



Professional Association of Therapeutic
Horsemanship International

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

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Purina Presents the 2011 PATH International Conference in Kentucky

Denver – The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), formerly NARHA, announced that Purina has been named the official title sponsor of PATH Intl.'s 2011 Conference in Lexington, KY, November 9-12.

Purina has been a good friend and sponsor of PATH Intl. for many years, and this year marks the second year in a row that Purina has honored PATH Intl. by becoming the title sponsor of its international conference, the leading event targeted at the growing field of equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT). In addition to providing financial support to PATH Intl., Purina has also funded scholarships to help people attend the conference and many other creative programs in years past.

Based in Denver, PATH Intl. was formed in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association to promote equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. The needs of those served include but are not limited to developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, hearing, visual and speech impairments, spina-bifida, cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, and emotional, behavioral and learning challenges. Many PATH Intl. centers offer special programs for at-risk youth as well as wounded service personnel and veterans. At nearly 800 member centers, men, women and children find a sense of independence through involvement with equines in activities such as therapeutic riding, hippotherapy, equine-assisted psychotherapy, driving, interactive vaulting and competition. Of the 43,000 participants helped by PATH Intl., nearly 80 percent are under the age of 18. Today, PATH Intl. has more than 35,000 volunteers, 3,200 instructors, 5,900 therapy horses and thousands of contributors from all over the world. Information about PATH Intl. is available on its website at www.pathintl.org.

The team at Purina is proud to support PATH Intl. and the fantastic work done by the organization, its member centers and numerous volunteers every day. Purina and PATH Intl. share a strong sense of responsibility to the animals and people in PATH Intl. programs. That sense of responsibility is reflected in the uncommon quality and performance of Purina's feeds, which are backed by years of extensive research.

According to Kaye Marks, Marketing Director of PATH Intl., the conference improves the EAAT field each year by bringing together the top certified instructors and accredited center leadership as well as therapists and other professionals for the kind of communication and continuing education that is absolutely necessary for the growth and expansion of the field. This year, Purina presents the 2011 PATH International Conference, which will showcase preeminent development in research and education and celebrate the very best people and equines in EAAT today.

“PATH Intl. is thrilled and very grateful for Purina’s title role in the conference, in the presentation of the Instructor of the Year Award and in the ongoing activities that support excellence in services to people with challenges throughout the year,” said Marks. “The financial support and increased awareness Purina brings to PATH Intl. is invaluable.

If you would like information on sponsoring PATH Intl.’s conference or wish to be an exhibitor, visit www.pathintl.org and click on “conferences national” or email Megan Ream at mream@pathintl.org.

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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.