



Santiam Hospital's Tele-ICU helps patients access medical professionals in urgent situations. DEKDOYJAIDEE, GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Mano a Mano increasing bilingual community health workers

Sydney Wyatt

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK



Herrera-Lopez



Bautista

At the start of July, Mano a Mano Family Center of Salem will be beginning a three-phase project to increase bilingual community health workers housed at community-based organizations in the Mid-Willamette Valley.

"Our goal is connecting the community to healthcare, so they know how to access it before it becomes a crisis," said Levi Herrera-Lopez, Executive Director of Mano a Mano Family Center.

Mano a Mano will partner with several Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) led community-based organizations to implement a community health worker model in hopes of making healthcare more accessible.

"When the next community crisis hits, we want to be ready" with a network of trained bilingual health workers that are coordinated to respond to the community's needs, Herrera-Lopez said.

Mano a Mano's main partner will be Capaces Leadership Institute in Woodburn. The final list of partner organizations will be developed during phase one, beginning in July. The first phase also will consist of hiring a project coordinator and developing a Spanish curriculum to train the new community health workers.

Mano a Mano expects to begin training 10-12 community health workers by the summer of 2023.

There is a large population of Latinx individuals in the local community for whom Spanish is their primary language, and Herrera-Lopez said even those who speak some English often prefer to communicate in Spanish.

For these individuals, finding the care they need can be difficult in a healthcare system dominated by English-speaking providers.

In rural Marion County, there is a large indigenous Latinx community whose first languages are indigenous languages from Mexico. Developing an indigenous language-based community health worker curriculum is one of the project's goals for the future, said Herrera-Lopez.

He said the project was initiated in response to a need in the BIPOC community for health education and assistance in navigating healthcare systems such as

health insurance, which became apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organizations such as Mano a Mano and Capaces worked through the pandemic helping the BIPOC community deal with health issues and related challenges such as increased stress.

"The people we're serving never stopped working and never stopped putting themselves at risk," Herrera-Lopez said.

The community health worker model works to mitigate these risks by ensuring access to consistent support in times of need. "It's not just a referral or a phone number," said Herrera-Lopez.

The community health workers will have knowledge of what resources are available, then will connect those in need with the care they are seeking. They will work to help them understand how health systems work, while continuing to support them throughout the process of accessing and receiving care.

This project is being funded, in part, by \$250,000 in funds secured by Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Oregon, in the 2022 federal spending bill. According to a press release from Merkley's office, this year's funding is aimed at "supporting housing, health care, education, and other needs in Oregon communities" through community-initiated projects.

While the funding is helping to launch Mano a Mano's project, Herrera-Lopez said their plan is to fundraise to maintain the community health worker network.

Sydney Wyatt covers healthcare inequities in the Mid-Willamette Valley. You can reach her at SWyatt@gannett.com, by phone (503) 399-6613, or on Twitter @sydney_elise44. The Statesman Journal's coverage of healthcare inequities is funded in part by the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, which seeks to strengthen the cultural, social, educational, and spiritual base of the Pacific Northwest through capacity-building investments in the nonprofit sector.

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Jobs

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To clear that hurdle, the KROC Center has offered a reduced price and even free lifeguard certification classes, which typically cost \$200 for a three-day, 20-hour course on top of the \$40 American Red Cross registration.

KROC Center Director of Marketing Rick Marazzani said this year they have raised its starting pay from \$13.75 in 2021 to \$16 an hour for lifeguards starting Jan. 1, 70 percent of whom are in high school or college.

"We've been working really hard knowing that half of them are going to go to their community pool and be lifeguards," Marazzani said.

"So we understood that giving away free lifeguard classes wasn't just for us, but that they were going to protect pools around the county.

"It is slowly paying off, and we should have the aquatics team staffed-up soon."

Aside from lifeguard classes, the KROC Center also provides as many hours of swim lessons, recreational swim and lap swim as possible.

"Though, we always need more lifeguards so we can provide better water safety and be

open more hours to the public," Marazzani said.

Marazzani said the short supply of applicants is "perplexing" and one guess is that young people were enjoying socializing and interacting with friends after the long quarantines and shutdowns.

Other sports-related summer employment at the KROC include fitness attendant, sports day camp counselors and group fitness instructors.

The KROC Center also offers a free teen program called Rebound that hires young adults to college-age people to play games, lead projects and activities. The Rebound Drop-in lounge also has the staff to tutor on homework and help study.

Marazzani said the Rebound staff offer programs and classes throughout the year that teens are free to participate in if they wish.

"Job training for today's tough is important to the KROC," Marazzani said. "Most of our teen programming has a component of career training, life skills and certifications."

"We have a program over the summer where teens who attend will get their food handlers, card, CPR certification, job coaching, resume building and interview practice."

A shortage decades in the making

The high demand for teen workers is a dramatic change.

Nicole Ramos, a workforce analyst at the Oregon Employment Department, said the percentage of teens working has been trending down since the 1990s. However, recent data has shown an increase in total quarterly new hires from 2020 to 2021 in age groups 14-18 and 19-21.

In 1978, half of American teenagers held down a job, the Associated Press reported. In the decades since, fewer have joined the workforce with the number falling steadily since 2000. By 2010, in the aftermath of the financial crisis, only 25% of 16- to 19-year-olds collected a paycheck.

Researchers at Drexel University's Center for Labor Markets and Policy predicted in a report last month that an average of 33% of youths ages 16 to 19 will be employed each month from June through August this year.

The Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association reported 35,720 total job postings from May 2021 to April 2022.

Further data showed

the top companies with over 1,000 postings included, Starbucks, Kroger, McDonald's, Chipotle, Pilot Flying J and Mod Pizza, while the city of Salem was among the top five cities with 1,695 postings.

"Our post-COVID reality has turned that trend on its head and created expanded opportunities for youth looking for their first job once again," ORLA President & CEO Jason Brandt said.

Boys and Girls Club of Salem, Marion and Polk Counties

The Boys and Girls Club of Salem, Marion and Polk Counties have experienced the same hiring challenges that organizations across the nation are feeling primarily because its focus is with youth through high school age and staffs 18 years or older.

"We run a teen workforce development program year round," Boys and Girls Club Director of Marketing Kari Roberts said. "Through that they are eligible for some of our summer employment opportunities."

"It is a specialized program and our positions are all filled."

The Boys and Girls Club also runs summer sports camps where many of its staff members work for during the school year as referees in its youth sports programs.

City of Salem's Parks & Activities

Contrary to Marion County's overall current labor market trend, the City of Salem's Parks & Activities department, which hires 16 years or older for its recreation activities, has had an excellent turnout heading into this summer.

City Public Information Officer Trevor Smith said they wrapped up its hiring process early last week and are expected to hire more than 20 people to help staff its summer recreation program.

"We have noticed that many businesses with entry level opportunities are raising their minimum salary equal to or above our salaries," Smith said. "Fortunately, our positions attract an outdoorsy, active and energetic person."

"The unique opportunities of working outdoors with kids in our parks system helps us find good applicants in this competitive labor market."

Edith Noriega is a sports reporter for the Statesman Journal. You may reach her at ENoriega@salem.gannett.com and follow her on Twitter at [@Noriega_Edith](https://twitter.com/Noriega_Edith).

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PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Review Body: Planning Commission
Hearing Date & Time: July 12, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Hearing Location: Silverton High School Library, 1456 Pine Street with a Teleconference option via Zoom.

Agenda Item #1: File Number AN-22-01. Annexation application to annex 13722 Edison Heights Lane into the City Limits and zone the property AR, Acreage Residential. The total area of the annexation request is 1.7 acres. The purpose of the annexation is to allow the existing dwelling to be able to connect to the City water system. The Acreage Residential district prohibits the property from being divided or developed beyond its current use. Located on the south side of Edison Heights Lane at 13722 Edison Heights Lane NE, Marion County Assessor's Map 071W11B, Tax Lot 00600. The application will be reviewed following the criteria found in Silverton Development Code (SDC) section 4.10.140

All interested persons and the general public will be given an opportunity to be heard relative to the application either by submitting material in writing to City Hall or providing oral testimony at the Public Hearing. Failure of an issue to be raised in a hearing, in person or by letter, or failure to provide enough detail to afford the decision maker an opportunity to respond precludes appeal to LUBA based on that issue. Additional information and/or review of this application, including all documents and evidence submitted, may be obtained at Silverton City Hall, 306 South Water Street, or by telephoning Jason Gottgetreu at (503) 874-2212. Copies of the staff report will be available seven (7) days prior to the public hearing and are available for review at no cost at City Hall, a copy can be provided on request at a reasonable cost.

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