

“The first step to supporting Oregonians in crisis is making sure there is always someone available to listen and to help. Ongoing funding for the 988 call line was a key priority in this year’s legislative session to address our behavioral health crisis, and I was thrilled to see legislators deliver. Now, we need to get the word out to all Oregonians that help is there whenever they need it. Thank you to Senators Merkley and Wyden, and their hardworking teams, for advancing funds to support a critical public awareness campaign,” **said Governor Tina Kotek.**

“Senators Merkley and Wyden recognize the addiction crisis that Oregon is facing and understand the need for critical investments in residential treatment facilities. We are grateful for their support of our Center for Addictions Triage and Treatment which will add 86 treatment beds to our system of care along with peer mentorship and outpatient care. These investments are important so that every Washington County resident has the chance to thrive,” **said Kathryn Harrington, Board of Commissioners Chair.**

“An investment in the medical workforce is an investment in all Oregonians in Douglas County. Umpqua Community College is excited to use these funds to outfit laboratory space for new medical careers training programs, and to strengthen partnerships with local medical providers to support the health of the community. Thank you to Senators Merkley and Wyden for recognizing the importance of an investment in our work,” **said Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President of Umpqua Community College.**

“I applaud Senators Merkley and Wyden for their leadership in strengthening the nursing profession,” **said Susan Bakewell-Sachs, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean of the OHSU School Nursing.** “OHSU’s proposed initiative to innovate on the traditional model of nursing education is focused on nurturing the skills and job satisfaction of our clinical nurses and nurse educators. Our senators’ support for this effort helps to advance our shared vision of growing and retaining our important nursing workforce across Oregon.”

“This FY2024 Community Initiated Project funding will allow Parrott Creek Child & Family Services to bring online 40 brand new youth residential treatment beds helping Oregon meet the behavioral healthcare needs of highly vulnerable youth. Based in rural Clackamas County but serving children and teens from across all of Oregon, Parrott Creek will use this federal funding to help Oregon fill the large hole in its system of care by applying trauma-informed principles as much to the care we provide to kids as we do to the design of the buildings themselves. Led by a focus on equity and social justice we hope that our new buildings and services set a new standard for the care and nurturing all children should receive no matter who they are or where they come from. Thank you to Senators Merkley and Wyden for supporting our youth, our families and communities across Oregon,” **said Simon Fulford, Executive Director, Parrott Creek Child & Family Services.**

“We are extremely grateful for Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley’s recognition of the importance of this facility to our community. La Clinica is heartened by the widespread community support for this project, including from local employers, hospital and other healthcare leaders who want to relieve pressure on hospital emergency departments, contain healthcare costs, and improve the area’s ability to respond to disease outbreaks and other emergencies,” **said Brenda Johnson, La Clinica Health CEO.**

“Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden understand how important it is for families in East Multnomah County to have access to quality healthcare. I’m grateful for their support of our Health Department’s efforts to modernize our newly purchased health clinic in Rockwood which will improve the health of individuals, their families and our community,” **said Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson.**

“Portland Community College is grateful to Senators Merkley and Wyden for their commitment to expanding behavioral healthcare,” **said Dr. Adrien Bennings, PCC President.** “This critical funding will help increase the availability of a skilled mental health workforce, while connecting underserved populations to careers that provide economic mobility.”

“Senator’s Wyden and Merkley immediately recognized that Lane County’s efforts to build out behavioral health crisis services are worthy of federal funding. They advocated for direct funding to assist our Stabilization Center project, and were successful in that effort. The Lane County Stabilization Center is a much needed element of community-based treatment services and will be a game changer for local courts, hospitals, mobile crisis responders and police agencies who have struggled to find the right resource for people in our community who may need immediate and targeted help to work through a moment of crisis in their lives that without such help can enmesh them in a homelessness-jail-hospital pipeline,” **said Pat Farr, Chair of the Lane County Board of Commissioners.**

“I am grateful for Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley’s support for the Ballmer Institute for Children’s Behavioral Health. The Ballmer Institute aims to expand access to behavioral health services for youth and address existing workforce shortages by creating a new mental health profession that only requires an undergraduate degree—the child behavioral health specialist,” **said Dr. Katie McLaughlin, incoming executive director of the institute.**

“We plan to work with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) to develop a pilot project that will provide easy access for educators and school administrators to universal behavioral health screening resources, a data dashboard, and a consortium of practitioners,” **said Dr. Randy Kamphaus, acting executive director of the institute.**

“Senator Merkley’s funding to support the YouthLine national platform will help lead the charge toward supporting youth mental wellness across the country and in Oregon. This youth peer-to-peer support and crisis service will be available to even more young people who face the unique mental wellness challenges of growing up today in America, helping to create a brighter future for next generations,” **said Emily Moser, Director of YouthLine Programs at Lines for Life.**

“The Klamath Tribes express our gratitude to Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for their exceptional leadership and dedication in supporting our Forest & Fire Workforce Training Initiative. With this funding, the Klamath Tribes can effectively operationalize our Master Stewardship Agreement with the US Forest Service for ecological restoration. We extend our appreciation to the Senators for fulfilling their commitments to tribal sovereignty and partnership. Their support will significantly bolster tribal and local capabilities to address the pressing forest health and wildfire crisis. This funding will serve as a catalyst, unlocking access to tens of millions of dollars in state and federal funding within the region, enabling us to achieve ecological, cultural, and public values in our homeland,” **said Steve Rondeau, Klamath Tribes Natural Resources Director.**

“Lifeways is beyond grateful to be considered for funding to support Malheur County's efforts to combat mental health and substance use crisis in our community. This funding will be instrumental in building a crisis stabilization center where individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis can receive immediate and appropriate assistance 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. This will eliminate unnecessary stays in the emergency department as well as free up law enforcement officers to focus on community safety. On behalf of Malheur County, Lifeways would like to thank Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for recognizing and supporting the increasing need for behavioral health services. This funding will strengthen services for the most vulnerable and underserved families in Oregon,” **said Andrea Recla, Clinical Director of Intensive Outpatient Services.**

“We are thrilled by the support of Oregon Senators Merkley and Wyden who recognize the importance of recentering Chinese American heritage in our state. This collaborative project will allow us provide educational opportunities for students, volunteers, and community stakeholders as we document and celebrate the many contributions of Oregon's early Chinese residents and the ways in which they helped to shape our modern communities,” **said Chelsea Rose, Oregon Chinese Diaspora Project, SOU.**

“My administration is taking steps to give every Oregon child the opportunity to learn to read and write. Support for our local libraries – particularly in rural communities – is a fundamental component of that goal. Our libraries are where our children with support from their families have the chance to practice their reading skills and cultivate a love of reading and learning about topics that spark their interests. Kudos to our federal delegation for advancing this work. Every child is full of promise, and funding our rural libraries will help create the conditions for more Oregon students to thrive,” **said Governor Kotek.**

“Students, teachers and parents know school libraries play a critical role in the health and success of the school community,” **said Dr. Charlene Williams, Director of Oregon Department of Education.** “With this funding, more students throughout rural Oregon would have a safe place to foster their curiosity and develop their reading skills.”