

Local groups receive first grants from Measure 110

Dianne Lugo Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Two Salem-area organizations are among the first recipients of voter-supported grants for addiction treatment programs.

Voters passed Measure 110, the landmark referendum that decriminalized low-level possession of drugs including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine, in November.

The measure reallocated millions of dollars from the state's cannabis tax to establish a treatment and recovery service fund that would support addiction recovery centers and Community Access to Care grants. Funds also are expected to come from state savings from reductions in arrests, incarceration and official supervision.

The Oregon Health Authority said 114 organizations submitted proposals from across the state, hoping to receive part of the \$10 million in initial funding; 48 were selected.

Organizations included community-based nonprofits and government entities.

"We are very impressed with the quality of the proposals that were submitted by organizations who will provide these urgently needed, culturally responsive substance use services," OHA Behavioral Health director Steve Allen said in a news release. "The need is great and I'm looking forward to the work the OAC is doing to develop the next grant opportunity to ensure these services are expanded to meet the needs of Oregonians struggling with addictions."

Three of the organizations selected work with the Marion and Polk community, and two are based in Salem.

Bridgeway's recovery coaches

Bridgeway Recovery Services, a healthcare organization based in Salem, will receive \$126,682. The organization provides education and support for those seeking addiction recovery and runs a local detox and treatment center in the area that provides health services to people going through withdrawal.

With the grant, the organization will be able to hire more peer recovery coaches who will provide support that isn't traditionally covered by insurance, explained Tim Murphy, CEO of Bridgeway Recovery Services.

An example is their reach-in program in which Bridgeway connects an incarcerated person dealing with substance abuse to one of their coaches. These coaches are often people who have gone through treatment or incarceration themselves.

"When they come out of incarceration, they have a partner in the community that can help them access services," Murphy said. "We know this works. We've been doing it for a number of years with a small number of staff, but now we're going to be able to expand the service to engage more people."

Grand Ronde's expanded programs

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is set to receive \$590,055 from the OHA.

The confederation, consisting of more than 30 tribes and bands from western Oregon, northern California and southwest Washington, offers a behavioral health program which their website describes as a "fully integrated outpatient mental health and alcohol and drug assessment and treatment program."

For the past year, the tribe has also worked to expand its services to provide medication-assisted treatment options to both tribal and non-tribal clients.

In March, it opened Great Circle Recovery at 1011 Commercial Street NE. It became "the state's first tribally owned and operated Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) facility."

The facility offers peer support services, group and individual counseling, and physicians who provide medications to treat opioid use disorders.

A program for parents

Morrison Child and Family Services, based in Portland, was awarded \$495,669. Its Salem location offers the Parents Anonymous of Oregon Program and Parent Mentor Program to Polk and Marion county residents.

Parents Anonymous, a self-help group, provides parents and caregivers support in order to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect by increasing mental health and reducing substance abuse. Parents and children are able to join a weekly support group, meet with mentors and work with a parent mentor.

These mentors are parents who have experienced similar challenges and have "maintained an active program of recovery from substance use for two years or more and has successfully navigated the Department of Human Services Child Welfare system," states the Morrison Kids website. The goal is to support parents entering treatment and to assist them in maintaining sobriety.

The website adds that parent mentors join parents in their court hearings and family decision meeting, maintaining contact with parents during their treatment and even through incarceration and introduces the parents to recovery-based meetings.

In order to receive the grants, all three of the organizations demonstrated work that aligns with the values of Measure 110, hoping to support and center communities of color and tribal communities that were disproportionately impacted by drug criminalization.

According to the OHA, every organization that received a grant clearly outlined their outreach, mentoring and housing retention services; transitional, recovery and supportive housing assistance; employment programs; access to harm reduction support and services; and increased access to substance use treatment.

"Oregon ranks nearly last out of all 50 states when it comes to providing access to treatment," said Tera Hurst, executive director of the Health Justice Recovery Alliance.

The alliance is a statewide coalition of 75 organizations across Oregon focused on implementing Measure 110 successfully.

"This initial \$20 million will help providers serve some of the most vulnerable people in our community. The initial grant process highlights what many of us already knew: that there is a desperate need for more investment in addiction recovery and harm reduction services - especially for programs that are culturally and linguistically specific. We have a long way to go toward meeting the need, but this initial round of funding can give hope and shows the commitment of the Legislature to invest in these life-saving services," Hurst said.

Funds awarded will be disbursed by June 8.

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Hikers are to avoid a roughly 20-mile closure of the Pacific Crest Trail in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness and Olallie Lake Scenic Area. STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

Pacific Crest Trail closure to continue throughout summer

Zach Urness
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

One of the most scenic stretches of the Oregon section of the Pacific Crest Trail will remain closed all summer following damage from the Lionshead Fire last September.

Roughly 20 miles of the trail in the northern Mount Jefferson Wilderness and the Olallie Lake Scenic Area won't reopen, prompting complications for the thousands traveling the pathway that runs from Mexico to Canada.

"The PCT is pretty deep in the wilderness in those sections and frankly, we just haven't been able to get in there yet to even assess the damage," Willamette National Forest spokeswoman Joanie Schmidgall said. "It's hard to even know how widespread the damage is at this point. We anticipate it staying closed all summer."

The closure runs from around Pamela Lake, in the Jefferson Wilderness, to around Triangle Lake, north of the Olallie. The closure is from roughly mile 2,027 to 2,049 on the PCT.

To avoid the closure, hikers will need to exit the PCT at Pamela Lake Trailhead at the latest, and may consider avoiding the Jefferson altogether

and exiting the trail at Santiam Pass Trailhead along Highway 20, Schmidgall said.

Hikers can reenter the PCT at Timothy Lake in Mount Hood National Forest, she said, or in different areas outside the closure.

"There's no walkable detour," wrote the Pacific Crest Trail Association in a blog post. "Northbounders will need to ... arrange a 150+ mile ride. Getting around the closure will likely mean going through Redmond to the east or Stayton to the west."

"These are high-speed highways with little to no shoulder, so again, walking is not recommended."

In addition, some PCT section hikers who are traveling less than 500 miles and do not have a long-distance PCT permit will need to get a Central Cascade Wilderness Permit to enter the Three Sisters, Mount Washington or Mount Jefferson Wilderness area this summer.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors reporter, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 13 years. To support his work, subscribe to the Statesman Journal. Urness can be reached at zurness@statesmanjournal.com or (503) 399-6801. Find him on Twitter at @ZachsOROutdoors.

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