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Paulina (“Polly”) Cohen joins Healing Reins Therapeutic Riding Center as new Program Director

March 4, 2011 – Bend, OR - Cohen, previously the Executive Director and Lead Instructor at Bright Horizon Therapeutic Riding Center near Newport, OR, has accepted the position of Program Director at Healing Reins Therapeutic Riding Center following the retirement of Penny Campbell.

Cohen is a NARHA certified instructor with nearly two decades of experience with horses. She grew up in Lincoln County and participated in 4-H horse program for nine years and served as the 1997 Lincoln County Rodeo Queen. Cohen worked for J Bar J Youth Services in Bend, OR, as the Equestrian Director before moving to Seattle to work at one of the top therapeutic riding centers in the U.S., Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center.

During her four years at Little Bit in Woodinville, WA, she worked with hundreds of people with various disabilities and brings her knowledge of therapeutic riding and her leadership experience at Bright Horizon to Healing Reins.

Cohen comments on her new move: “I am so excited to be back in Central Oregon with my husband and our two young sons. This is a full circle for me because nine years ago Penny Campbell and the Healing Reins staff helped me achieve my NARHA Registered Instructor Certification. I was then and still am impressed by the professionalism that Healing Reins demonstrates through their principle “to heal with horses”. The foundation that Penny Campbell built allows Healing Reins to move forward successfully. I am very excited by the opportunity to work with an organization that has such strong community support.”

Penny Campbell, the retiring Program Director, started Healing Reins together with Pam Addington in 1999, and served as Program Director and in other capacities for 13 years. She will continue her involvement with Healing Reins as an instructor and a volunteer.

“The staff and board are extremely fortunate to be able to welcome Polly,” comments Executive Director Dita Keith. “The Program Director position at Healing Reins is a critical component of the work that we do and is best filled by someone with experience in this specific industry – Polly comes with a wealth of knowledge and passion. While we are sad to announce Penny's retirement, Polly and Penny will be working side-by-side to ensure a seamless transition of command to ensure that our program participants and families continue to receive the individual attention and highest quality care on which they rely.”

About Healing Reins Therapeutic Riding Center

Healing Reins is the only nationally accredited organization in Central Oregon that provides equine-facilitated therapy and activities for people with special needs. Programs include Therapeutic Riding, Hippotherapy, Equine-Facilitated learning and Mental Health, and other workshops, classes and camps using our specially trained horses.

The new Program Director, Polly Cohen, is available for interviews about her vision for Healing Reins programs. To set up an interview, please contact marikas@healignreins.org . 541-382-8410.