



## **Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports**

PO Box 770208/35465 US Hwy 40, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

CONTACT: Steve Tober, Board President Office: 847-946-0178 Email: [steve1195@comcast.net](mailto:steve1195@comcast.net)

### **Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS) Appoints New Executive Director Susan Petersen**

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS – The Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS) Board of Directors has named Susan Petersen as the new Executive Director for STARS. The Board conducted a national search over the past three months that generated over a dozen qualified applicants. “With multiple candidates from across the country, the Board was able to run a robust search process for the Executive Director role,” said Board President Steve Tober. “While the process was highly competitive, Susan stood out on many levels, specifically for her extensive background in recreational programming, event management, fundraising, nonprofit administration and, most importantly, her deep passion for enhancing the lives of people with disabilities.” said Tober.

Petersen assumes her new role after serving as the Development Director of STARS over the past three years. “Susan did an extraordinary job in her former role and was a key player in positioning the organization to its best financial shape since its founding over 15 years ago” said Tober. Susan will manage all day-to-day operations for STARS, guided by a strategic plan focused on elevating the organization into a national player with year-round programming. STARS is fortunate to have two world-class facilities - the STARS Ranch for hosting overnight camps and the Zen Ranch for its equine therapy program – that will enable the organization to carry out its mission and serve participants from across the country.

“As a long-time resident of Steamboat Springs, I have been fortunate to experience all that our valley has to offer and bear witness to how important nonprofit organizations like STARS can be to people near and far. I am thrilled to take the helm of one of the nation’s leading adaptive sports programs where we truly make the impossible possible.” says Petersen. Petersen grew up in Fort Collins, CO before attending college at the University of California, San Diego and then moving to Steamboat for “one ski season” over 30 years ago. Petersen settled into a long career with the City of Steamboat Springs Parks & Recreation Department overseeing recreational sports, day care programs and community events. She then joined the Yampa Valley Community Foundation where she worked with donors to find their passion while administering

the distribution of grants and scholarships to local nonprofits and students. At an early age she had the opportunity to support people with disabilities as a side-walker in an equine therapy program started by her aunt and mother and later served as a volunteer for the Horizons Saturday ski program before STARS came into the picture in 2007.

“The Board was unanimous in our choice of Susan to lead STARS. We are thrilled she has accepted the challenge to grow STARS and to continue serving our participants with exceptional and meaningful programming. She will be leading an incredible staff of dedicated individuals and volunteers.” said Tober.

STARS will be holding an Open House at the Zen Ranch on Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:00 PM located at 30100 Routt County Rd 14E for anyone that would like to see this incredible facility, get to know our hardworking herd of therapy horses, and meet with staff and the new Executive Director, Susan Petersen.

###