



January 10, 2010

Department of Veterans Affairs

**James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital
13000 Bruce B. Downs Boulevard
Tampa FL 33612**

RT/117

Edie Dopking, President
Quantum Leap Farm, Inc.
10504 Woodstock Rd.
Odessa, Fl 33556

In Reply Refer To:

Therapeutic Recreation Department
James A. Haley VA Hospital
13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, Fl 33612

Dear Edie,

On behalf of the patients and therapeutic recreation staff of the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, I would like to extend to you our deepest appreciation for offering equine therapy for our wounded troops, veterans, and family members. Your entire program truly transforms our patients each and every visit we have to Quantum Leap. From the opportunity to sit in the serenity that the horse farm itself offers, to the actual riding, the total experience truly offers our patients a physical and psychosocial benefit that the patients, themselves, talk about well after we have left the farm. This creditability is hard to come by and your reputation is well respected by its participants and staff who are in accompaniment. Thank you so much for creating this atmosphere for our active duty wounded and veterans!

Your program is especially unique to our troops and family members because the experience provides a combination of skill development, education, and sport. The hippo therapy that offers the rider to strengthen participant's core muscles and work on strength and balance has complimented the other rehabilitative services that the treatment team at the hospital has as a primary goal for our spinal cord and traumatic brain injured patients. Also, the patients with amputations have discussed how riding the horses help enhance the coordination of a simple walking movement that they once had. The adaptive equipment including the horse ramps, lifts, colored reins, and foot stirrups, and trunk control saddles offers an introduction to modification which allows participants that they, despite their physical limitations, can experience a leisure skill such as this. This introduction of adapted equipment carries over to other adventures which often lifts spirits and prompts self education of other leisure pursuits.

We therapists see improvement not only in the horse riding skill, but with trust enhancement and reduction in stress and anxiety with our patients. Our therapists that serve the Polytrauma wounded from the OIF and OEF wars focus on patients who are suffering from severe PTSD as well as multiple wounds. These patients are reintroduced to an environment that is serene and tranquil which often provides a successful and welcoming community reentry.

The equine therapy program's participants state how much this new leisure experience enhances them spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Especially for this, we all are delighted to continue to bring our patients to Quantum Leap Farm and appreciate you and your staff's consistent efforts.

Thanks so much again for providing such an awesome therapeutic environment and total experience! Your support of our Active Duty, family members, and Veteran community is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Kathryn Bryant, CTRS, CBIS