, self-injury, social skills deficits, and adaptive skills training in an outpatient setting. He has an assessment emphasis on use of Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and other empirically validated assessments with a treatment emphasis on behavioral parent training and individual therapy using the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and RUBI Autism Network's parent training manual.

4:15 – 4:30 p.m.

BREAK

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

PATH Intl. Field Test Standards Update and Facilitated Networking

5:30 p.m.

Dinner on your own

Sunday, February 18, 2024

HETRA

8 – 9 a.m.

Breakfast and the PATH Intl. Region 7 Meeting

Session I

9 – 10 a.m.

I1, The Weight of Responsibility CR Riding

Setting weight limits is a hot button topic that can get complicated quickly. It can involve a lot of uncomfortable conversations, but it is our responsibility as professionals to advocate for our equines, staff and volunteers. Learn how to set policies to help your center be consistent and successful while navigating this difficult subject. There will be an opportunity to evaluate live horses and practice techniques for assigning weight limits.

Shelby Schult, PATH Intl. CTRI, ESMHL, Mentor see bio in session H1.

Cassidy Godden, PATH Intl. CTRI has a unique perspective of not remembering a time before HETRA, she grew up around it! She was lucky enough to have HETRA in her backyard from 2001 to 2014. At a young age she served as a mock rider for HETRA's equine partners in training. Throughout high school, she served in part-time positions at HETRA such as support staff for life skills, feeding, horse leading, and barn maintenance. In 2022, Cassidy joined the horse team as an equine operations staff member. In 2023, she became the equine operations coordinator, managing the day-to-day scheduling of horses, intake of potential horses, and training and conditioning of the herd.

I2, Volunteer Management Round Table CE

Have burning questions that you would like to ask about volunteer management at your center? Join us for a round table discussion facilitated by Whitney Stonebraker to help navigate important volunteer issues.

Whitney Stonebraker has a passion for volunteer management that has been fueled by her extensive experience of over 5 years in recruiting, retaining and expressing gratitude to more than 150 volunteers on a weekly basis. Her administrative background and her lifelong love of horses further enhance her dedication to this field.

10 – 10:15 a.m.

BREAK

Session J

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

J1, Horse Leading 101: Developing Horse Leaders for Long-Term Success CR All

Whether you're a seasoned professional or new to the industry, this presentation offers valuable perspectives, practical tips, and real-world examples to train and keep your horse leaders around for the long haul. Join us to discover how training horse leaders can unlock the potential for consistency, growth, and lasting change in EAS programs, all while keeping your herd happy to do their job!

Shelby Schult and Cassidy Godden see bios in sessions H1 and I1.

J2, Administration Round Table CE

Have burning questions that you would like to ask about administration at your center? Join us in a round table discussion facilitated by Erin Bevington to help navigate important administrative issues.

Erin Bevington see bio in session B2.

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

HETRA Barn Tours

We look forward to seeing you soon in Nebraska!