

★ PATH Intl Horses for Heroes was launched in April 2007 to facilitate the collaboration between the VA's federal and state level partners and PATH Intl. member centers, instructors and therapists to provide equine assisted therapies and activities to VA-eligible military personnel.

★ Equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) have shown to be especially beneficial for veterans and wounded service personnel with the diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and many other physical, emotional and cognitive conditions.

★ To date, almost 60 PATH Intl. member centers throughout the US offer PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes services. Almost 50 VA medical centers have been linked in to the PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes initiative.

BraveHearts is proud to be one of these!

**All information cited from pathintl.org*



BRAVEHEARTS
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"Horses are peaceful. They don't ask questions. They just accept you as you are."

Grayling, US Army



BRAVEHEARTS THERAPEUTIC RIDING
& EDUCATIONAL CENTER



Bringing hope, joy and unlimited possibilities through the healing power of the horse.



BraveHearts is a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center and a PATH Intl. Horses for Heroes program providing Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT) such as therapeutic riding, horsemanship skills and carriage driving. Individuals with various needs gain greater independence through their interaction with horses.

We need your help:

- ★ Spread the word
- ★ Bring a veteran or their family member
- ★ Volunteer
- ★ Sponsor a rider or horse



The benefits from EAAT for veterans and service personnel with disabilities include:

- ★ **Physical:** The movement of the horse's gait at a walk is quite similar to a human's walking motion. Wounded military and veterans with amputations, spinal cord injuries, TBI or other mobility impairments may benefit from this simulated gait as it strengthens specific muscle groups, which may ultimately assist the participant as he or she tries to relearn how to walk.
- ★ **Social:** The farm provides a safe and peaceful environment for wounded military and veterans to share issues and fears. They bond with fellow veterans, the equines and volunteers in this non-judgmental atmosphere.
- ★ **Cognitive:** Wounded military and veterans working with and around horses learn the proper sequence and order of completing tasks so the horses remain cooperative and responsive. The order and directions required to develop riding and driving skills are familiar strategies to military personnel.
- ★ **Emotional:** Bonding with a large animal can be emotionally satisfying. In addition, the repetitive motion of stroking and grooming of a horse can be soothing to individuals with anxiety. Learning new skills such as riding or driving builds self-confidence which manifests into knowing more can be accomplished in their lives.

"The horses are helping me to get my life back on track." **Kevin, US Army, Hines VA Hospital**

"My family suffered many hardships after my 18 month deployment to Iraq and my children's lives will never be the same, but horse riding with my daughter has helped me reconnect and appreciate life once again. The unique therapy at BraveHearts has also improved my balance and coordination so much after years of struggling that I no longer need my cane or any assistance and I have a better quality life."

Sherry, Army Military Police Corp

"Our veterans benefit immediately by an improvement in mood. In the long term, we see an increase in confidence, social skills and self esteem. They are touched by the benefits of the program whether they plan to continue with the program or come as a one-time visitor."

Alice Konkel, Creative Arts Therapist/Recreation, V.A. Milwaukee

