



Professional Association of Therapeutic  
Horsemanship International

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

**For more information, contact:**

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

**October 2011**

**Disabilities Panel a Highlight of PATH Intl. Conference**

**Denver** – All attendees of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) Conference and Annual Meeting, November 9-12, in Lexington, KY, will have the opportunity to hear a panel of experts share their knowledge about physical, psychological and cognitive disabilities. While these panelists are not experts in the equine-assisted activities and therapies field, their expertise will benefit the conference attendees as they learn how to better serve their centers' demographics.

The Disability Panel is comprised of at least seven panelists, with the possibility of more being added, that will discuss such disabilities as visual impairment, speech impairment, post traumatic stress disorder, Down syndrome, autism, disability caused by traumatic brain injury. An expert who works with at-risk youth will also be on the panel.

The panelists include Dr. Myra Beth Bundy, who coordinates the Eastern Kentucky University Developmental Disabilities Specialty Clinic for people with autism and other developmental disabilities; Cynthia Dunn, who is the coordinator for the Lexington Veteran's Administration Medical Center's PTSD clinical team; Daniel Hudson, who is the program manager on the brain injury and pulmonary units at Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital in Lexington, KY; Amber Fleming, who is a speech-language pathologist with Cardinal Hill; Stacey Grider, who has worked with the visually impaired for 12 years; Margi Stickney, who worked for more than 16 years with the Kentucky Horse Park Education Department supervising the Mustang Troop riding program for inner-city youth; and Kristen Wheeler, who works at Cardinal Hill with children with a diagnosis of an ASD and Down syndrome.

The panel, which is Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., is the topic for the general session that all attendees are invited to participate in. The experts will discuss how center staff and volunteers can best help clients with specific disabilities and explain certain precautions that are important when dealing with different clients and their needs. There will be a question and answer session following the overview by each of the panel members.

The conference, sponsored by Purina, is November 9-12 at the Hyatt Regency Lexington and will feature the Horse Expo, keynote luncheon with Phil Tedeschi, educational seminars led by industry experts, discussion forums and networking opportunities.

Find more information about conference sessions, the conference hotel, the conference travel deals and fun things to do in Lexington on the PATH Intl. [conference page at www.pathintl.org](http://www.pathintl.org).

-30-

*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.*