



Hoof Care Training & Certification For Zoo Professionals

People have been trying to maintain and improve the health and integrity of the hooves of horses for hundreds of years. A lot was learned over those years. Until recently, however, most of it was about how to prepare and apply shoes or some other artificial contrivance ... none of which is relevant to barefoot zoo animals. Instead, successful hoof care for animals living in captivity requires a multifaceted approach that includes trimming that encourages the hoof to grow into its optimally-functional aboriginal form, and a lifestyle and environment that support hoof and animal health and prevents the emergence of abnormalities and pathologies. These principles and the methods to implement them are the focus of the Liberated Horsemanship training and certification program for zoo professionals.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

The Gateway Clinic

The five-day Gateway Clinic (GC) is where the road to a professional hoof care career and certification begins. In the GC, participants get extensive hands-on experience trimming cadaver hooves under the supervision of some of the top hoof care professionals in the world. Cadaver hooves provide an opportunity to learn and make mistakes without causing harm.

However, the GC is a hoof care clinic not just a trimming clinic. Hoof health is determined by many factors. Trimming is one important element. But hoof health and shape are also significantly influenced by management practices, and environmental and lifestyle factors. Deficiencies in these areas can undermine the efforts of even the most highly skilled trimmer. It is imperative that hoof care providers understand this basic premise and, importantly, know that problems caused by such factors cannot be fixed by trimming. Instead, the root cause of the problem must first be addressed. Then proper trimming can facilitate healing. Consequently, GC participants receive extensive practical and theoretical information about how management practices, and environmental and lifestyle factors affect hoof health.

Hoof health and shape conversely can affect general health, biomechanics and well-being. The relationships between hoof, body, and mind are reciprocal and inseparable. Factors that affect one, either directly or indirectly, affect the others. This is another important premise that permeates every aspect of the Gateway Clinic.

The Gateway Clinic in 2022 is at the award winning White Stallion Ranch in Arizona. Registration fees are essentially all inclusive as described on our website, <http://liberatedhorsemanship.com/gatewayclinic/>.

Field Instruction

Following the GC, program participants are required to do one day of field instruction with a senior field instructor (to be designated) and a second day with Ann Corso, the Director of the LH Barefoot Initiative and a Master Hoof Care Professional. Field instruction is meant to help program participants transition to working on the hooves of live animals and perfect their use of trimming tools. Field instruction provides practical information about hoof trimming, cooperative animal handling, tool use and maintenance, and healthy body mechanics. Fee: Currently \$175/day. After the GC in 2023, \$300/day. Participant may choose to spend more than one day with a field instructor but it is not required.

Onsite Instruction & Application to Zoo Hoofstock

Following the completion of field instruction, Cindy Hall, Certified Zoo Hoof Care Professional, will spend one day with the program participant at their zoo. It is a day of instruction and consultation to help the participant move forward with the development of their skill and understanding of how to apply the principals they have learned to zoo hoofstock.

Fee: \$950/day at the zoo plus Cindy's travel expenses from/to Naples, Florida.

Progress Evaluation and Guidance

Twelve or more weeks after Onsite Instruction, Cindy Hall will return to the zoo. This is designed primarily to be a day for evaluation and guidance based on the condition of the hooves the participant has been trimming. But trimming instruction and consultation are likely to be part of the process. If the participant's skill, knowledge, and the condition of the hooves under her/his care are satisfactory the participant will be awarded the designation Associate Zoo Hoof Care Professional.

Fee: \$950/day at the zoo plus Cindy's travel expenses from/to Naples, Florida.

Final Assessment

One year or more after the Progress Evaluation, Cindy Hall will return for a Final Assessment of the participant's skill and knowledge. The evaluation will be based on the condition of the hooves that the participant has been trimming. Consultation and discussion about how to continue to progress, and perhaps, a limited amount of trimming are part of the process.

Fee: \$950/day at the zoo plus Cindy's travel expenses from/to Naples, Florida.

Certification

Participants who pass the Final Assessment receive a Certificate of Accomplishment stating that they have successfully completed the Liberated Horsemanship, LLC training program for zoo hoof care professionals. Graduates receive the designation Certified Zoo Hoof Care Professional (CZHCP) and are listed on the LH website as a courtesy of recognition and to promote and support their efforts to advance the care of hoofstock.

LH **Hoof Care For The 21st Century**