



The Path of Growth for the EAAT Industry

It has been an exciting and busy time for the association over the last couple months. In early October, I represented PATH Intl. at a symposium in Korea on equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT), coordinated by Samsung Therapeutic Riding Center staff Amy Lee, Hye Yeon Shin and Kevin Chung, along with Ann O'Shallie, president of the Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI), and Ed Bracher, the CEO for Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA). The symposium covered how EAAT is evolving in our associations. I presented on the evolution of PATH Intl. from its inception and in the process learned so much about the association's history. In addition, everyone gained a new perspective on HETI and RDA, shared the excitement of the industry's growth in Korea and developed wonderful new relationships within the global EAAT industry.

Less than a month later, the 2012 PATH Intl. Conference and Annual Meeting convened in Bellevue, WA, and this issue of *Strides* highlights the conference and celebrates its many individual and center accomplishments. At the conference, in meetings to facilitate the development of our next strategic plan, PATH Intl. began envisioning its future course. The work the board and staff did to lay the groundwork to organize these meetings was impressive, and the board would like to commend the staff on all the extra work this added to their already bursting conference to-do list. The strategic planning committee will continue to meet with staff to consolidate this input and design a timeline for the board that includes specific action items for implementation of the plan. In 2013, we look forward to presenting our next strategic plan with goals and objectives designed to drive PATH Intl.'s future.

We want to thank you, our members, for giving us your valuable feedback through surveys and through your participation at the conference.

This winter issue of *PATH Intl. Strides* focuses on certified professionals, as we now refer to both our instructors and equine specialists. These individuals have the passion to invest in the education and training necessary to excel in a field that requires dual expertise in understanding and working with both equines and individuals with special needs. Our certified professionals go well beyond what is required to make centers effective and thrive in their communities. To do this, many of them wear multiple official and "unofficial" hats as herd managers, program directors, volunteer coordinators, etc.

The winter issue's articles include mentoring new instructors and using music to make lessons more relaxing, enjoyable and effective. It also includes teaching techniques based on a research project involving therapeutic riding and children on the autism spectrum and an article on instructor participation in a study at a university-affiliated PATH Intl. Center showing that equine-facilitated learning improves children's social competence.

May you and your center, participants, families, friends and volunteers all be blessed in this New Year, and we look forward to seeing you in 2013!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jody Enget". The signature is stylized and fluid.

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