



Preventing Substance Abuse & Suicide

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LINES FOR LIFE CELEBRATES OREGON EXPANSION OF NATIONAL CRISIS LINE FOR VETERANS

Portland, Ore. -- On November 9th, 2018, state, community and national leaders will convene to celebrate the expansion of Lines for Life's work with the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL). Lines for Life supports the VCL in meeting the needs of veterans in crisis nationwide as the VCL's sole back-up call center. This is a significant expansion of Lines for Life's Military Services, which includes the Military Helpline, funded by the State of Oregon.

US Senator Ron Wyden recognized the potential of Lines for Life and played a key role in the expansion opportunity.

"This expansion provides an opportunity for veterans in Oregon and nationwide to receive the highest level of service and support during a crisis," Wyden said. "I'm proud to have helped Lines for Life extend its essential work for veterans and their families needing timely and top-notch assistance to prevent substance abuse and suicide."

Senator Ron Wyden will provide remarks and be joined by Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury, and Multnomah County Commissioner Sharon Meieran. Veterans Crisis Line Director Dr. Matt Miller and Dr. John Draper of the National Lifeline will also be in attendance.

The Veterans Administration established the Veterans Crisis in 2007 as a special service for those who have served in the armed forces. Since VCL's launch in 2007, counselors have handled over 3.5 million calls. The VCL works closely with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL). Last year, Lines for Life was selected to serve as the VCL's "Ambassador Center" to help meet the growing needs of veterans in crisis and to serve as a center for excellence in working with veterans in crisis.

The new work with the VCL led to a significant expansion at Lines for Life – and brought over 30 new jobs to Oregon. Lines for Life also upgraded and expanded its state-of-the-art crisis call center.

"We are honored to be a part of the Veterans Crisis Line network and provide support to Veterans in crisis of all ages in Oregon, throughout the United States and beyond," said Tom Milligan, Assistant Crisis Lines Director of Military Services at Lines for Life. "Our well-trained Lines for Life team is dedicated to helping Veterans from every conflict and circumstance."

Veterans suicide is a growing challenge in the United States. Every day, 20 veterans die by suicide. Lines for Life call counselors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to help veterans, family and friends find a way forward through difficult challenges. In the last six months alone, Lines for Life has connected with over 27,000

veterans, active duty military personnel and family through the Veterans Crisis Line and Oregon Military Help Line.

The Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource that's available to anyone, even if they're not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care. The staff are specially trained and experienced in helping Veterans of all ages, circumstances and backgrounds. To utilize the line, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press 1.

A ribbon cutting ceremony in the crisis call center will take place before the formal event. Due to limited space, press are encouraged to RSVP.

DETAILS

Friday, November 9th, 2018

Special Press Avail with electeds and VCL Director, Matt Miller: 10:25am-11:00am **(Please arrive by 10:15am)**

Full ceremony with remarks: 11am-12pm

Tours of the space available after the full ceremony

Location: Lines for Life, 5100 SW Macadam Ave #400, Portland, OR 97239

PLEASE RSVP for full details: Natalie Sept, natalies@linesforlife.org

Lines for Life is a 501c3 nonprofit that works to prevent substance abuse and suicide and promote mental wellness. The organization operates the suicide crisis line 24/7/365 in addition to the Oregon YouthLine, Senior Loneliness Line, Drug & Alcohol Line, Military Helpline and many others. We also work to find ways to end the opioid crisis.

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