

DATE	TIME	TRACK NUMBER	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER(S)	SESSION SUMMARY	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	PRESENTER BIO(S)	PATH INTL. APPROVED CEUs
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 1	What does control smell like? Redefining Safety as a Two-Species Process	Kimberly I. Tumlin, Founder, More than a Massage Dr, LLC, and Associate Professor, University of Kentucky  Cathrin Wilbanks, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Equine Assisted Services, Asbury University	Safety is sensed, not said. Much of what happens between horses and humans occurs before words are formed. Recent research demonstrated horses can detect human emotions through smell, highlighting how strongly they respond to environmental signals. Building on more than 30 years of collective experience in equine-assisted learning, we introduces the SENSE framework (Signal Evaluation with Neuroception and Social Engagement). Participants will actively observe signals that influence regulation and engagement for both horse and human. Using nonvisual and nonverbal cues, facilitators will practice subtle physical signals and evaluate how the horse responds. Through somesthetic learning, participants will apply basic massage and body positioning techniques that reveal tension patterns and nervous system shifts in the horse. This hands-on session helps practitioners sharpen their ability to read horses and respond with awareness. Our goal is to help create environments where safety can be dynamically and bidirectionally sensed by both horses and humans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strategies for designing sensory-aware environments that support nervous system regulation in equine-assisted settings.</li> <li>Recognize nervous system cues in horses that extend beyond traditional behavioral interpretation.</li> <li>Apply techniques that shift equine interactions from task-focused activities toward relational presence.</li> </ul>	<p>Kimberly is a translational health scientist and implementation researcher focused on designing community-embedded health systems. Integrating neurophysiology, sports performance, and occupational health and safety is core to her work. As an innovative strategic partner, Kimberly's work drives scalable models that strengthen resilience and flourishing at the intersection of health and human-animal systems. Kimberly has a doctoral degree in animal sciences, a MS in food sciences, an MPH in Occupational Health and Safety, EAGALA certification, and has been researching the EAL and EAS systems for 8 years. She has over 20 years of educational theory and practice, been teaching somesthetic learning for over 10 years. In practice, Kimberly has over 26 years of proving horse manual therapies and is a lifelong equestrian. Kimberly was connected to EAL in the late 1990's at a Virginia Therapeutic Riding Center as their support for obtaining NARA credentialing.</p> <p>Cathrin is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) in Kentucky and is a certified equine interaction professional for mental health (CBEIP-MH), specializing in the integration of equines into mental health services. As an Assistant Professor at Asbury University, she teaches within the Psychology and Equine Studies departments and oversees the Equine Assisted Services major. Beyond academia, Cathrin has been serving on the Board of the Certification Board of Equine Interaction Professionals (CBEIP) for over three years. Cathrin is a Licensed Professional Counselor and educator specializing in trauma-informed therapy and experiential learning. She integrates somatic awareness, relational neuroscience, and equine-assisted approaches to support emotional regulation and resilience. The presenter works with individuals, families, and groups to develop practical skills for sensing safety and building healthy relationships. She also trains practitioners and students in experiential approaches that connect nervous system science with real-world practice.</p>	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 2A	Why We Couldn't Study What We Believed In: Replication and Readiness in Equine Assisted Services	Dr. Carlene Taylor, Clinical Assistant Professor & Clinical Director of Clinical Mental Health Counseling, University of North Florida  Amy Johnson Binder, EdD, LPC, CPDT-KA, UW-AAAB, Clinical Assistant Professor & Animal Assisted Services Program Director, University of North Florida	Many of us in equine assisted services have long known the power of this work—watching transformation unfold in arenas, pastures, and round pens—yet have wondered why the research has struggled to keep pace with our beliefs. This session invites participants to step back and reflect on that question through a “then and now” lens. Revisiting early industry research that identified foundational barriers, we will explore how challenges such as inconsistent training, unclear roles, and fragmented service models shaped what was—and was not—possible. More importantly, we will look at what has changed. Drawing on over a decade of intentional academic program development and emerging teaching and research infrastructures, this session offers a hopeful perspective on how equine assisted services may finally be ready to study what we have believed in all along—and how that readiness can shape the field's next chapter.	<p>Describe the foundational threats to equine assisted services identified in early industry evaluation efforts and why they limited research replication.</p> <p>Explain how inconsistent training, role clarity, and professional standardization across equine assisted services delayed research readiness.</p> <p>Evaluate how academic training pipelines and the separation of teaching and research environments address longstanding barriers and support future research.</p>	<p>Carlene Holder Taylor, Ed.D., LMHC, NCC, ESMHL is a Clinical Assistant Professor, licensed mental health counselor, and counselor supervisor with extensive experience in equine assisted learning and services. She holds an Ed.D. in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Counselor Education and Supervision. Her doctoral dissertation examined early industry wide threats to therapeutic horsemanship, with particular focus on sustainability, professional identity, and the lack of standardization necessary for replicable research. For over a decade, Dr. Taylor has led the development of an academic program embedding equine assisted learning within a master's level counseling curriculum, emphasizing professional competency, ethics, and supervision. Her work bridges equine assisted learning, counselor education, and research infrastructure development.</p> <p>Amy Johnson Binder, Ed.D., LPC, CPDT KA, UW AAB, is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at the University of North Florida. She also serves as Program Director for Animal Assisted Services, where her work focuses on research, professional training, and program development within animal assisted and equine assisted services. Dr. Johnson Binder is the lead author on a recently published, peer reviewed international consensus paper advancing unified terminology for Animal Assisted Services (AAS), including Equine Assisted Services—addressing a long standing barrier to collaboration, training, and research consistency in the field. Her expertise centers on research methodology, program evaluation, terminology standardization, and protocol development. She has completed the required training for Columbia University's Man O' War project and contributes to research oversight, implementation fidelity, and infrastructure supporting replicable study designs.</p>	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 2B	The Horse Is the Teacher: A Clinical Lens on Complex Trauma in the Arena	Brittani L. Frade, CMHC, Owner, Golden Horse Counseling	Good horsemanship is built on principles and foundation, which becomes the lens through which we understand and communicate with our horse partners. When faced with a “problem” horse or a challenging client, it is common to search for new tools or techniques. But what if the issue is not a lack of tools, but the absence of a framework to organize the dissociation and complexity we are already seeing? Equine-assisted practitioners often witness moments where something significant—often confusing—is happening. Without a framework, these interactions can be difficult to understand. Horses consistently respond to aspects of human experience that are not spoken, revealing patterns that are difficult to make sense of without a clinical lens. This presentation reflects the presenter's clinical lens and experience integrating equine-assisted services with the EquiLateral®. The Equine-Assisted EMDR Protocol, informed by EMDR's Adaptive Information Processing (AIP) model. The focus is not on teaching interventions, but on providing a foundation for understanding complex trauma and dissociation theory as they present in equine-assisted work. This perspective is supported by emerging qualitative research on EquiLateral®, which highlights improvements in emotional regulation, present-moment awareness, and a sense of safety and connection in participants. These findings reflect what is observed in the arena, where horses are partnered with and practitioners utilize an evidence-based, dissociation-informed approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize how dissociation and complex trauma present in the arena, that leaves us as facilitators looking for new tools or activities.</li> <li>Organize observations through a dissociation-informed framework, identifying patterns related to safety, choice, and internal experience</li> <li>Differentiate when to continue, pause, or seek additional support, based on what is unfolding between horse and participant</li> </ul>	<p>Brittani Frade, MS, CMHC, is a licensed therapist with a Master's degree in Counseling and a specialty in Equine-Assisted Mental Health from Prescott College. Brittani is a lifelong horsewoman with approximately 10 years of experience in equine-assisted services. With a strong foundation in trauma-informed care, she integrates equine-assisted work with a clinical understanding of complex trauma and dissociation theory. Drawing from both advanced clinical training and lived experience, she focuses on safety, stabilization, choice, and understanding the experiences of those who have struggled to heal through traditional approaches, including individuals with complex trauma presentations. Her work centers on understanding for both humans and horses alike, grounded in the belief that our equine partners deserve the same consideration of safety, stabilization, consent, and language that clients need to heal. She believes that, when given the space to do so, horses and humans alike find the language to heal. She is EMDR Certified, an EMDRIA Approved Consultant, and an Approved Deep Brain Reorienting (DBR) Practitioner in consultant training. Brittani is an EquiLateral®: The Equine-Assisted EMDR Protocol Consultant and integrates equine-assisted services (EAS) with EMDR's Adaptive Information Processing (AIP) model and a dissociation-informed framework to support work with complex trauma and dissociation. She is trained through EAGALA as a dual Mental Health (MH) and Equine Specialist (ES), and has additional certification through OK Corral Series. Her clinical work is grounded in both advanced trauma training and lifelong horsemanship, allowing her to bridge the gap between what is observed in the arena and what is understood clinically. She specializes in helping practitioners recognize and respond to structural dissociation, supporting both clinicians and clients in trauma processing.</p>	1 CE

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FRIDAY, NOV. 6	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 3	MAGNETIC Storytelling - Share Your Vision, Not Facts	Joe Wappelhorst, CEO, SIRE Therapeutic Horsemanship	<p>This session is all about helping leaders tell stories that truly stick. In just one hour, we'll break down the MAGNETIC storytelling method—a simple, memorable way to turn real moments from your programs into stories that feel genuine, hit the heart, and actually inspire people to do something. We'll talk about how to keep stories focused, honest, and grounded in real outcomes, while still making them emotionally engaging and easy for any audience to connect with.</p> <p>Participants will get hands on practice using a quick three step story formula and will learn how to shape one story so it works for donors, board members, partners, and the community without losing its spark. By the end, everyone walks away with a story draft they can use right away, plus a simple checklist to make future storytelling faster, clearer, and even more impactful.</p>	<p>-Transform real program moments into clear narrative arcs using the three beat story structure (Setup → Shift → Signal).</p> <p>-Apply ethical, trauma informed storytelling practices to ensure dignity, privacy, and accuracy in all public facing stories.</p> <p>-Tailor a single core story for multiple audiences, including donors, board members, and community partners, while maintaining authenticity and impact.</p>	<p>Joe is the CEO of a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving quality of life through equine-assisted services. He has played a central leadership role in the development, design, and expansion of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) programs, including education, personal development, and workforce focused applications. Joe has authored and delivered multiple EAL presentations and curricula that articulate the purpose, structure, and implementation of EAL within community, educational, and organizational settings, with a strong emphasis on experiential learning, relationship based growth, and social emotional skill development. His EAL experience is grounded in translating mission driven goals into practical program models that align with best practices in equine assisted services and nonprofit leadership. Joe has 10 years of leading a large EAS Center who in the past 7 years has grown EAL from non-existent to serving over 140 participants per year. He has 25 years of non-profit experience; creating community partnerships, programs for a variety of audiences, and fundraising for financial stability.</p>	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 1	From Chaos to Clarity: Using the COASTER® Model to Facilitate Scalable, Low-Impact EAL for Groups	<p>Dr. Blair McKissock PhD CTRS, Director of Education and Research, Strides to Success &amp; Indiana University</p> <p>Debbie Anderson, Executive Director, Strides to Success</p>	<p>Facilitating EAL session with large groups can feel like a complex, dynamic environment. Shifting group dynamics, expected outcomes and the need to protect horse and human welfare often lead facilitators to respond reactively rather than intentionally resulting in inconsistent delivery and missed learning opportunities. This session introduces the COASTER® model, a practical, replicable facilitation framework for structuring equine-assisted learning from start to finish. Participants will experience a live demonstration of a lowimpact, scalable group activity while unpacking how each phase of the model works in real time. Grounded in experiential learning and facilitation best practices, COASTER® provides a clear structure for managing groups, adjusting in the moment, and creating meaningful reflection without increasing pressure on participants or horses. Attendees will leave with a ready-to-use framework and activity they can apply immediately in leadership settings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply the COASTER® model to structure and facilitate a clear, intentional, and repeatable equineassisted learning session from check-in through reflection.</li> <li>2. Facilitate a low-impact, scalable equine activity for large groups that maintains horse welfare, participant safety, and meaningful engagement.</li> <li>3. Recognize and respond to common facilitation challenges in real time, using structured reflection to translate equine interactions into relevant insights for leadership and team development.</li> </ol>	<p>Dr. Blair McKissock has spent more than 30 years working in equine-assisted services as a recreation therapist, educator, facilitator, and program developer. She is a PATH Intl. CTRI, Equine Specialist, and Master EAL Facilitator, and co-founder of HorseWork Education, where she trains equine-assisted learning professionals through online and in-person programs focused on facilitation, program development, and nature connection. Blair also serves as an Associate Clinical Professor at Indiana University and Director of Education and Research for Strides to Success.</p> <p>Blair serves as faculty for PATH Intl. and co-led the development of the PATH Intl. Equine-Assisted Learning credential. She has collaborated and consulted internationally to help advance professional standards, competencies, and best practices within equine-assisted services. In addition to training professionals, Blair develops curricula, books, online tools, and facilitation resources used by programs across the field. She has conducted and published peer-reviewed research, presented internationally, and serves on the Scientific Advisory Board for the Horses and Humans Research Foundation.</p> <p>Debbie has 40+ years of experience as a PATH Intl CTRI, ES and EAL Facilitator at the Master level. Trained in EAGALA, ESA, Natural Lifemanship and New Horizons. She is also past board member of PATH Intl., one of the authors of the Terminology Consensus paper, has trained well over 200 facilitators in EAL. She has been the ED of Strides to Success, a PATH Premiere Accredited facility for 20 years, Strides was the first facility in the US to be accredited by PATH in mental health, she is also credentialed through CBEIP-ED. As co-founder of a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center, Debbie's work has focused on developing programs that meet community needs while maintaining high standards of safety, horse welfare, and participant experience. Debbie is also known for mentoring emerging professionals, supporting others in building sustainable and impactful equine-assisted programs.</p>	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 2A	Introducing Equine-in-Nature-Assisted Social Work: A Shared Methodology for Practice, Research, and Education	<p>Dr. Dana Spett, MSW, DSW, CTRI, Executive Director, Pony Power Therapies</p> <p>Bonnie Lavoie, MSW, LSW, CTRI, Research Manager, Pony Power Therapies</p>	<p>The Equine-in-Nature-Assisted Social Work (ENASW) framework, developed over 26 years at Pony Power Therapies, provides a cross-disciplinary approach to Equine Assisted Learning. This framework combines professional social work with intentional horse partnership and is based on systems theory, the biophilia hypothesis, and polyvagal theory.</p> <p>A key component of this model is the "pedagogy of silence," which creates quiet, non-coercive environments that foster authentic relationships with horses and the land, making these relationships central to the intervention. Unlike traditional approaches, ENASW treats nature as a co-regulator rather than merely a background element.</p> <p>Currently, the framework supports two main initiatives: a practice-embedded research model focused on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and a graduate-level MSW elective at Ramapo College. By formalizing the immediate relational feedback that is inherent in equine work, ENASW offers a blueprint for academic partnerships and establishes a shared professional language for the field.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)Describe the Equine-in-Nature-Assisted Social Work (ENASW) framework — including its grounding in systems theory, the biophilia hypothesis, polyvagal theory, and the pedagogy of silence — as a methodology for integrating relational, somatic, and nature-based practice into equine-assisted learning.</li> <li>2)Apply principles from Pony Power's practice-embedded research model, including structured Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum and outcome evaluation, to identify concrete strategies for strengthening rigor and measurability within their own equine or nature-based programs.</li> <li>3)Examine the alignment between equine-assisted learning and social work competencies — including shared outcomes in co-regulation, relational attunement, and tolerance for environmental challenge — to articulate pathways for cross-disciplinary collaboration and multi-institutional research.</li> </ol>	<p>Dana is founder and Executive Director of Pony Power Therapies. An accomplished equestrian from a young age, Dana started New York University's equestrian team and competed on the intercollegiate show circuit. After earning a master's degree from the Wurzwiler School of Social Work, she gained experience working with people with disabilities as a coordinator of child-study teams for school-based programming. Dana became a PATH International certified instructor to support one of her three daughters who was diagnosed with mild sensory integration issues. Inspired by the difference therapeutic riding made in her daughter's life, Dana founded Pony Power in 2000. She has since been the guiding force behind the organization's growth, dedicating herself to creating an inclusive and transformative environment guided by nature. In 2023 Dana earned her Doctor of Social Work degree from Rutgers University. She contributes research around developing an ethical and competent practice models for equine- and nature-assisted social work. In addition to her role at Pony Power, Dana teaches master's level social workers at Rutgers University, Smith College and Ramapo College of New Jersey.</p> <p>Bonnie Lavoie, MSW, LSW, CTRI, is a Licensed Social Worker and PATH International Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor whose work bridges applied research and hands-on equine-assisted services. She currently serves as Research Manager at Pony Power Therapies in Mahwah, NJ, and as a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor at Saddle Up! in Nashville, TN. Her work focuses on advancing evidence-informed program design, evaluation, and practice to support meaningful outcomes for participants across abilities in equine-assisted services.</p>	1 CE

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FRIDAY, NOV. 6	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 2B	The Power of Hope and Activation: The Connected Horse Program	Nancy Schier Anzelmo Co Founder and Educational Director, Connected Horse Melissa Herbert, Connected Horse Facilitator, Horses with Hearts	Explore for mindfulness to activation - in this session we will explore a carefully thought out journey to support care partners and those diagnosed with any type of dementia to reset with the support of equine assisted learning.	1-Gain knowledge of working with older adults who memory loss. 2-Understand the foundation of the -Connected Horse program and philosophy 3- Expansion and supporting this work in other barns to empower the needs of the older adult population .	Nancy Schier Anzelmo is a passionate Gerontologist who loves horses and created a first of its kind program for those living with a dementia diagnosis and their care partners in a 3 week workshop with horses. Nancy is recognized nationally and internationally for her work, and is a former presenter at the EAL Summit in 2024. She has been the presenter at numerous national and international conferences for Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia.  Melissa Herbert is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in WV, VA & MD and a certified EAGALA mental health provider, specializing in complex trauma. Melissa has worked in a variety of settings to include child welfare, community mental health, crisis services, school-based therapies, & medical social work. Melissa transitioned from Veterans Affairs to her own full-time practice in 2024. Melissa became a certified Connected Horse Facilitator in March 2025 and is leading the program at Horses with Hearts.	0.5 DE and 0.5 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 3	Expanding Your EAL Career Opportunities through EAL for Corporate Groups	Jeff Arnold	When we think of offering Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) for corporate groups, we often think of the benefits of increased program funding and corporate exposure to ensure sustainability, but often we don't recognize the benefits it provides to building/advancing our careers in EAL. Interested in offering EAL to corporate or organizational groups but not sure where or how to start? Are you wondering how it could help to develop career opportunities for you or your staff/volunteers? Join us to learn about the importance, impact, career opportunities, and how-to's of offering EAL to local corporate or organizational groups. We'll demystify the process based on our experience of helping more than 60 Centers. We'll cover a framework and checklist of steps and considerations, along with lessons learned and pro-tips (including audience best practice sharing)!	1.) To share the importance and impact of offering EAL to local corporate groups, and how it can help to create career opportunities for you and your staff/volunteers 2.) To walk through a framework of steps to demystify the process, including obtaining contacts of local businesses, developing or acquiring EAL programming, business development and outreach process, contracts, and instructor training/certifications 3.) To share first-hand Center stories, corporate stories, and pro-tips within each step	Jeff has 15 years of Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) design, delivery, and implementation experience within a 31-year corporate consulting career focused on organizational design, experiential learning, and leadership development. He has a B.S. degree in Engineering Management, is the President of a global consulting and professional services firm, and has worked with more than 100 CEOs and client organizations world-wide, including Colleges & Universities, Fortune 100 companies, non-profits, and faith-based organizations. He has partnered with more than 60 small to very large therapeutic horsemanship Centers to design, deliver and implement accelerated, experiential EAL programs. He developed a license-based offering to assist Centers to bring EAL programming to their Center's local organizations, colleges/universities, veterans, police & first responders, and youth to advance their leadership skills using EAL. Jeff is published in McGraw-Hill's Industrial Engineering Handbook, MOST Work Measurement Textbook, and was recently featured in JH Style and Strides magazines discussing the use of experiential, accelerated, equine-assisted leadership development as part of the Equine-Assisted Leadership Development Academy™ (EALDA™).	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 1	Hooves & Harmony: Using Music and Horse Movement in Equine-Assisted Learning Sessions	Dr. Carol Pettito, Executive Director, On Eagles' Wings Therapeutic Horsemanship Stephanie VanGilder, Program Director, On Eagles' Wings Therapeutic Horsemanship	Horses and music share a powerful common element: rhythm. This session explores how integrating music into equine-assisted learning sessions can enhance engagement, emotional regulation, and participant experience. The horse's natural four-beat walk provides steady rhythmic movement that influences the nervous system, while music offers auditory rhythm that can support relaxation, focus, and emotional processing. When these rhythms are intentionally paired, participants experience a multisensory environment that encourages regulation and connection. Attendees will explore how rhythm influences the brain, learn practical strategies for incorporating music into groundwork and mounted activities, and discover ways to use music to support diverse participants in equine-assisted programs. Through discussion, examples, and interactive exploration, this session highlights how music and horse movement can work together to create meaningful learning experiences that support emotional balance and engagement.	Learning Objectives 1. Explain how rhythm and music influence brain function and emotional regulation in equine-assisted learning settings. 2. Describe how the horse's four-beat walk contributes to sensory input and nervous system regulation. 3. Apply practical strategies for integrating music into equine-assisted learning activities.	Dr. Carol Pettito is the founder and Executive Director of a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited therapeutic riding center in north-central West Virginia, established in 2007. A certified PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor and Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning, Carol also developed the Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies minor at West Virginia University. Carol's program serves individuals with disabilities, at-risk youth, veterans, and corporate leadership groups through innovative equine-assisted learning programming.  Stephanie is the center's Program Director, as well as a PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor and an Equine Specialist in Mental Health & Learning. Since 2017, Stephanie's roles have evolved from volunteer, to Americorps VISTA, to current role as program director. Stephanie is a 2023 graduate of West Virginia University with a degree in multidisciplinary studies, with focuses on equine studies, disability studies and agribusiness.	0.5 DE and 0.5 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 2A	Brain Science is for Everyone: An Introduction to Interpersonal Neurobiology for Personal and Professional Development	Bettina Shultz-Jobe, Co-Founder and CEO, The Natural Lifemanship Institute Kate Naylor, Director of Trainer Development, The Natural Lifemanship Institute	The field of Interpersonal Neurobiology has exploded in recent decades, and the findings are profound. The human brain is formed by both genetics and experiences, and the brain changes throughout the lifespan in response to experience. What this tells us is that intentional experiences over time can build stronger brains and heal emotional and relational wounds. The science of IPNB gives us fascinating insights into what kind of interventions aid this growth and healing. Join us for a presentation that offers foundational information about brain development, the impact of suboptimal experience, and the kinds of interventions that are required for healthy development and healing. This presentation is for anyone who is human, loves a human, or cares for humans. And bonus! Human brains are mammalian brains, which means what is learned here can also help us better understand our non-human partners.	Participants will learn the basics of mammalian, and specifically, human brain development as it unfolds in optimal environments Participants will be able to identify the impact of suboptimal experiences and environments on brain development, particularly in early development Participants will discover the value and importance of being brain and nervous system-informed regardless of the EAL approach or population, for ethical and effective EAL services	With more than 20 years of experience partnering people and horses to bring about healing, growth, and transformation for horse and human alike, Bettina is passionate about discovering and utilizing the horse's full potential for helping humans. She is a pioneer in the field of Equine Assisted Services, and believes that healing, growth, and transformation begins when people and horses form deep connections, free from power, domination, and control. Bettina is a mentor and teacher, has authored multiple book chapters, led EAS clinical research, and continues to be an engine for the evolution of the EAS field. Bettina is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified mental health practitioner and equine professional in Natural Lifemanship (Trauma-Informed Equine Assisted Services).  Kate is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, mother, and teacher; among other things. Growing up on farms, ranches, and around a variety of animals, Kate found at an early age that interdependence with all life is the fuel for living. This embodied understanding of interdependence led her to work with families in nature-based, equine-assisted environments with an eye toward the context, the systems, from which each unique life emerges. Over the last 15 years, Kate has trained in several experiential modalities and has found a sweet spot - supporting the development of therapists, coaches, helpers and healers through experiential methods and mentorship. She has co-authored several chapters on EAS, teaches regularly at both the local and national level, and continues to envision a world in which each of us feels our inherent belonging.	1 DE

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FRIDAY, NOV. 6	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 2B	Quantifying Horse Magic: Measuring Beyond the Satisfaction Survey	Kerra Mercon, Executive Director, Flying Change Foundation, Inc. Carla Romano, President, Flying Change Foundation, Inc.	We often hear "you know it when you see it" about the magic of horses and the effects of EAS on improving physical, mental, and emotional well-being of participants. But how do you measure magic? In this session, we will discuss the importance of standardized outcome measurements for program evaluation. We will begin working toward building consensus on a core set of outcomes that EAS programs should measure and report to improve the current state of evidence-based practices in EAS to support funding and reimbursement decisions.	Learning Objectives 1. Describe the utility of a core outcome set for EAS research 2. Reflect on EAS provision to identify potential outcomes for measurement 3. Develop greater understanding of outcome measurement and tools	Kerra is co-founder of Flying Change Foundation, Inc., and is highly experienced in evaluating the effectiveness of public health interventions as well as a life-long equestrian. She began her journey in the EAS space while still in high school and has expanded her volunteer capacity to co-founding an EAL program. She couples her formal training in public health, passion for horses and use of experiential learning at her organization. She is a third-year doctoral student in the Maternal and Child Health program at the University of Maryland. She is a long-time volunteer at a large EAS foundation, following PATH Intl. standards, and has a master's in biomedical engineering.  Carla serves Vice-president of a Patient-Centered Outcomes Assessment team at a large not for profit. She volunteers her time for FCF, Inc. and is a founding member. Her academic and life experiences have prepared her for her volunteer role in EAL as she is well-versed in public health program planning and execution. She is also a life-long equestrian and describes her youth experiences with horses as completely "transformative" and one important inspiration for the founding of FCF, Inc. She has completed her 2018 PATH Intl. Standards as well as Natural Lifemanship level 1 and continues to pursue certifications in PATH Intl. EAL and Natural Lifemanship. She holds a master of science in public health, is a PhD candidate in public health, and co-founder Flying Change Foundation, Inc.	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 3	From Vision to Sustainable Ministry: Building and Leading an Equine Mentorship Program	Jennifer Shepard, Vice President, Hope Reins	Many people feel called to start an equine-assisted program, but turning that vision into a sustainable ministry requires more than passion—it requires leadership, clarity, and the right foundation.  In this session, Jennifer shares lessons learned from building a thriving equine mentorship ministry that now serves children in crisis and equips leaders through the Hope Reins Academy.  Participants will explore key principles for moving from vision to sustainable impact, including developing confidence as a leader, building a strong team, and creating the structure needed to support long-term ministry. Kim will also share common pitfalls to avoid and practical insights for building an equine mentorship program that can grow and serve children for years to come.	1. Explore key leadership and organizational foundations needed to start and sustain an equine mentorship ministry. 2. Consider common challenges and pitfalls when launching an equine-assisted program and practical ways to navigate them. 3. Learn practical steps for moving from vision to sustainable impact, including building a strong team and establishing structures that support long-term ministry.	Jennifer Shepard is a founding staff member of Hope Reins and serves as Vice President after serving 15 years as Director of Operations—overseeing the ranch, volunteer teams, and the care and training of the Hope Reins herd. With a lifelong passion for horses and more than twenty years of nonprofit experience, Jennifer has played a central role in developing the Healing-Based Horsemanship philosophy used at Hope Reins. This approach prepares horses to partner with mentors and clients in relational work with children who have experienced trauma. Jennifer supports the training of mentors and equine hosts in the principles of Healing-Based Horsemanship, equipping them to cultivate authentic partnerships with horses that support healing, connection, and resilience.	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 1	Horse Sense Means Stable Livin'	Johnny Clark, LMSW, Equine Therapist Specialist, Tulsa Boys' Home and The SPUR Model	The Spur Model is an Equine Assisted Learning program. It utilizes social intelligence theory concepts and relationship building activities in a game format to engage both the horse and participant towards discovery and development in self-perception, self-behavior and social connection.	1. Social Brain - wired to connect 2. Social Play - relationship magic 3. Social Game - the power of play	Johnny A. Clark, LMSW, is the equine specialist counselor at Tulsa Boys' Home and author of The Spur Model: An Equine-Facilitated Social Intelligence Approach to Relationship Building. He has certifications including LMSW; EAGALA, EACP; AIA-Barbara Rector, AACC, O.K. Corral Series Mounted Certification. With 56 years devoted to the world of horses, Johnny has built a lifelong practice grounded in compassion, curiosity, insight and deep respect for the horse-human bond. Johnny is the creator of an equine facilitated social intelligence model that helps individuals strengthen relationships through experiential learning with horses. His work gently guides people toward greater self-awareness, authentic connection and meaningful communication – drawing on the natural wisdom of horses to inspire growth, trust and lasting relational change.	1 CE
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 2A	The Power of Practice: Balancing Talk and Action in EAL Sessions	Kate Naylor, Director of Trainer Development, The Natural Lifemanship Institute Bettina Shultz-Jobe, Co-Founder and CEO, The Natural Lifemanship Institute	Talking is a fantastic skill set most humans benefit from using, but what is the cost of relying too heavily on talking? Research tells us that in order for an individual to experience lasting change, learning has to be embodied - and embodiment comes from practice. In our eagerness to be helpful, we can fall into the trap of teaching, explaining, discussing, and making meaning throughout our sessions - and so can our clients. Yet, talking can often interrupt the embodied learning that occurs through practice. If you find you may be over relying on "verbal processing" and struggle to help a client stay present and in their body, join us as we experience and explore the concrete ways we can bring more presence, more practice, and therefore, more embodied change for our clients.	Participants will be able to connect brain science to an embodied facilitation approach that adapts to their own EAL practice Participants will practice concrete facilitation skills that support a client in staying in the present experience of a session fostering brain integration and embodiment of change Participants will be able to explain why verbal processing and meaning-making isn't always necessary and can, in fact, interrupt learning	Kate is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, mother, and teacher; among other things. Growing up on farms, ranches, and around a variety of animals, Kate found at an early age that interdependence with all life is the fuel for living. This embodied understanding of interdependence led her to work with families in nature-based, equine-assisted environments with an eye toward the context, the systems, from which each unique life emerges. Over the last 15 years, Kate has trained in several experiential modalities and has found a sweet spot - supporting the development of therapists, coaches, helpers and healers through experiential methods and mentorship. She has co-authored several chapters on EAS, teaches regularly at both the local and national level, and continues to envision a world in which each of us feels our inherent belonging.  With more than 20 years of experience partnering people and horses to bring about healing, growth, and transformation for horse and human alike, Bettina is passionate about discovering and utilizing the horse's full potential for helping humans. She is a pioneer in the field of Equine Assisted Services, and believes that healing, growth, and transformation begins when people and horses form deep connections, free from power, domination, and control. Bettina is a mentor and teacher, has authored multiple book chapters, led EAS clinical research, and continues to be an engine for the evolution of the EAS field. Bettina is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified mental health practitioner and equine professional in Natural Lifemanship (Trauma-Informed Equine Assisted Services).	1 CE

DATE	TIME	TRACK NUMBER	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER(S)	SESSION SUMMARY	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	PRESENTER BIO(S)	PATH INTL. APPROVED CEUs
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 2B	Journey with Joy: Equine Assisted Learning for Post Traumatic Growth	Dr. Abigail Wilson, COO, Lone Oak Animal Assisted Therapy and Adjunct Professor, Millersville University of Pennsylvania Heather Girvin, Executive Director, Lone Oak Animal Assisted Therapy and Associate Professor, Millersville University of Pennsylvania	Journey with Joy is an innovative pilot program targeting post-traumatic growth in adult women that Lone Oak conducted in February 2026. This program utilized equine-assisted and experiential learning in a group setting to teach principles of incorporating the feeling of joy in their every day lives. Participants worked with rescue horses on the ground and mounted to engage in these principles. Due to a grant from Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Lone Oak utilized this pilot to collect quantitative and qualitative data on this innovative intervention. This presentation will cover the background, implementation, and results of the Journey with Joy program.	At the end of the session, participants will be able to: - Understand the principles and importance of post-traumatic growth - Define joy and its role in post-traumatic growth - Create interventions that incorporate joy as a goal	Dr. Wilson is a licensed Social Worker in Pennsylvania with a Doctor of Social Work degree. She is trained through Natural Lifemanship as a Level 1 practitioner. She is an adjunct professor in social work and the Chief Operating Officer at a non-profit providing equine-assisted therapeutic and educational services. She works with children, families and adults with anxiety, depression, trauma, and grief. She utilizes psychotherapy as well as ecotherapeutic and equine-assisted strategies. She has provided Equine Assisted Learning and Therapy for 5 years with rescue horses in the Lancaster County Community.  Heather is a lifelong horsewoman, academic, and social service professional and Founder of Lone Oak. She works to build community wellness by offering equine-assisted therapeutic and developmental programming. She is currently an associate professor at Millersville University, earning a Doctorate from Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work & Social Research. Her practice experience centers on children and families, primarily in child protective services and foster care. Heather has also worked in residential programs, public child welfare agencies, provided in-home services, and worked as an outpatient therapist. Her research interests include trauma, social justice, and alternative interventions that are accessible, individualized, and effective.	1 CR-All
FRIDAY, NOV. 6	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 3	Thriving Through Transition: How One Organization Managed Growth and Expansion In a Time of Transition	Twylla Hester EdD, CEO, House of Healing, Inc.	Transition in leadership is always daunting. Questions like "Will the organization withstand the transition from one key leader to the next?" can create stress and/or success in an organization. This session will explore one organization's growth through transition over a three year period from being near closure to tripling program size and beyond. During the transition everything from leadership, board membership, bylaws, and financial practices were reviewed and adjusted. This session is intended to support small but hopeful programs with a desire to collaborate and encourage one another through honest discussion of successes to celebrate, strengths, weaknesses, and pitfalls to avoid. Not every program is identical but we all experience times where change is necessary for growth to occur. Join us as we dive into the good, the bad, and the sometimes ugly.	1) Explore successes and failures during growth in one organization. 2) Identify potential pitfalls in succession planning or lack thereof. 3) Collaborate with other leaders on sustainability practices and growth factors.	Twylla is the CEO at a rapidly growing nonprofit focused on EAL programs for at-risk youth, veterans, and their families. While new in the field of equine work (a little over 3 years), Twylla has over 20 years of experience in educational leadership. This experience combined with other nonprofit work and volunteer service provided the connections, knowledge, and willingness to adapt and grow that helped the organization expand. Twylla has an EdD in Educational Supervision, Administration, and Policy Studies that has supported the vision casting and expansion of the nonprofit. Twylla has a PATH EAL Certification, CHA Equine Facility Certification, SPUR Model Certification, EdD in Educational Supervision, Administration, and Policy Studies.	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 1	Beyond Observation: A Practical Ethogram for Tracking Relational Wellbeing in Equine-Assisted Services	Emily Kieson, Executive Director, Equine International Christine Rudd, Research Director, Equine International Dr. Helen Sabolek Consiglio, Associate Professor, Regis College	We all want our horses to be willing partners, but how do we move beyond intuition to truly understand their experience in session? This workshop bridges the gap between subjective behavior observation and data-informed behavior tracking. First, we'll introduce a newly developed ethogram, a practical behavioral interaction tracking tool designed specifically for unmounted work, that helps practitioners identify affiliative, neutral, and avoidant behaviors in real-time. Then, you'll put it to work. Participants will observe a classic equine-assisted learning activity and use the ethogram to track the horse-human interaction as it unfolds. Following the observation, the presenters will conduct a moderated discussion of the interactions observed, along with practical strategies to implement long-term tracking of equid wellbeing.	1) Understand the importance of interaction quality in equine wellbeing. Participants will be able to explain how the quality of human-horse interactions (HHI) influences equine welfare and how misinterpretations of equine behavior can impact therapeutic outcomes. 2) Identify key features of a novel tracking tool for horse-human interactions. Participants will be able to describe the purpose and key components of the ethogram for monitoring interaction quality and equine affect during therapeutic sessions. 3) Practice using the ethogram in a guided exercise. Participants will use the ethogram in an experiential exercise to demonstrate this tool's applicability, using live behavioral observation.	Emily Kieson holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Psychology with a focus on equine behavioral psychology in horse-human interactions. She also has a MS in Psychology, a graduate degree in Equine Science, and has completed certifications in many different models of EAS, including PATH Intl. ESMHL, EAGALA, and Natural Lifemanship and has been in both the EAS and traditional equitation fields for 25 years.  Christine Rudd has a PhD in Animal Science with a focus on equine wellbeing in therapeutic and adaptive horse-human interactions. She has been involved in the sport horse and EAS industries for 20 years and holds the credentials of PATH Intl. CTRI, Advanced TRI, and ESMHL. Her teaching, education development, and research focuses on physiological and psychological animal wellbeing in human-animal interactions and data-informed care and management practices.	1 CR-All
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 2A	Healing-Based Horsemanship: Partnering With Horses for Trauma Recovery	Jennifer Shepard, Vice President, Hope Reins	Horses play a powerful role in equine-assisted work—but how we prepare them for that role matters. Healing-Based Horsemanship is an approach that prepares horses not simply to participate in sessions, but to become relational partners in the healing process.  In this session, participants will explore the principles of Healing-Based Horsemanship and how thoughtful horsemanship practices create the conditions for safe, meaningful connection between horse, facilitator, and client. Jen will introduce the connection triangle that forms between horse, facilitator, and participant, along with the four truths that guide this philosophy.  Participants will gain practical insight into how preparing horses for relational healing work can transform equine-assisted experiences and create powerful opportunities for trust, connection, and growth.	1. Explore the principles of Healing-Based Horsemanship and how preparing horses as relational partners supports trauma-informed equine-assisted work. 2. Understand the connection triangle between horse, facilitator, and participant and how this dynamic creates meaningful opportunities for connection and growth. 3. Identify practical horsemanship practices that help prepare horses for safe, relational engagement in equine-assisted programs.	Jennifer Shepard is a founding staff member of Hope Reins and serves as Vice President after serving 15 years as Director of Operations—overseeing the ranch, volunteer teams, and the care and training of the Hope Reins herd. With a lifelong passion for horses and more than twenty years of nonprofit experience, Jennifer has played a central role in developing the Healing-Based Horsemanship philosophy used at Hope Reins. This approach prepares horses to partner with mentors and clients in relational work with children who have experienced trauma. Jennifer supports the training of mentors and equine hosts in the principles of Healing-Based Horsemanship, equipping them to cultivate authentic partnerships with horses that support healing, connection, and resilience.	1 CR-ESMHL
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 2B	Measuring What Matters: Utilizing Individualized Outcome Strategies in Equine Assisted Learning	Ainsley Dillon, PhD, OTR/L, HPCS, Executive Director, Hilltop Horizons, Inc. Suzanne Hardman, Program Coordinator, Hilltop Horizons, Inc.	In equine-assisted learning, we witness powerful moments of growth everyday, yet translating those moments into clear, measurable outcomes can be a challenge. This session presents a practical, adaptable framework for designing outcome strategies that truly measure what matters. In this session, we'll explore a practical framework for creating simple, meaningful outcome tools that align with each group's priorities. We'll discuss how intentional goal setting leads to focused feedback tools and purposeful observations that measure real change - not just satisfaction. Participants will learn how to identify key priorities, turn them into measurable outcomes, develop brief and user-friendly tools, collect both quantitative and qualitative data, and communicate results in ways that clearly show impact. Whether you are building an evaluation system from scratch or refining existing tools, this presentation offers realistic strategies to collect data that informs practice, supports funding, and honors the transformative power of equine assisted learning.	1. Identify group-specific priorities and translate them into clear, measurable outcomes aligned with program goals. 2. Design practical, customized outcome strategies that effectively capture both meaningful growth and usable data. 3. Utilize outcome data to communicate program impact clearly and confidently to those who matter most to your organization's sustainability and success.	Ainsley is the Founder and Executive Director of a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering individuals to thrive through the integration of equine-assisted services. Since establishing the organization in 2017, she has led its growth and program development, serving children and adults throughout Western Pennsylvania and the greater tri-state region. Ainsley earned a Master of Occupational Therapy degree from Chatham University in 2020, expanding services to include occupational therapy incorporating equine movement. She later completed a PhD in Health Sciences, with dissertation research focused on the impact of occupational therapy utilizing equine-based interventions for children with developmental disabilities. This work emphasizes the development and implementation of meaningful outcome measures within equine-assisted programming. Ainsley is a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor (CTRI), Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL), and Mentor through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.). She is passionate about advancing the field of equine-assisted services through intentional program design, evidence-informed practice, and strategies that strengthen impact within the communities served.	1 CE

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SATURDAY, NOV. 7	9:30 - 10:30 A.M.	TRACK 3	From Idea to Impact: Creative Strategies for Program Development and Sustainability	Aviva Vincent, PhD, LSW, Assistant Professor, Cleveland State University	This interactive session is designed for credentialed professionals, program directors, management/CEOs, and aspirational leaders who are ready to build, expand, or sustain impactful programs with renewed clarity and creativity. Whether you are launching a new initiative, strengthening an existing program, or working toward long-term sustainability, this workshop offers a structured, dynamic approach to thinking through your work from vision to implementation. This session reframes the logic model as a creative and generative framework; one that helps translate big ideas, values, and aspirations into actionable strategies. Participants will engage with a refreshed approach to logic modeling that emphasizes flexibility, innovation, and real-world application. Attendees are encouraged to bring their ideas, challenges, and aspirations. Participants will leave with a foundational strategic plan using a logic model, clear outcomes, and aligned activities to support implementation and growth. Are you ready to move beyond static planning tools to reinvent your aspirations?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will construct a logic model that aligns program goals, activities, and outcomes to support program development or growth.</li> <li>Participants will be able to identify and apply at least two strategies for measuring program progress and impact.</li> <li>Participants will be able to translate their program ideas, challenges, and aspirations into actionable components, including clearly defined inputs, outputs, and short- and long-term outcomes.</li> </ol>	Dr. Vincent is a Veterinary Social Worker, assistant professor of social work at Cleveland State University and co-owner of Healing Paws LLC. Dr. Vincent is the program coordinator for the Veterinary Social Work Certificate Program in the school of social work; only the second offering the certificate in the country. She is a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor through PATH Intl and clinician of advanced equine facilitated psychotherapy through the HERD Institute. She is trained in Results Based Accountability for organizational strategic planning and evaluation. She holds facilitator training through the Harwood Institute, Sustained Dialogue, and the Institute for Social Change. As a social justice advocate, she centers DEI in her practice inclusive of Access and Belonging. She is on the board of the National Association of Social Workers, and Secretary for the Board of Trustees of PATH International where she is also member of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee. Dr. Vincent was awarded NASW-OH Social Worker of the Year for Region 2 (2024), Cleveland Crain's 40 under 40 (2023), and the Early Career Success Award by Case Western Reserve University (2022). She has over 25 peer-reviewed publications and 8 peer-reviewed chapters in texts including Career Paths in Human-Animal Interaction for Social and Behavioral Scientists, The Comprehensive Guide to Interdisciplinary Veterinary Social Work, The Handbook on Human Animal Interactions and Anthrozoology, and Integrating Horses Into Healing.	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 1	Separate Doesn't Have to Be Scary: The Natural Lifemanship Practice of Detachment	Tim Jobe, Co-Founder, The Natural Lifemanship Institute Tanner Jobe, Director of Equine Professional Development, The Natural Lifemanship Institute	Separation can be scary, but it doesn't have to be! When we ask an equine to leave his paddock and herd to come to work, we ask them to hold an internal sense of connection to their places and relationships of safety. In this demonstration, Tim and Tanner Jobe will engage an equine in predictable interactions that intentionally support the development of this internal sense of connection. The presenters will demonstrate, at liberty, how shared interest and deep listening facilitates an equine in finding confidence through exploration - allowing the equine to find safety through connection rather than avoidance or dissociation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will observe how an individual equine separated from his herd naturally experiences anxiety and displays automatic and learned coping mechanisms in response</li> <li>Participants will discover how the practice of detachment intentionally supports the equine in reorienting to connection with the human and immediate surroundings to ease anxiety</li> <li>Participants will witness how the practice of detachment encourages and allows the equine to find safety through connected exploration, rather than through avoidance and dissociation</li> </ol>	<p>Tim has worked since 1986 to develop and apply the unique principles that center around connected relationships and was Co-founder of EAGALA. With The Natural Lifemanship Institute (Trauma-Informed Equine Assisted Services), he has a history of working with at-risk youth, and learned to teach horses to make the right choices because they valued the relationship, and not out of submission or fear of consequences. Applying this perspective in his roles at the West Texas Boys Ranch, Cal Farley's Ranch, with mustangs in collaboration with the BLM, and many other collaborations, Tim has pushed the boundaries of what people believe horses, and humans, can do. He is a cowboy poet and father of 4 incredible children.</p> <p>Tanner is a Certified Equine Professional with Natural Lifemanship Institute, and has spent his life working with horses, challenging the norms and conventions of horsemanship. He has supported equines in EAL and EAP sessions, as well as trains and mentors a new generation of horsemen and women. Based on an understanding of human and equine neurobiology, and a belief in the full sentience of our equine partners, presenter hopes to dramatically change the landscape of equine interaction, and EAL/EAP services, for the benefit of everyone involved.</p>	1 CR-All
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 2A	Small Horses, Big Impact: ADAPT's Equine-Assisted Learning Program Transforming Pediatric Healthcare Experiences	Jennifer Pfeiffer, ADAPT Director/Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist/ESMHL/APRN, Nemours Children's Health Christie Evans, Program Director of ADAPT Volunteer Services/Manager of Patient and Family Centered-Care, Nemours Children's Health	Discover how miniature horses are transforming pediatric healthcare experiences through ADAPT's Equine Assisted Learning program at a free-standing outpatient urban center. This session offers a behind the scenes look at an innovative outpatient model that thoughtfully integrates miniature horses into pediatric specialty care. Led by licensed clinicians and certified equine specialists, ADAPT's program uses structured, goal oriented interactions to support emotional regulation, confidence building, and stress reduction for children navigating medical care. Attendees will learn how equine assisted learning is safely implemented within healthcare settings, grounded in established animal assisted services guidelines, and aligned with interdisciplinary treatment plans. Whether you are a healthcare professional, educator, or program developer, this session highlights a creative, evidence informed approach to whole child care that prioritizes both patient well being and animal welfare.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the clinical framework and scope of equine assisted learning using miniature horses within the ADAPT pediatric outpatient program.</li> <li>Identify how structured equine assisted learning interactions support emotional regulation, confidence, and stress reduction in pediatric healthcare settings.</li> <li>Discuss key considerations for safely and ethically integrating miniature horses into healthcare environments, including clinician roles, animal welfare, and program guidelines.</li> </ol>	Jennifer is a licensed pediatric healthcare professional with over two decades of outpatient specialty care experience and is a certified Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL). She is the founder of a clinician led equine assisted learning program integrated within a pediatric healthcare system, focused on ethical, safe, and evidence informed practice. Most notably, Jennifer developed a pediatric diabetes focused equine assisted learning curriculum designed to support emotional regulation, confidence, and engagement in children managing chronic illness. Following an extensive review of the literature, this work is currently submitted to an Institutional Review Board (IRB), with plans to begin formal research in the fall. To the presenter's knowledge, this study would represent the first research initiative examining equine assisted learning with pediatric diabetes patients. Their work emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration and prioritizes both participant and equine welfare. Jennifer's team includes a Clinical Nurse Specialist (APRN, PCNS BC) with ESMHL certification and over 25 years of pediatric experience, a developer of a pediatric diabetes focused equine assisted learning (EAL) program within ADAPT, and an interdisciplinary team with credentialed animal assisted services professionals (CAVS, C AAIS) and doctoral level psychology leadership (PhD, ABPP). All equine assisted learning experiences follow established animal assisted services guidelines and prioritize participant safety and equine welfare.	1 CR-ESMHL
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 2B	Partnering with Horses for Coregulation	Abigail Vargus, Co-Founder, Acorns to Oaks Horsemanship Center	Coregulation is when someone (or some animal) partners with you in processing and dealing with emotions. Most EAL practitioners have seen a horse instinctually meet a distressed person where they are at, and guide them to a less dysregulated state. As natural as that may seem, coregulation is a two-way street: Either side can be brought into the other partner's emotional state. Horses aren't trained in coregulation, and good horsemanship requires honoring their role in this process. So how do we do our best to achieve positive coregulation without increasing the horse's stress and potentially negative behaviors? Attendees will learn what actions we can take, both short-term and long-term, to help our equine partners be steady and stable coregulators. Topics will include creating a process of coregulation, reading the client, reading the horse, setting sustainable practices, and addressing concerns in the moment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees will be able to define and model coregulation.</li> <li>Attendees will be able to list at least three signs of positive coregulation and negative coregulation when working with equine partners.</li> <li>Attendees will participate in creating a sustainability plan for horse welfare in coregulation environments, with both short-term and long-term interventions.</li> </ol>	Abigail is a school-based masters-level clinician and a licensed adjustment counselor with a certification in animal-assisted therapy. She has been partnering with horses to help children and adolescents with their mental and behavioral health since co-founding her nonprofit barn in 2021. She strongly believes in the power of the horse-human bond, and just as strongly believes in the ethical requirement of responsible horsemanship in that process. Her work is based both in research and in years of working directly with children and animals. Abigail has a Masters in Mental Health Counseling, an Animal-Assisted Therapy-Certificate, is the Co-founder of nonprofit barn that provides both traditional riding lessons as well as equine-assisted therapeutic sessions, and was a presenter at the 2024 EAL Summit.	1 CR-All

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SATURDAY, NOV. 7	10:50 - 11:50 A.M.	TRACK 3	Engaging Your Staff & Volunteers	Paula J. Del Giudice, Executive Director, Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center Lindsay Shepard, Director of Volunteer Involvement and Digital Media, Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center	We'll share Little Bit's journey toward building engagement internally with staff and volunteers. We'll explore results from engagement surveys, impacts our organization has experienced, lessons learned, and how your organization can do this.	1. Understand the concept of Engagement 2. Structure an Engagement Survey 3. Develop a Communication Strategy 4. Analysis and trends of Engagement Results 5. Create an Action Plan	Paula joined Little Bit in May 2017. Previously, she served in several executive positions spanning 20 years. She served as the Western Region Center Director with the National Wildlife Federation, then as executive director at both the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Seattle Guild, and the Pacific Northwest Pollution Prevention Resource Center. She has a wealth of proven success in communications, fund development, operational management, and board development. She has a history of leading organizations through periods of challenging transitions. In addition, volunteerism is an important part of her life, starting at a young age and continuing today with several other nonprofit organizations, including the Rotary International. She serves as President of the Rotary Club of Redmond and is on the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and a master's in education.  Lindsay came to Little Bit in July 2015 from Washington, DC, coordinating over 10,000 volunteers annually. Lindsay was excited to combine her passion for community outreach and program building with a commitment to creating positive change in the lives of people with disabilities. She has a BA in Gender and Sexuality Studies from The Ohio State University and her Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the University of Washington. Since Lindsay came onboard, the Volunteer Department at Little Bit had seen the highest volunteer rates in Little Bit's 44-year history, for five consecutive years, prior to 2020: 33% increase in total volunteer hours and a 56% increase in total volunteer count. Her team successfully re-designed and stabilized the program after losing half of the volunteer base in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 1	Step Into Their (Horse)Shoes: Reimagining the Equine-Human Partnership	Cathrin Wilbanks, LPCC, CEIP-MH, Assistant Professor of Equine Studies and Psychology, Asbury University	The horse-human relationship is the heart of effective Equine-Assisted Services (EAS), yet we must ask: Is the "empowerment" we offer our clients shared by our horses? This immersive, experiential presentation challenges traditional power paradigms by inviting professionals to view and experience their services from the horse's perspective.  Moving beyond "good intentions," we will bridge the gap between theory and practice by drawing on interdisciplinary literature and an innovative EAS Code of Ethics developed at Asbury University. Participants will engage in a unique role-reversal exercise that puts the human facilitator into the horse's shoes. Join us to explore how we can extend the same ethical standards of authenticity and vulnerability to our equine partners, ensuring a truly mutual partnership.	Critically examine the power dynamics inherent in the horse-human relationship within equine industry at large and in the field of Equine Assisted Services (EAS), and identify how these dynamics influence the service provider's perspective on equine welfare considerations. Integrate findings from social and natural sciences to challenge human-centric views of equine behavior and service participation.  Apply insights gained from the "be the horse" immersive exercise to reformulate session designs that prioritize a mutually empowering experience for both the human and equine partner.	Cathrin is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) in Kentucky and is a certified equine interaction professional for mental health (CBEIP-MH), specializing in the integration of equines into mental health services. As an Assistant Professor at Asbury University, she teaches within the Psychology and Equine Studies departments and oversees the Equine Assisted Services major. Beyond academia, Cathrin has been serving on the Board of the Certification Board of Equine Interaction Professionals (CBEIP) for over three years. Cathrin is a Licensed Professional Counselor and educator specializing in trauma-informed therapy and experiential learning. She integrates somatic awareness, relational neuroscience, and equine-assisted approaches to support emotional regulation and resilience. The presenter works with individuals, families, and groups to develop practical skills for sensing safety and building healthy relationships. She also trains practitioners and students in experiential approaches that connect nervous system science with real-world practice.	1 CR-All
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 2A	Adaptive Vaulting as an Equine-Assisted Learning Modality	Lauren Burke, Equine Director, Life Adventure Center	Adaptive vaulting offers a unique and engaging way to deepen Equine-Assisted Learning through empowerment, rhythm, and connection. In this experiential session, participants will explore how vaulting can support emotional regulation, confidence, communication, and trust for individuals of diverse ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Drawing on over 14 years of integrated program experience, this presentation shares how adaptive vaulting can be integrated as a safe, accessible, and meaningful component of EAL. Attendees will gain insight into how this modality creates memorable, growth-centered experiences while honoring both participant and horse well-being. Whether you are new to vaulting or looking to expand the impact of your current offerings, this session will offer practical ideas and inspiration to bring this dynamic approach into your work.	Understand how Adaptive Vaulting can connect with EAL: Participants will be able to describe how adaptive vaulting could complement traditional Equine-Assisted Learning, supporting diverse learning goals through meaningful, memorable, and growth-focused experiences.  Apply Inclusive and Safe Facilitation Practices: Participants will be able to identify strategies to design and facilitate adaptive vaulting experiences that are accessible, safe, and engaging for diverse populations, while prioritizing the physical and emotional well-being of both participants and horses.  Integrate Vaulting into Existing Programs: Participants will gain practical tools to incorporate adaptive vaulting as a meaningful and memorable component of their EAL programming, enhancing participant engagement, skill development, and the transfer of learning into everyday life.	Lauren is a lifelong equine professional who serves as the director of a leading equine-assisted learning program, where they design and facilitate innovative and impactful program offerings for groups of youth and adults. Lauren is a certified Equine Specialist through EAGALA and a CHA-certified Riding Instructor, combining their passion for creating empowering, memorable experiences with participants while upholding ethical, horse-centered practices in equine-assisted programming. Lauren Burke brings over 15 years of experience facilitating Equine-Assisted Learning programs at Life Adventure Center, specializing in providing multi-modal, impactful equine programs, including adaptive vaulting and trauma-informed equine activities. Lauren's expertise includes training new instructors, engaging volunteers, and supporting staff development, in addition to designing and leading inclusive, growth-focused sessions for diverse populations. Lauren emphasizes participant engagement, sustainable practices and excellence in equine welfare, and combines formal training, extensive hands-on experience, and a commitment to safe, empowering, and transformative EAL programming.	1 CR-Vaulting or 1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 2B	Applying EAL for Co-Parenting through Separation, Divorce, and Beyond. Leadership, Partnership, and Still Connected.	Adrienne Freeland, Executive Director and Instructor/Therapist, Holistic Horsemanship Services	When words get in the way. Modeling leadership, partnership, and connection through the understanding of high-context communication by learning the language of the horse. A session for families experiencing separation, divorce, and co-custody.	1. Learn to lead a powerful trilogy of sessions with high context communication. 2. Understand where to be, when to be, and why to be as it pertains to parenting through separation and divorce. 3. When old wounds and arguments resurface, how to redirect and remain on task.	Adrienne has a background in Neurological Rehabilitation, specializing in TBI. Moving onto a PATH CTRI with a variety of populations, including but not limited to troubled youth and veterans. At age 60, she acquired her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and is currently a Resident with a PP in Northern Va., where her clinic is on a 50-acre farm with 8 herd members. Adrienne is a Recreational Therapist, PATH Intl. CTRI, and holds a Masters CMHC.	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	1:15 - 2:15 P.M.	TRACK 3	Overcoming Adversity, Navigating Vulnerability & Building Personal Brand Identity through Strengths	Kelley Westbrook, Senior Director Talent Development, Leadership & Performance, Hologic, Inc.	Do you know your authentic self, your personal mission, and your personal brand? Are you curious about how you can better navigate vulnerability and adversity in your career and life? Join us to explore how you can use your most natural talents and strengths (CliftonStrengths) as a superpower to overcome imposter syndrome, develop a personal brand, and enhance your skills in your current/next role. We'll review tips that attendees can take away on building your personal brand identity through your strengths to enhance your career growth now and in the future.	Understand self awareness, authenticity, a personal mission, and personal brand.  Identify how CliftonStrengths can help you to develop your unique brand identity to advance your current/future career goals  Share tips and best practices around a framework for advancing beyond vulnerability and adversity in your career.	Kelley has been an executive in medical technology ("med-tech") and the defense industry for the past 20 years, focusing on human capital, human resources, organizational development, and talent enablement spaces. Kelley is known globally to help individuals and teams find, see, and cultivate their superpowers. She is a Gallup Certified Coach, as well as a Change Management Certified Coach, and has spoken at universities and conferences around the world. She has a Bachelor of Business Administration, a Masters in Business Leadership, and global Executive Education certificates including leadership and psychology for high performing teams.	1 CE

DATE	TIME	TRACK NUMBER	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER(S)	SESSION SUMMARY	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	PRESENTER BIO(S)	PATH INTL. APPROVED CEUs
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 1	E.Qi: Integrating Qigong, Horses, and Expressive Arts for Embodied Equine-Assisted Learning	Elizabeth Warson, PhD, ATR-BC, LPC, NCC, EMDR III, EXAT, EAP II, Owner, Healing Pathways LLC	<p>E.Qi is an innovative equine-assisted learning approach that integrates Qigong, horse-human relational work, and expressive arts within a nature-based setting. Inspired by E.Qi: Equine and Expressive Arts Inspired Qigong (2024) by Sifu Kurtis Tilley, LMT and Dr. Elizabeth Warson, this model invites participants to cultivate embodied awareness, emotional regulation, and relational attunement through mindful movement and equine interaction. Adapted Qigong practices support grounding, breath awareness, and bilateral movement that enhances sensitivity to subtle shifts in energy and communication with horses during both groundwork and mounted experiences.</p> <p>Expressive arts processes deepen integration through response artwork that reflects the embodied experience with movement, horses, and environment. The bilateral rhythm of Qigong movements supports nervous system regulation and creative reflection. This session introduces the foundations of the E.Qi model and demonstrates how integrating movement, horses, and art can foster presence, resilience, and meaningful connection in equine-assisted learning environments.</p>	<p>Describe the foundational principles of the E.Qi model, including the integration of Qigong movement, equine-assisted learning, and expressive arts within a nature-based framework.</p> <p>Demonstrate how bilateral Qigong movements can be applied in both groundwork and mounted equine interactions to support embodied awareness, nervous system regulation, and relational attunement with horses.</p> <p>Apply expressive arts response processes to help participants integrate somatic experiences from Qigong and equine interaction into reflective and creative meaning-making.</p>	<p>Elizabeth has extensive experience in Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) and equine-facilitated wellness programming. They operate a therapeutic riding program grounded in the E.Qi model and regularly facilitate corporate E.Qi experiences and wellness retreats that integrate equine interaction with leadership development, emotional awareness, and personal growth. Elizabeth is a Certified EAGALA Mental Health Professional, combining mental health expertise with equine-assisted approaches. Additional training includes Basic-level training in the Masterson Method, supporting equine bodywork awareness and horse wellbeing.</p> <p>Elizabeth is also a Certified EMDR Therapist and Advanced Practitioner, with specialized training in Equilateral: the Equine-Assisted EMDR protocol. They currently serve as an Advanced Consultant for Equilateral, providing consultation and guidance in the integration of EMDR with equine-assisted therapy practices. Elizabeth has contributed to publications and professional materials within the field of equine-assisted services. These contributions include work related to the development and use of the E.Qi manual, materials and guidance for Equine-Assisted EMDR (EquiLateral), and participation in E.Qi program evaluation efforts examining outcomes of equine-assisted learning programs. Additional contributions include work documenting and supporting equine-assisted learning (EAL) initiatives with Indigenous communities, with a focus on culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches to equine-assisted work.</p>	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 2A	The Pathway to Resilience: Integrating Faith and Science Through Equine Mentorship	Ashlee Bowker, Director of Programs, Hope Reins	<p>What happens when faith, resilience science, and the relational nature of horses come together? At Hope Reins, this intersection has led to the development of Resilience-Based Equine Mentorship, a model designed to help children move from trauma toward lasting resilience.</p> <p>In this session, participants will explore the Pathway to Resilience, a framework that helps children develop four essential resilience skills—trust, communication, boundaries, and leadership—through meaningful experiences with horses. These skills are practiced relationally and reinforced by research on resilience, while also pointing children to four powerful identity truths: I am safe, I am not alone, I matter, and I have purpose.</p> <p>Hilary will share how this integrated model has been refined through fifteen years of ministry and how the Hope Reins Academy is equipping leaders to implement this approach in their own communities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore the Pathway to Resilience framework and how the resilience skills of trust, communication, boundaries, and leadership can be developed through relational experiences with horses.</li> <li>2. Examine how faith and resilience science intersect to support healing and growth for children through resilience-based equine mentorship.</li> <li>3. Gain insight into the core components of the Hope Reins model and how this framework can be applied within equine-assisted programs.</li> </ol>	<p>Ashlee Bowker serves as Director of Programs at Hope Reins, where she leads the implementation and ongoing development of programs serving children and families in crisis. With a background in communication, nonprofit leadership, and missions, Ashlee is passionate about helping children experience the hope and healing found in authentic relationships with Jesus, mentors, and horses. Ashlee holds a B.A. in Communication from North Carolina State University with a minor in Nonprofit Studies and a Master of Divinity in Missiology from Southeastern Seminary. Her work focuses on strengthening mentor relationships, supporting program staff, and ensuring the Hope Reins Pathway to Resilience is delivered with consistency, excellence, and care. She also helps equip leaders through the Hope Reins Academy by sharing practical insight into mentorship, program culture, and trauma-informed ministry.</p>	0.5 DE and 0.5 CR-All
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 2B	Evidence-Based Research for Best Practices with Equines and Older Adults	Betsy Kemeny, PhD, CTRS, FDRT, Professor and Director of Recreational Therapy, Slippery Rock University	<p>Research on equines and older adults exists in the literature. It is helpful to unpack the best practices that can be found in the current literature. This session will explore the underlying themes and evidence in the current literature and translate the research so that it can be useful to practitioners who are seeking to enhance or expand services to older adults.</p>	<p>The participant will be able to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summarize the evidence from the research literature over the last 5-10 years on incorporating equines in services for older adults.</li> <li>2. Identify at least 3 best practices from the distillation of the research literature</li> <li>3. Identify at least 2 program implications for their own EAL program.</li> </ol>	<p>Dr. Kemeny is a CTRS (Recreational Therapist), Adaptive Sports Specialist II, and Certified Professional Gerontologist who is a Fellow Distinguished in Recreational Therapy. She has 15 years experience conducting research with equines and has co-facilitated programming for 18 years at Storm Harbor Equestrian Center.</p>	1 CE
SATURDAY, NOV. 7	2:35 - 3:35 P.M.	TRACK 3	From Chaos to Clarity: Systems That Help Equine-Assisted Programs Save Time and Grow	Tamra Ranard, Executive Director, Crossroads Ranch, Inc.	<p>Many equine-assisted programs begin with a passion for serving clients—but as programs grow, the administrative work can quickly become overwhelming. Client records, scheduling, horse care logs, volunteer tracking, incident reports, donations, and grant data are often spread across multiple spreadsheets, paper files, and disconnected systems. In this session, participants will learn practical strategies for bringing operational clarity to the daily management of an equine-assisted program. Discover how integrated systems can simplify tracking clients, horses, volunteers, and program outcomes while reducing paperwork and saving valuable time each week. Attendees will see real examples from a working equine-assisted nonprofit and gain practical ideas for streamlining operations, improving reporting, and supporting program growth. Participants will also receive a sample grant narrative that can help organizations seek funding for operational improvements and technology solutions designed specifically for equine-assisted programs.</p>	<p>Identify common operational challenges in equine-assisted programs and understand how fragmented spreadsheets and paper systems contribute to administrative overwhelm and inefficiency.</p> <p>Evaluate practical system strategies for organizing client records, horse management, volunteer coordination, and program reporting in a more streamlined and scalable way.</p> <p>Apply a framework for improving operational efficiency, including identifying opportunities to save administrative time and exploring funding options to support system improvements.</p>	<p>Tamra Ranard is the Executive Director of Crossroads Ranch and is passionate about equine-assisted programming and organizational development. She previously served as Executive Director of People and Animal Learning Services (PALS), a PATH International center in Bloomington, Indiana, where she gained extensive experience managing equine-assisted services, program operations, and nonprofit leadership. Tamra holds an MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University and brings a unique blend of nonprofit leadership, equine-assisted program expertise, and technology expertise to her work. She is certified through Equine Connection in equine-assisted learning and is also a certified speaker with John Maxwell Team leadership and team-building programs. In addition to her program leadership experience, Tamra is a Certified Salesforce Administrator and the developer behind EquiOPS, an operational platform designed to help equine-assisted programs simplify client management, horse records, volunteer coordination, and organizational reporting. Her work focuses on helping equine-assisted organizations reduce administrative overwhelm, improve operational clarity, and create systems that support sustainable program growth. Tamra has a strong interest in helping equine-assisted organizations simplify their operations so leaders can spend less time managing paperwork and more time focusing on the people they serve.</p>	1 CE