



- **What is PATH International?**

- Our team at Heaven's Gait Ranch includes dedicated members of PATH International, the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship. PATH International was founded in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) to promote equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) to individuals with special needs. Today, PATH Intl. has over 800 member centers throughout the world who help and support more than 62,000 men, women, and children with special needs each year through a variety of programs.

- **What are Equine Assisted Services?**

- Equine Assisted Services include any specific center activity -- such as therapeutic riding, mounted or ground activities, grooming and stable management, shows, parades, demonstrations etc. -- in which riders, participants, volunteers, instructors, and equines are involved.

- **What is therapeutic riding?**

- Therapeutic riding is an equine assisted activity for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being of individuals with special needs or disabilities.

- **What are the benefits of therapeutic riding?**

- By enhancing a person's balance, posture, muscle control, and social skills, therapeutic riding has been proven to help people with physical, emotional, and psychological needs.
- Participating in activities at Heaven's Gait Ranch is a wonderful option for those who love nature and animals. By offering services in a nonclinical environment, families and individuals often feel more at ease, learning and growing together in a natural environment.

- **Who can participate?**

- HGR is proud to serve both children and adults with special needs or disabilities. Children as young as four may participate in therapeutic riding.
- We are also honored to serve our US Military Veterans. We are thankful for our generous donors who help sponsor and subsidize our Equine Services for Heroes.
- Individuals with head injuries, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Down Syndrome, hearing impairments, visual impairments, Multiple Sclerosis, seizures, speech & learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory integration dysfunction, depression, and PTSD are all encouraged to inquire and apply.

- **How does one become a rider at HGR?**

- All those who are interested in participating in the equine assisted activities at HGR must apply by completing annual rider registration forms found on our website. These forms include a physician's statement and medical release.
- HGR reserves the right to determine whether mounted or unmounted equine activities are safe and appropriate for each applicant.



- **What Equine Services for Heroes are offered at HGR?**
 - Formerly called *Horses for Heroes* by PATH International, our Equine Services for Heroes program includes both mounted and unmounted opportunities for military veterans to grow.
 - US Military Veterans may participate at no charge, thanks to the generosity of our donors.

- **Why should veterans join this program at HGR?**
 - With compassionate eyes, a calming demeanor, and a comparable gait, horses have the unspoken ability to forge a powerful relationship with veterans. Through gained respect, mutual trust, and physical contact, horses not only crave companionship, but they also seek leadership. As herd animals, they understand the beautiful dynamic of working within a team that bonds together. As incredibly intelligent animals, they also love challenges, and they are not afraid to push their potential and enhance their abilities.

- **How long is a lesson? How long is each session?**
 - A typical lesson at HGR is 45 minutes long. We offer lessons year-round including sessions in winter, spring, summer, and fall. In addition, we offer an “encore fall session” for the four weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

- **What is the actual cost to provide a lesson at Heaven's Gait Ranch?**
 - Based on our 2026 budget approved by Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, our service rate for specialized recreation and/or counseling and therapeutic services is valued at \$299.57 per lesson.

- **What does HGR do to make equine assisted services financially accessible to those in need?**
 - HGR relies heavily on the generosity of its donors to provide equine services to veterans at no charge. Veteran lessons are sponsored 100% by the generosity of our donors.
 - In addition, we fundraise to provide heavily subsidized scholarships for families who privately pay and qualify for financial assistance. Families with questions on how to apply should inquire with our Program Coordinator about the Andy Mueller Memorial Scholarship. Available scholarship funds vary from season to season, so out of pocket expenses could range from \$30-\$55 per lesson.
 - HGR is an approved provider for various counties under the Children's Long Term Support Waiver (CLTS), and CLTS can pay up to a cap rate of \$178.50 per lesson through 2026, while donations to HGR offset the true cost.
 - Participants enrolled in Sheboygan or Ozaukee County Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) also qualify for funding through the Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Quality vs. Quantity: How do our group lessons compare with those at other centers?**
 - Heaven's Gait Ranch caps its group lessons to four participants at a time in the arena to maximize movement and success. Many of our group lessons have 2-3 riders at a time, and participants are intentionally grouped by age, goals, and abilities.
 - Most centers in Wisconsin have 4-6 participants in a riding arena at one time, and many do not offer the option of providing private lessons at all.



- Heaven's Gait Ranch offers the flexibility of private and small group lessons year-round. Many of our participants might start with private lessons and then join a group as they gain skills and confidence over time.

- **I love horses. How can I get involved?**
 - Please contact Maggie Robertson at 920-917-7102 to inquire about volunteer opportunities.
 - Those with horse experience are encouraged to apply so that they can be trained as grooms, lead walkers, or side walkers at HGR.

- **I like horses, but I don't know much about working with them. What other ways can I get involved?**
 - There are a variety of volunteer opportunities at Heaven's Gait Ranch. Some of them include working with the horses, while others do not. By filling out a volunteer application, our team at HGR can work to align your interests and abilities with our program needs. From grooming and tacking before lessons to volunteering at special events, we are so thankful to those who can offer their time and talents in support of our mission.

- **I love your mission at HGR, but I cannot commit to the time commitment of weekly volunteering. How else can I help?**
 - Aside from inquiring about other volunteer opportunities on site, please consider supporting us in a very important and meaningful way. Through the generosity of our donors and sponsors, we are able to provide exceptional and personalized therapeutic riding lessons to all of our participants at a substantially lower rate than the value provided. Our rider & participant fees cover a fraction of our entire operating budget, and to show our gratitude to our US Military Veterans, we offer our services to them at no charge. We are genuinely only able to do this with the help of kind people like you.
 - Heaven's Gait Ranch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which means all donations are tax deductible. Please contact us to learn more about how you can make a difference.