



# HERD THE LATEST FROM AHA, INC.?

## Russian Specialist in Rett Syndrome Visits Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center



Olga Timutsa, Director of the Association of Rett Syndrome in Russia, is the mother of a child with Rett Syndrome. She is an Associate Professor at Kazan Innovative University, Kazan, in the Tatarstan Republic of the Russian Federation. Since 2011 she has conducted seminars for parents of children with Rett Syndrome and has organized conferences and courses for doctors and specialists.

During a visit to the San Francisco Bay Area, Olga was invited by Tineke Jacobsen, PT, HPCS to tour the Multidisciplinary Therapy Department of Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center to learn about hippotherapy as a treatment strategy. Olga was accompanied by Thomas Bertrand

from France, past Board President of Rett Syndrome Europe, who also has a child with Rett Syndrome. Tineke, together with Mary Jones, MD and Diane Morabito, RN, MPH, described their study, "The Effect of Hippotherapy on Postural Control in a Child with Rett Syndrome." This study was presented at the AHA, Inc. International Conference in Denver in 2017, and later that year an abstract was published in *HIPPO THERAPY Magazine*. Both visitors were impressed with the level of professionalism in the field of hippotherapy in the United States and its acceptance as a valuable treatment strategy in physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy.

With the help of her excellent translator, Olga shared details of current studies of hippotherapy treatment strategies in Russia. She explained that at this time there are a few centers in Russia where hippotherapy is incorporated into the plan of care, but that more work needs to be done before it becomes widely accepted as an effective and valuable part of treatment for physical disabilities.

## AHA, Inc. Moving Toward Offering CEUs to Membership

During 2018, the Standards & Practice Committee has been hard at work completing the paperwork to become an approved provider of continuing education credits for both ASHA and AOTA.

As the committee members worked through the process, it was brought to their attention that the current process of hosting the AHA, Inc. courses would need to change in order to offer CEUs. The committee determined that the necessary changes would result in a cost burden for the hosting facility and AHA, Inc. Therefore, it was determined with the approval of the AHA, Inc. Board of Directors and faculty members that starting in 2019 AHA, Inc. would move to a facility rental system. This new system will save the hosting facility staff time, reduce overhead costs, and minimize or eliminate course administrative tasks. Moving forward, AHA, Inc. will rent the necessary space from our hosting facilities for the courses and the AHA, Inc. office will be responsible for the course administrative tasks.

A new "How to Host" document is now available through the AHA, Inc. website. There are now two ways to establish course hosts: a facility can request to host, or the office may call to ask if a facility would be interested in hosting. So keep your ears open; you may be contacted by the AHA, Inc. staff to see if your facility would be interested in hosting a course in 2019!

## AHA, Inc. Signs an Agreement With HPSO

A common question asked by our members is, “What company should I use for professional and general liability insurance for my practice?” AHA, Inc. has signed an agreement with Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO). HPSO was founded nearly 25 years ago with a mission to provide malpractice insurance to healthcare professionals. HPSO is the largest provider of malpractice insurance in the country and is endorsed by more than 60 national and state associations. HPSO understands the coverage needs of our members. AHA, Inc. has provided HPSO with resources and information specific to occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology professionals who incorporate equines, equine movement, and the equine environment in treatment. Contact HPSO at 1-800-982-9491 for more information about general and professional liability coverage options.

## Strategic Planning Update

The AHA, Inc. Board of Directors, along with several representatives from the faculty, met in March 2018 to develop a new and innovative strategic plan for the organization. As part of the strategic planning process, the group identified a need to take several steps toward rebranding. This included updates to the organization’s mission, vision, core values, and tagline. A group of individuals, including members, faculty, and past board members took on the task and participated in the Rebranding Task Force. In October, the Board of Directors approved the changes. The previous mission and vision can be seen in the annual report on p13. The revisions are as follows:

### MISSION:

Improve lives by advancing education, best practices and resources for licensed healthcare professionals who incorporate horses in therapy.

### VISION:

To have skilled therapy services that incorporate horses readily available to every person who has the potential to benefit.

### CORE VALUES:

**INTEGRITY:** Commitment to the highest standards of personal, ethical, and professional behavior

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Commitment to stewardship, transparency, and fiduciary responsibility

**INNOVATION:** Promoting advances in treatment and research

**EXCELLENCE:** Promoting best practices and the highest caliber of education and resources

**COLLABORATION:** Networking and partnering with organizations with similar missions and values

## TAGLINE:

The organization will continue to use the tagline “Treatment with the help of the horse” and add the tagline “Leading the way” to our marketing and branding. One or both taglines will be utilized depending on the content and audience.

In addition, the organization launched a new website that is more user friendly and provides a range of information related to hippotherapy. Take a look at the new [www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org](http://www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org)!

## AHA, Inc. Welcomes McKenna Wood

On September 17, McKenna Wood joined the AHA, Inc. staff as Member Services Coordinator. McKenna graduated from Colorado State University in the spring of 2018 with a Bachelor’s degree in Communication Studies. She is a proud alumna of The Center for Public Deliberation. Prior to her new position at AHA, Inc., she worked at United Way of Larimer County as a community impact intern. ◀



## CONGRATULATIONS! NEW HPCS Certified Therapists

Laura Dennis, PT, DPT  
Melrose, MA

Samantha Hatfield, PT  
Edgewood, NM

Jessica Perkins, OT  
Nicholasville, KY



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