



Oregon Partnership
6443 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy
Suite 200
Portland, OR 97221

A CLEAR BODY. MIND. CHOICE



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OPLINK

OREGON PARTNERSHIP FALL 2009

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Senator Wyden visits Oregon Partnership

Oregon Partnership received a major show of support during a visit to the OP Crisis Lines Call Center this month from U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, Brigadier General Mike Caldwell of the Oregon National Guard, and Reintegration Team Director, Colonel (Ret.) Scott McCrae.

Sen. Wyden assured OP board and staff members in attendance that he would be pushing for funding in a Senate appropriations bill that would allow OP to provide assistance for more veterans and returning soldiers. Wyden said he considers OP's Lifeline work with military men and women and other Oregonians a "model project" when the need is severe and Oregonians are under such economic stress.

OP Board member Lon Getlin, Development Director Peter Journey, Crisis Lines Director Leslie Storm, and Crisis Lines Assistant Director Deborah Zwetchkenbaum offered solid information and compelling examples of calls for help into OP's suicide prevention line from an increasing number of Oregonians returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Caldwell, McCrae and Wyden all expressed appreciation for OP's role in supporting Oregon's soldiers and their families. Wyden was especially interested in OP's ability to make follow-up calls to insure that callers receive sufficient assistance in the days and weeks following their first contact with Lifeline.

As Gen. Caldwell said, "Even if peace broke out around the world today, we would still have to take care of the 3,000 Oregonians who would be returning home tomorrow." 



Senator Ron Wyden with Raina Daniels, OP Youth Development Coordinator and Kovi Ashely from the Youth Advisory Council.

Youth Advisory Council up and running at OP



OP's new Youth Advisory Council proves to be an active force in steering youth programs and projects.

According to its working mission statement, the Council will bring youth's voices and actions to the challenge of ending substance abuse and suicide...

and will empower Oregon's youth to make positive choices in their lives."

The idea for the Council came from OP Education Director Donna Libemday to provide a formal way for Oregon teens to steer OP's programs and individual projects.

The 15 member Council, formed last Spring, is currently recruiting additional members ages 13-21. Half of the group is from the East side of the Portland area; and half is from the West side. Youth are asked to commit a minimum of one year of service on the Council.

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Make a donation to OP!

There are many giving levels to help Oregon Partnership support Oregonians to make healthy choices with their lives.

- \$25 • Outfit 1 OP teen with "Drug-Free" gear
- \$50 • Sponsor dinner for one Youth Advisory Council meeting
- \$75 • Train a parent to teach drug prevention in 1 elementary class for 1 year
- \$100 • Provide a month of healthy snacks and coffee for 113 OP Crisis Lines volunteers
- \$150 • Provide a \$5 'thank you' gift card for 30 Crisis Lines volunteers
- \$250 • Help OP teach 250 Middle School teens about suicide and where to turn
- \$600 • Sponsor an off-site Youth Leadership retreat for 25 OP teen volunteers
- \$1,000 • Provide a Crisis Lines computer work station, phone and headset
- \$1,500 • Train 2 Crisis Lines volunteers to work 1 year on the OP Crisis Lines
- \$2,000 • Sponsor Parents Teaching Prevention in 1 school

For more information on supporting OP, call us at 503-244-5211, or visit us on the web at: www.orphnership.org. 

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Youth Advisory Council Up and Running at OP

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“Our current members are a diverse group of teens, all with a different exposure to substance abuse,” says Raina Daniels, Youth Programs Director. “They bring a lot depth to what they’re doing in creating this exciting addition to OP’s youth outreach.”

The Youth Advisory Council is led by 19-year old Portland State University student Kovi Ashley. The Council is taking applications for new membership to officially participate in January. 




Youth Advisory Council members gather in OP’s Board Room for one of their first official meetings.

Parent Teaching Prevention Coordinator joins OP staff

Oregon Partnership would like to welcome Diane Murray-Fleck to the team! Diane is working with Parent Prevention Volunteers as the Parents Teaching Prevention Coordinator. Diane is working along side Emily Moser, Director of Parenting Programs at OP, to coordinate the PTP effort.

Diane is a native New Yorker who earned her Masters in Social Work from Syracuse University in 1997. She has extensive prevention experience ranging from in-home counseling, foster care, and school social work. Her most recent work experience was as the Prevention Coordinator for the Catholic Diocese in Albany, New York.

She lives in Portland with her husband, Scott, and their three children, Morgan 7, Gavin 6, and Molly 2. She enjoys going to the theater, skiing, and any time spent at the Oregon Coast with her family. 



OP pressures Old Navy on binge drinking t-shirts

Oregon Partnership’s campaign to convince Old Navy stores to stop selling t-shirts promoting binge drinking has received support from national prevention groups and garnered substantial media attention.

OP’s efforts have been highlighted in the newsletters and alerts by the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) and Join Together, an arm of the National Center of Addiction and Substance Abuse.

The story has also been the topic of dozens of news stories by TV, radio and newspapers throughout the state.

The t-shirts feature binge drinking messages such as “Beer Pressure – Worth Giving In To!” and “Sloshball Champions – Staggerin Falls, Hi.”


In a letter to Glenn Murphy, CEO of Gap, Inc, Old Navy’s parent company, OP said the sale of such items to a young customer base is repugnant and goes against the company’s pledge of social responsibility.

“Oregon Partnership and other anti-drug coalitions around the country will not let go of this.” said Pete Schulberg, OP Communications Director.

In a written reply to OP’s request, Chris Wingenfield of Gap Customer Relations said “at Old Navy, we strive to offer merchandise that appeals to a wide range of interests...and we apologize for any concerns related to our product.”

But, OP President/CEO, Judy Cushing, termed Gap’s response “wholly unsatisfactory.”

“For the culture to be changed,” said Cushing, “retailers such as Gap and Old Navy need to play their part in changing the way we view teen drinking.”

Several years ago, after Oregon Partnership criticized Macy’s and Bloomingdales for selling similar t-shirts, the retailers decided to discontinue the items. 



Seen above: one of the controversial t-shirts sold at Old Navy stores. The shirts were first brought to OP’s attention by Crook County Prevention Coordinator Cameo Chambers.

Suicide calls increase as OP’s Crisis Call Center expands


A record number of calls into Oregon Partnership’s crisis lines has resulted in a new, revitalized look for the Crisis Lines’ Call Center. With the new expansion came a doubling of work stations for the increasing volunteer force.

113 volunteers are now taking calls at 10 call stations thanks to a major remodeling project this past September. The wall between the Crisis Lines and the YouthLine area was knocked out, giving Crisis Lines volunteers more room to work while allowing the YouthLine to move into its own brightly painted office.

With the increase in calls, it isn’t unusual to see six volunteers all working the same shift busy speaking to callers on the alcohol and drug Help Line and the suicide prevention Lifeline.

“Often I used to be the only one here on my shift,” said volunteer Mel Platman, a three-year Crisis Lines veteran. “Now, I’m surrounded by people with a new sense of cohesiveness and a lot more space to do our job.”

The Crisis Lines are receiving some 3,000 calls a month, with more than half coming into Lifeline. The Lifeline, Oregon’s statewide certified suicide prevention hotline, handles calls from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska. The line has seen monthly increases of up to 243% over the same period last year.

“We’re getting more calls from returning soldiers and veterans,” explains Crisis Lines Director, Leslie Storm, “and of course, the economy is affecting so many who are seeking our help. But, our wonderful volunteers and all those who continue to contribute to OP make this vital service possible.” 



Volunteers take calls in OP’s newly expanded Crisis Lines Call Center while shift supervisor David Corse looks on.

Bell Blazers Classic a resounding success

Sunny skies, fun-filled golf and encouraging words from Portland Trail Blazers coach, Nate McMillan, highlighted the 8th Annual Bell Blazers Classic this past September.

And, once again, Oregon Partnership was the beneficiary. Over \$40,000 was raised for OP programs among the record 33 teams that played in the scramble which is considered to be one of the top charity golf tournaments in the state.

For the fourth consecutive year, OP participated in the tournament sponsored by the Portland Area Pacific Bells Owners Association and the Portland Trail Blazers.

“The support for OP that the Trail Blazers and Taco Bell demonstrate year in and year out is incredible,” said

Judy Cushing, Oregon Partnership President/CEO. “Our heartfelt thanks continues to go out to them.”

Held at the Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club, the tournament featured Portland Trail Blazer alumni, Trail Blazer staff, and local celebrities.



Portland Trail Blazer alum Jerome Kersey tees off at the 2009 Bell Blazers Classic.

Such former Blazers as Terry Porter, Jerome Kersey, and Bobby Gross were joined by the likes of former NFL quarterback Neil Lomax, Blazers broadcaster Bill Schonely and the man who brought the Blazers to Portland - Harry Glickman.

Coach McMillan talked about the upcoming season during the post-golf dinner. McMillan has demonstrated his support of Oregon Partnership, taping public service announcements and offering his services to OP projects.

Another loyal supporter, Taco Bell’s Tom Cook, spoke movingly of a tragedy involving a family member while explaining the importance of OP’s suicide prevention line, Lifeline. 