

## NARHA “Horses for Heroes”

Pre-conference Workshop

Denver, CO

November 2, 2010

### Prepare – Enrich – Sustain

Successful Pre-Planning Leads to Sustainability:

A desire to help Veterans is not enough – careful pre-planning sets up success.

9:00 – 9:15

**Paul Spiers: Welcome/Conference outline**  
**Amanda Hogan to Introduce Presenters**

9:15-10:30

**Program Planning - by the Program Staff:** Mary Vardi (TROT, Tucson, AZ) & Marge Gunner (Bravehearts, Harvard, IL)

#### **Define YOUR program by recognizing your current resources:**

Ask questions: Are you adding a Veterans program – or absorbing Veteran riders into your current population?  
How will the program impact our current operation/budget?  
What level of program can you do with your current resources: # of riders?  
*What challenges can you accommodate? Can you plan for future program expansion?*

Assess:

Horses (large enough for adults?)

Equipment & Tack

Staff (overall experience – experience with adult riders – specific certifications)

Volunteers (tall, strong)

(Recognize that staff and volunteers will need additional preparation to serve a Veteran population)

#### **SUSTAIN your program by developing new program Ideas**

Driving

Round Pen from a Wheelchair ([training video](#))

Groundwork – Showmanship

EFL/EFP – for Veterans and families

Hippotherapy – PT, OT, SLP

Social interaction – a “cantina” for Veterans, volunteers, staff, families

#### **Find Your Program Partners**

Develop a Presentation including:

2-page written description of what your center offers (who?what?when?where?how?)

Let partners know what you need (pre-screening of riders – share goals)

Video of Veteran Program – about 10 minutes

What is your application process (provide copies of documents)

Primary Target:

Veterans Administration

Local Recovery Coordinator, Spinal Cord Clinic, Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic, Polytrauma Clinic – every department you can think of! Who are these people? Where do you find someone who will listen? Engage one department and ask them to bring new partners into the project..

Secondary Targets:

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Wounded Warrior Project

Purple Heart Organization

**Determine the Evaluation Process:**

Who does initial pre-screening?

What is the Center's evaluation process?

Does your process match the needs of the Veterans?

How do you involve the Veteran participant in goal-setting for their individual program?

Review your progress evaluation to determine if it meets the needs of your Veteran riders.

How do you determine your program's success?

How do you communicate your success – with the rider? With volunteers and staff?

Share outcomes with all partners (VA) to assess success and for future planning.

**SUSTAIN your program by constantly seeking new partners**

Never lose your original partners – keep them in the loop at all times

Think in new ways – a property project by an Eagle Scout

a service group or church group do the cantina/BBQ/family activity

a classroom to honor a Veteran – field trip to watch them ride

a military service group who hasn't heard about your program yet

**Sustainability = Energy**

Keep the excitement going – personnel changes within the VA require a “new start”

Energize your volunteers with team tee-shirts/hats – something that identifies their role

Seek publicity for your program through every possible source

**10:30-10:45            BREAK**

**10:45- 12:30            *Sustaining your Program – All it Take\$ i\$ Money!*  
Leslie Esselburn (TROT, Tucson, AZ)**

**Whose job is it anyway?**

The Board of Directors has a perfect job two-sentence job description

- 1) Define the organization's mission, make its policies, govern its performance
- 2) Responsible for insuring there are adequate Financial Resources

Program staff advises the Board what tools are needed to serve a broad-based Veterans constituency.

- Automated lift
- Large saddles
- Adaptive saddles
- Large horse(s)

Initial start-up funds could range from \$18,000 - \$25,000 (if you already have a ramp)

### **It is the Board's Responsibility to Develop a Financial Plan to Sustain Funding**

What is the initial investment by your organization?

How will you attract those funds?

(Investigate resources to provide funds to acquire what you need— individual donors, closely-held family foundations, corporations, grants)

Who will pay the riding fees for the Veterans?

- Finding funds within the VA and other partners
- Attracting funds from donors & sponsors

### **Sustain your program – Maintain your Connections**

Develop connections that are about more than money— find many ways to say thank you

Connecting donors to your organization for the long run – don't assume you know their plans

Ongoing campaigns/fundraising events to secure funds – targeting the program

Publicize your program constantly

**12:30-1:30**

**LUNCH**

### **PANELS:**

**1:30-2:30**

#### **Instructor Panel:**

**Amanda Hogan (Windrush, Boxford, MA), Paula Quillan (The Right Step, Littleton, CO) Mary Jo Beckman (the Caisson Unit, Fort Myers, VA) Joan Shroeder (ROCK, Georgetown, TX)**

**2:30-3:30**

#### **Mental Health Presentation:**

**Sue Suddith (CHAPS, Sheridan, WY); Dr. Mark Mann (Chief of Mental Health Services, Sheridan VA Medical Center); Ms. Jackie Van Mark (Public Affairs Director, Sheridan VA Medical Center)**

A unique partnership with a VA counselor and Veteran riders.

**3:30-3:45**

**BREAK**

**3:45-5:00**

#### **Veterans Panel:**

**Dave Trexlar (Panel Leader)**

3-5 Veterans currently participating in Horses for Heroes programs (from Colorado and surrounding area)