

\$100,000 in research grant funding now available!



## Horses and Humans Research Foundation News & Updates

### Fabulous HHRF Donors Take It Up a Notch!

HHRF's Board of Directors decided that our 10th anniversary year needed something big. Although HHRF has found raising funds for research to be a tremendously challenging endeavor, we made a leap in faith and doubled our goals for 2015 with the goal of awarding our first \$100,000 grant award. **With successful results from our initial outreach, the campaign was completed very early in 2016!**

Campaign chairman Alison Zack Darrell (Stonington, CT) and honorary campaign chairman Molly Sweeney (Hockley, TX) provided leadership for the initiative.

"Thanks to the generosity of our Anniversary Campaign donors, HHRF will now be able to offer more rigorous research resulting in a greater relevance on the field of horse-centered and equine assisted programs of all types," said Molly Sweeney. "There are exciting new developments on the horizon that I believe will get us closer and closer to understanding how the horse manages to have such a profound impact on the well-being of people."

Our hearty thanks go out to the donors who made this campaign successful. Their vision will help build evidence that will guide progress for all equine assisted activities for decades to come: *Stuart Daly, Alison Zack Darrell, Paul T. Haefner, Susan Harding, Joanne Hart, KC Henry, Judith & Richard Lightfoot, Kevin & Kelly McShane, Patricia Ochman, Jose & Kim Polo, Larry & Peggy Pence, Cynthia Ruiz, Lynn Shaw, Brian & Debbie Sweeney, Kevin & Danielle Sweeney, Molly Sweeney, C. Mike Tomlinson, Stacey Yalenti, Caisson Platoon, The Louise H.*



and David S. Ingalls Foundation, Inc., William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation.

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## \$100,000 Available to Researchers Investigating the Therapeutic Effects of Horses on Humans

Horses and Humans Research Foundation (HHRF) has announced an open call for proposals to investigate the therapeutic effects of horses on humans. Research proposals requesting up to \$100,000 are due on July 15, 2016.



### Application information

## Thoughts from Dr. Paul T. Haefner, HHRF Board President

### Are we approaching the point where we have "enough" research?

Unfortunately, no. Treatment studies which validate a treatment for any number of human struggles are held to a very high standard. While there may be many studies of equine assisted therapies (numbered in the 10's of studies not 100's), very few (perhaps a handful) meet these rigorous standards. In addition, equine assisted therapies are applied to a very broad array of challenges in living. Having a study that validates the therapy for one issue, say PTSD, unfortunately does not provide the needed support for its application to a different population, say Depression or Eating Disorders. We are in desperate need of more high quality studies if we are to support the hundreds of thousands of people who benefit from these therapies and preserve the place of horses in our world in their role as healers.



### Why is it so critical to increase our investments in research?

While many people understand from their personal experience the healing power of the horse, we live in a world where many would disparage horse related therapies as "snake oil" rather than accept the experience of others. In addition, people as well as organizations who use these services deserve to have the information they need to make responsible choices with their money and be assured that they are not wasting their resources when investing in these treatments. A different way to look at the issue is that this investment is reasonable given its potential to support the hundreds of thousands of people who benefit from a wide array of equine assisted therapies and to help preserve the place of horses in our world in their role as healers.

[Click to See the Research We've Funded So Far](#)

## Dr. Maureen Vidrine, Newest Scientific Advisory Council Member

Maureen attended Emory University's School of Nursing, received her Master's in nursing from Georgia State University, and earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice from Brenau University. Her thesis research examined human field motion in children with cerebral palsy participating in a therapeutic horseback riding program. She is ANCC certified as a Psychiatric-Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist. Dr. Maureen Vidrine, APRN-PMH, BC is Co-founder and Psychotherapist with Horse Time, Inc., an equine-facilitated mental health and wellness center in Covington, Georgia. She currently is an Associate Professor of Nursing at Brenau University in Gainesville, GA and sees clients at a local public mental health center in addition to working at Horse Time. Maureen believes that "In order to align global societal institutions to optimize mutual benefit in horse and human relationships, research is needed to support data-driven decisions regarding policy, resource deployment, and return on investment."



Experienced research scientists with an interest in serving on the [HHRF Scientific Advisory Council](#) can [contact the office](#) for an application.

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As a public foundation, Horses and Humans Research Foundation is in a unique position. Our current programming is entirely focused on our competitive research grant award programming. However, we are not an endowed fund, so we must also constantly fundraise in order to award research grants. We are dependent on contributions from those who understand the importance of this research.

[Donate Now](#)

*"If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." -Thoreau*

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