

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lines for Life Launches YouthLine in Central Oregon

Lines for Life announces the launch of its nationally-recognized YouthLine in Central Oregon. Since 2000, the YouthLine served communities throughout the state. This new initiative will expand services by welcoming teens from across Central Oregon to volunteer – helping peers through the crisis line, school-based outreach and engagement throughout their communities. Those in Central Oregon who volunteer will join over 90 teens who already volunteer with the YouthLine in the Willamette Valley.

YouthLine received over 12,000 contacts last year, and is expected to reach over 15,000 this year from teens who need mental health support. The service provides peer-to-peer crisis service which trains and equips teens to help their fellow teens with a myriad of challenges and stresses. YouthLine focuses on building help-seeking skills in young people with its crisis text and hotline, outreach in schools, and engagement of its remarkable teen volunteers.

“The expansion of Oregon YouthLine in our area has been an amazing Central Oregon multi-partner effort,” says Jessica Jacks, Prevention Program Supervisor at Deschutes County Health Services. “YouthLine strengthens our existing community efforts and I am really excited to see it take flight and provide our youth with resources and leadership opportunities.”

Deschutes County Commissioner Tammy Baney praised the launch: “Youth suicide is preventable; our community partners have worked hard to bring support services to the Central Oregon region. YouthLine is a critical community resource to support our youth and prevent youth suicide. We are fortunate to have them here in the region.”

“The launch of the Central Oregon YouthLine initiative is the result of hard work from people throughout Central Oregon,” states Dwight Holton, CEO of Lines for Life. “We want to thank our partners in Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties, and among the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs who made this launch possible. We are dedicated to building on our roots in Central Oregon to support a cadre of young people ready to help support and their peers.”

Mel Butterfield, a third generation Central Oregon native, will lead the Central Oregon expansion of Oregon YouthLine. With deep experience in the region, Butterfield began at Central Oregon Community College, and received her Bachelor's and Master's at Oregon State University Cascades in counseling.

"I love this community and I've had my feet on the ground talking to youth for over a decade. I want to build a place that they can feel safe and heard," said Butterfield. "The new YouthLine office can and will do that."

The St. Charles Foundation, the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, the Bend Police Department, and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area provided early support for the launch in Central Oregon, along with numerous health care, education and suicide prevention professionals throughout Central Oregon.

Details about the office opening will be announced later this year.

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