

ATRC Board of Advisors Orientation Manual

October 2020

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**Mission**

Albany Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. (ATRC) strives to provide, promote and encourage the benefits of equine facilitated therapeutics and activities by teaching horsemanship to individuals across multiple populations.

**History**

Albany Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. is a PATH International accredited therapeutic riding center incorporated in 1981 by Chris Lehman as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Chris was the founder, board president and PATH certified riding instructor of ATRC, the first therapeutic riding center in our area.

Chris was the heartbeat of ATRC, giving countless hours to care for the animals and facilities, prepare for and provide lessons, and conduct outreach and fundraising activities. Chris had over 34 years of experience in therapeutic riding and in 2013 she was recognized as Volunteer of the Year by the Schenectady Gazette and Direct Energy. Sadly, she passed away in early January 2017 after a life-long dedication to service.

After Chris’s passing, the Board of Advisors and volunteers cared for the herd, found homes for Chris’s other animals, and provided security of the facilities at the Voorheesville farm. In 2018, ATRC’s first paid employees, the program director and a stable hand, were hired. Ridership began to grow and the volunteer program expanded to meet the needs of the riders and the aging herd of four horses. In 2019, an assistant instructor was added along with a younger gelding. In June 2019, tragically, two of the original horses, Tee and Teddy, passed away and were laid to rest. With quick and thorough outreach, a somewhat younger, bonded pair were located and loaned to ATRC.

Also in 2019, ownership of the farm transferred to a new landlord with a five-year lease for ATRC. With no indoor arena, challenging soil and weather conditions, and a growing ridership, the Board recognized ATRC would not survive at its current location because lessons (and thus program fees) were not possible year-round. In February 2020, after nearly 40 years at the Lehman Farm, ATRC moved to Slingerlands, NY, in partnership with Monarch LLC. As a result, despite the pandemic and the interruption of lessons, ridership has increased more than 500% in three years, from 6 riders in 2017 to 40 in 2020.

ATRC continues its dedication to helping students gain confidence, independence, and physical, cognitive, and emotional development through therapeutic riding lessons and instruction to individuals of all ages and ability levels in the Greater Capital District area.

**Equine Assisted Therapeutics**

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. Therapeutic riding provides benefits in the areas of health, education, sport and recreation and leisure. Throughout the world, there are thousands of individuals with special needs who experience the rewarding benefits of horseback riding. A disability does not have to limit a person from riding horses. In fact, experiencing the motion of a horse can be very therapeutic. Because horseback riding rhythmically moves the rider's body in a manner similar to a human gait, riders with physical disabilities often show improvement in flexibility, balance and muscle strength. In addition to the therapeutic benefits, horseback riding also provides recreational opportunities for individuals with disabilities to enjoy the outdoors.

At Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) centers, professional staff and volunteers work closely with riders to ensure safe riding sessions. A new rider is generally assisted by two side walkers who walk alongside the horse, as well as a horse leader. Riding classes are taught by an instructor who has a strong equine background, as well as an understanding of various disabilities.

PATH Intl. was founded in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) to promote safe and effective therapeutic horseback riding throughout the United States and Canada. Today, PATH Intl. has 873 member centers and nearly 8,000 individual members in countries all over the world, who help and support almost 69,000 men, women and children--including more than 6,700 veterans--with special needs each year through a variety of equine-assisted activities and therapies programs.

\*credit: www.pathintl.org

**Organization Chart**

Executive/Program Director

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Intern(s) Asst. Instructor(s) Stable Hand

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Volunteers

The Executive/Program Director (Director) reports to the Board of Advisors and specifically, the President who conducts the performance review.

Currently, all staff report to the Director, including Intern(s), Assistant Instructor(s), and barn staff. An Assistant Instructor serves as Volunteer Coordinator and all volunteers report to that staff person.

**Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

Executive Director - Oversight of ATRC, in consultation with Board of Advisors, and delivery of program services, including:

* Rider recruitment, registration, processing, program development, riding/horsemanship instruction, reporting
* Compliance with PATH requirements
* Hire, onboard, and supervise paid staff, including barn hand and instructor(s) for all Board approved positions.
* Oversight of volunteer recruitment, training and scheduling in collaboration with the volunteer coordinator
* Indirectly supervise volunteers through the volunteer coordinator, ensuring lessons are provided as scheduled
* Herd health and safety, including diet, exercise, veterinary, farrier and other provision of care
* Compliance with any and all contracts and operating agreements, including but not limited to the facility lease and dumpster
* Daily financial management of revenue and expenses in partnership with the Board Treasurer
* Oversight of budget – in collaboration with Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, monitor spending and revenue targets, as well as recommend fee and other revenue increases and other budgetary changes (e.g. spending categories and limits)
* Board coordination – ensure the Board is informed and educated about ATRC activities, incidents and ridership, and requests for Board assistance and support is communicated effectively
* Attend scheduled Board meetings, as able, to provide Board members with operations report and other updates
* Participate on Board committees as desired and/or requested
* Participate in ATRC fundraisers and other public relations events

Assistant Instructors:

* Report to Director
* Provide program services as directed
* Perform barn duties
* Serve in other roles as required, for example as volunteer coordinator

Barn Staff:

* Report to Director
* Complete daily chores including cleaning stalls, feeding and watering, turning out, cleaning pastures and water buckets, sweeping barn, and special projects.

Interns

* Report to Director
* Perform duties as set out in their internship plan/program, including shadowing instructors in lessons and lesson planning, performing barn duties in coordination with barn staff, assisting in fundraising and other business activities.

**Board of Advisors Roles and Responsibilities**

All Members of the Board of Advisors will:

* Offer advice and counsel in setting the mission, purpose, policies and strategic direction of ATRC
* Understand the services, activities and operations of ATRC in order to provide sound advice and counsel.
* Support the mission and be governed by the bylaws
* Proactively prevent organizational drift
* Support the Director and President and trust their leadership
* Hold fellow board members accountable and ensure ATRC’s adherence to legal standards and ethical norms
* Be actively involved in fundraising activities and events, fulfilling budgetary requirements from non-program fee revenue sources (i.e. grants, donations, events)
* Monitor and advise on financial activities, including establishing the annual budget
* Be able to represent and promote the organization with enthusiasm and professionalism and with knowledge of its mission, accomplishments and goals
* Be fully vested by giving time, talent and treasure
* Participate in the selection, support and review of the performance of the Director
* Actively recruit new Board Members and staff, as needed
* Participate in annual reviews of staff and board performance
* Serve on at least one committee
* Make every effort to attend all regular and specially scheduled board meetings

All members of the Board of Advisors are expected to participate in the responsibilities listed here with the additional duty for voting members of voting on official board actions and decisions.

All board members should accept their positions with full understanding that being a board member requires a time commitment. Prior to accepting a position as a board member, a candidate should review the meeting schedules to make sure that s/he doesn’t have any conflicts. Once a board member has been nominated and appointed, s/he should carve out enough time in his/her schedule before meetings to review materials and prepare for the board and any committee meetings. After reviewing materials, s/he should ask questions about the upcoming agenda so that s/he can be an informed contributor to the meeting. Board members should take the responsibility for accepting tasks and follow through on given assignments.

Board President

* Presides at meetings of the board and executive committee
* Appoints chairs of committees and task forces
* Ex-officio member of all board committees
* Signs documents and contracts as approved by the board
* May serve as spokesperson for the board
* Recruits members of the board
* In collaboration with the Director and Governance Committee, hosts strategic planning and training sessions for the board
* Meets regularly with the Director to receive progress reports, assessing and unifying Board actions and activities with the operations of ATRC.
* Prepares agendas for meetings in cooperation with the Director
* Oversees the yearly evaluation of the Director and Asst. Instructors

Vice President

* Prepares to assume the office of the board chair
* Steps into the office of board chair should the board chair be absent or if that office becomes vacant
* Assists the board chair in the execution of his or her duties
* Serves on committees as requested to learn the operations of the board
* Works closely with the board chair to transfer knowledge and history to prepare for leadership

Treasurer

* Serves as chair of the finance committee and financial officer of the organization
* Manages, with the finance committee, the board’s review of and action on its financial responsibilities
* Ensures that financial reports are distributed to the board in advance of meetings
* Leads discussion of the financial reports at board meetings
* Assists the Director and President in preparing the annual budget and presenting the budget to the board for approval
* Assists with the development and review of the annual budget

Secretary

* Assures that an agenda has been prepared by the board president and director and that the agenda is distributed in advance of the meeting.
* Oversees the distribution of background information for agenda items to be discussed.
* Prepares the official minutes of the meeting that records motions, discussion votes on motions, decisions made.
* Prepares and provide written minutes to board members in advance of the next meeting and records any changes or corrections to the minutes.
* Assures that documents (bylaws, Form 990, roster of board members) is filed and is accessible to members

**Current Board Members**

Officers:



Paul Aloy, President

Paul took the role of ATRC Board President after Chris’s passing. He had been an active volunteer prior to accepting the role. Paul is a Schools and Education attorney working in Albany, New York at Honeywell Law Firm, PLLC. He is a graduate of Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania and Syracuse University College of Law and was subsequently admitted to legal practice in 2006 after passing the bar exam.



Katie Curtin, Treasurer

Katie is a Budget Fellow with the New York State Division of Budget working on school aid and other education policy and fiscal issues. She has a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Albany Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy and dual undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Business/Health Care Management from Wells College. Katie became Treasurer in 2019 having volunteered with ATRC since 2018.

Vacant, Vice President

Vacant, Secretary

Voting Members:

Joe Guy has been a volunteer and supporter of ATRC since the 1980s. Joe was awarded a PhD in Political Science by the State University of New York, Rockefeller Institute of Government in 1973. He was employed by the NYS Department of Health for 31 years and served as the Director of the Department’s Bureau of Medical Review and Payment. Subsequent to his retirement from State service, Joe served as Project Director for a federal audit contract of Medicaid services reimbursed by the New England states, New York and New Jersey.

Mindy Scott is the Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. She has a Master’s in Public Administration from the SUNY Albany Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy and an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont. Mindy has volunteered with ATRC and been on the Board since 2019.

Allie Gleaton graduated from the University at Albany with a degree in Psychology and Child Development. She has volunteered with ATRC and been on the Board since 2019. Allie is working towards her PATH certification.

Non-Voting Members:

Casey Danton is a local, avid equestrian who began riding at age 11. Casey continued riding in college representing the Siena College Equestrian Team. She has extensive background today with children’s hunter ponies after developing her own local lesson program. Casey has been with ATRC since 2020.

**Board Committees**

Governance – The Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring that ATRC has the organizational infrastructure, including a qualified board, effective bylaws and the necessary policies and procedures, to support current and future needs. Responsibilities include: board member recruitment, development and evaluations; maintaining and reviewing policy manuals; strategic and emergency planning; reviewing ATRC’s mission and by Bylaws.

Members: Paul Aloy; Mindy Scott

Finance – The Finance Committee is chaired by the Treasurer and assists in the development and delivery of financial plans, policies and procedures to support the financial viability of ATRC. Responsibilities include: creating business and financial plans; negotiating contracts to minimize cost and maximize value; coordinating with Fundraising and other committees on revenues and expenses; and preparing strategic plans for Board approval.

Members: Katie Curtin, Chair; Joe Guy; Mindy Scott

Fundraising – The Fundraising Committee helps the Board carry out its fiduciary duties assuring the fiscal health of ATRC through funds development and philanthropy. Responsibilities include: reviewing prior year’s activities and making recommendations for future year; find, create and implement fundraisers; work with Finance Committee to determine annual budget and fundraising plan for revenue; work with Board Members and staff to plan and execute events; report to Board on activities and revenues generated; and maintain fundraising email and calendar.

Members: Allie Gleaton; Joe Guy

Facilities – TBD

Communications – TBD

**Approved 2020 Budget**



**Session Information**

Session Fees - 6-week sessions:

1. Intake assessments $30
2. Therapeutic Riding
   1. Private Hour ($35/hr) $210 per 6 week session
   2. Private Half Hour ($30) $180
   3. Group Hour ($35) $210
   4. Group Half Hour ($30) $180
3. Ground Program/Equine Assisted Learning
   1. Half Hour Private ($30) $180
   2. Group Half Hour ($30) $180

Session Dates:

1. Mar. 3rd – Apr. 13th
2. Apr. 20th - May 31st
3. June 8th - July 19th
4. July 27th -Sept 6th
5. Sept 14th – Oct 25th
6. Nov 2nd – Dec 13th

**Fundraising**

One of the Board’s foremost responsibilities is to secure adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission. With the death of the Founder/Director/Instructor, the paid employment of staff, and the cessation of support from the Founder’s estate this year, the Board has a fundamental task to generate revenue from non-program fees, i.e. donations, fundraising events and grants. This is even more challenging due to the pandemic and its social distancing requirements. All Board members are expected to participate in generating funds for ATRC, in addition to contributing personally, however large or small that is, as it is a critical illustration of the Board’s commitment to ATRC and the services it provides. Donors and granting organizations rely on a strong commitment from the Board when making decisions about where they put their support and often ask what proportion of the Board contributes financially. Our goal is 100%.

Current fundraising events include:

* Social events, such as “Sign and Sip”
* Golf outing

Ways to donate cash include:

* “Support the Herd” drives through Go Fund Me
* Adopt-A-Horse program
* Honest Weight Food Coop “Coins” Program
* Clothing sales

Grants have been applied to and/or received through:

* Stewarts Shops
* Golub Corp.
* Federal PPP

**2020 Calendar**

In additional to financial contribution, Board members are expected to commit their time to ATRC, attending most Board and committee meetings and participating in social, fundraising events. Below is a sample list from 2020 of meetings and events with start dates of program sessions included:

January

* 1/6 Board Meeting

February

* Move in Day at Slingerlands
* 2/11 Board Meeting

March

* Cancelled planned Pub Crawl fundraiser
* Board Meeting cancelled

April

* 4/21 Board Meeting

May

* 5/20 Board Meeting (Rescheduled to 5/27)

June

* 6/16 Board Meeting

July

* 7/9 Board Meeting
* First Annual Golf Outing

August

* 8/18 Board Meeting
* Albany Medical Student Volunteer Project Day

September

* 9/15 Annual Meeting and Board Meeting
* Sip and Sign Fundraising Event

October

* 10/18 Strategic Planning Retreat

November

* 11/17 Board Meeting – Adopt 2021 Budget

December

* Rider Exhibition Event
* 12/15 Board Meeting