



"Ensuring excellence and changing lives through equine-assisted activities and therapies"

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Veterans Affairs Director to Speak at PATH International Conference**

Denver –The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International is pleased to announce that Mr. Larry Long, Director of Recreation Therapy Service for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Washington, DC, will be the lead speaker for its PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes pre-conference workshop. The pre-conference workshop is November 8, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Lexington, KY.

As a director for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Long supports the clinical mission of all 22 Veterans Integrated Service Networks, i.e., 153 VA medical centers, 135 community living centers, and 47 domiciliaries. He is the leader of a diverse group of employees which consists over 700 recreation and creative arts therapists. He provides leadership in planning the delivery of patient care services for Veterans, tactical and strategic direction on critical issues, and assimilating Veterans Health Administration direction into systems directions at the national level.

Long has over 28 years of experience as a recreation therapist, is certified by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification and is a member of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association

Long was part of a meeting in March 2007 with PATH International (then NARHA) when the issue of veterans benefiting from equines was discussed. He has been a strong supporter of PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes through the years.

PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes assists military veterans through services provided by PATH Intl. members and by providing leadership and guidance for equine-assisted activities and therapies. To accomplish this mission, PATH Intl. centers connect with Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers and Clinics, as well as individual veterans. Veterans of any age can benefit from the program and by being involved with equines.

“Our service personnel have fought to preserve our freedom, and, for many, at a very dear cost,” said PATH Intl. Past President Dr. Paul Spiers. “We must be certain that if our wounded service personnel and veterans need and want this kind of help, they will get the best PATH Intl. has to offer.”

The PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes pre-conference workshop is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the Department of Veterans Affairs, how it operates and how to interact with the facilities at the local level.

Early bird registration for the conference is offered online on the [conference page at www.pathintl.org](http://www.pathintl.org), as well as more information about conference sessions, the conference hotel, the conference travel deals and fun things to do in Lexington. Early bird prices are good through September 6. Online registration runs through October 21.

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About PATH Intl.:

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), formerly NARHA, was formed in 1969 to promote equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. At more than 800 member centers, a total of 42,000 children and adults find a sense of independence through involvement with horses. These member centers range from small, one-person programs to large operations with several certified instructors and licensed therapists. In addition to therapeutic equitation, a center may offer any number of equine-assisted activities including hippotherapy, equine-facilitated mental health, driving, interactive vaulting, trail riding, competition, ground work or stable management. Through a wide variety of educational resources, the association helps individuals start and maintain successful equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. There are more than 24,000 volunteers, 2,000 instructors, 5,700 therapy horses and thousands of contributors from all over the world helping people at PATH Intl. centers.