



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

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**Webster Named PATH Intl. James Brady Professional Achievement Award Winner**

**Denver**—The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) is proud to announce that Sandy Webster is the recipient of the 2012 James Brady Professional Achievement Award, sponsored by the Equus Foundation. The annual award, presented in the name of former White House Press Secretary James Brady, recognizes the contributions made to the field of equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) and is presented to a professional who has made a contribution to the industry. Contributions have been in, but are not limited to, areas such as research, publication, public relations or program development.

For more than 25 years, Sandy has made significant contributions to therapeutic horsemanship, whether as executive director, program director, coach or consultant. As an instructor Sandy demonstrates intensive knowledge of the theory and practice of therapeutic riding. She understands the effects of a wide range of disabilities and is a master of matching horse to rider.

Sandy has an outstanding reputation in the equestrian community for her horse and stable management knowledge and is respected by professionals such as veterinarians, farriers and suppliers for the horses.

Sandy is a PATH Intl. Master Instructor and an advanced instructor with the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association. She was the program director for 12 years and the executive director for seven years at Community Association for Riding for the Disabled in Toronto, Canada (CARD). As executive director, Sandy brought many innovative ideas to the table, including a restructuring of the program that resulted in a reduction of the waiting list and a more efficient use of staff time. She spearheaded many capital improvement initiatives and breathed new life into fund development activities. Under her leadership, CARD's signature fund raising event, CARDathon in the Park, quadrupled its revenue. The Board of Directors held Sandy's abilities and judgment in the highest regard but most of all treasured her devotion and commitment to her deep belief in the power of the horse to heal and improve quality of life.

In fact, Sandy's heart has always been first and foremost with the riders and she not only helped many achieve their goals but worked tirelessly to expand opportunities for riders with disabilities. She spearheaded the provincial, national and international competitions for riders with disabilities as well as integrated sport opportunities. She took the first Canadian team to the World Championships and Paralympics, finishing with silver and bronze medals.

Sandy left CARD to pursue a career as a consultant, motivated to build new centers where there was a need and share the impact nationwide. She has helped other therapeutic riding centers develop and expand their programs. Everywhere, she brings her professional expertise and her focus on detail. She also presents at conferences, workshops and sits on many committees that do outreach and development for the therapeutic riding industry across North America, consulting at Montgomery Area Nontraditional Equestrians in Alabama, J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center

in San Juan Capistrano, California, and most recently at Giant Steps Therapeutic Equestrian Center in Petaluma, California; all are PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers.

"Sandy brings to therapeutic riding leadership, a high level of professionalism, expertise relating to both horses and riders with disabilities, and most of all, an extraordinary passion for using the horse to create a better life for the rider," said Dr. Michele Green, former CARD chair of the board. "These are constants in her life, a life devoted to the purest ideals of therapeutic riding....Sandy is well deserving of the James Brady Award."

The benefits of therapeutic riding gained national attention after James Brady, press secretary to then-President Ronald Reagan, was shot during an assassination attempt on the President's life. Paralyzed, Brady turned to hippotherapy to help him in the rehabilitation process, and now, 30 years later, Brady can walk and has regained almost all of his prior speech and cognitive function. The PATH Intl. James Brady Professional Achievement Award is sponsored by the Equus Foundation, The EQUUS Foundation, which is dedicated to improving the quality of life of horses, promoting the use of horses to enrich the lives of those in need, and educating the public about the horse's unique ability to empower, teach and heal.

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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, more than 54,000 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 45,000 volunteers, 4,300 instructors, 6,300 therapy horses and thousands of contributors from all over the world helping people at PATH Intl. centers.*