

Where Are They Now? Kahli Anderson

From the U.S. Navy to nursing, Kahli Anderson is dedicating her life to service.

By Scott Laird

As a 2009 graduate of Vernonia High School, Kahli Anderson's high school days were rudely interrupted by the 2007 flood. While the flood was an enormous disruption, it also gave an early glimpse into the power of volunteerism and helping others, something Anderson would carry into her life following high school.

"We lived on O-A Hill near the fire station and my mom was a volunteer with the Ambulance Association," remembers Anderson about the December 3, 2007 disaster. "When the Smith family (Ernie, Robin and children) were finally rescued after being trapped in their home all night, we took them in, and there were a ton of other people at our house trying to stay warm and get through the night."

Being bussed to Scappoose High School for several weeks following the flood, and then finishing her last two years in modular classrooms, was an inconvenience, but didn't get in the way of Anderson's generally sunny disposition. "We had some good teachers;

Mr. Brookins and Mr. Brown were my favorites," says Anderson. "I really loved school and going to my classes. I remember, when we were bussing back and forth, our teachers trying to make do when it was all so disjointed."



Kahli Anderson joined the U.S. Navy in 2012 where she is a corpsman.

Anderson was an active student at VHS who participated in the student Leadership Class. "I enjoyed the majority of my time at Vernonia High School," says Anderson. "I played volleyball, ran track and played softball. I feel like my class was pretty close because a lot of us had known each other from kindergarten all the way through high school. We all got along pretty well so we had a lot of fun and did a lot of things together."

While her high school days with friends

and classmates were fun, Anderson always carried a sense of service along with her. She remembers a major snowstorm in 2006 that knocked out power to some residents for almost two weeks providing another opportunity to volunteer and help her community. After graduation Anderson headed to Pacific University where she began her studies with an eye on a career in the medical field. "I was considering Physical Therapy or Physician Assistant," she says. "I always wanted to take care of people." Unfortunately Anderson chose to leave school early after just three semesters in order to help her family with her stepfather's serious illness.

In 2011 Anderson continued her quest to serve when she signed up and joined the United States Navy, heading to basic training in February of 2012 to become a corpsman, an enlisted medical specialist.

"Becoming a Navy corpsman provided me with a huge opportunity to do so many different things in so many different areas," explains Anderson. "Our scope of practice is much larger than any other enlisted medical branch."

Anderson ended up being stationed in Japan which had been her first

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Text to 9-1-1 Available in Columbia County

The Columbia 9-1-1 Communication District has announced that they can now accept text messages to request emergency services from 9-1-1.

Columbia 9-1-1 is part of a regional partnership and joins seven other 9-1-1 agencies in Clatsop, Washington, Clackamas, and Multnomah counties, the cities of Astoria and Woodburn, and Clark County, Washington to deliver this service to the region.

The official announcement was made on August 23, 2016 at a major press conference and demonstration at the Clark Regional Emergency Services agency in Vancouver, Washington.

Texting is intended to benefit people that may not be able to speak due to an emergency such as a home invasion or abusive partner, as well as individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have limited speech capabilities.

According to officials, Columbia 9-1-1 will always prefer that citizens make a voice call when possible. Texting should ONLY be used when you are unable to make a voice call to 9-1-1. If you are able to place a voice call, 9-1-1 dispatchers are able to gather information more quickly from you about the emergency, your location and what hazards responders may encounter. If, however, you are unable to place a voice call, Text-to-9-1-1 is an option you can use to share this same information. The key thing to remember is Call if You Can, Text if You Can't.

9-1-1 also asks that anytime you make a request to 9-1-1, either by voice or text,

please make sure of your location so they can send appropriate help in a timely manner.

There are several challenges to sending and accepting 9-1-1 texts. The 9-1-1 Call Center cannot identify the person's exact location. In fact, location accuracy is worse with text messages than when you call into 9-1-1. Additionally, it can take more time for a call taker to respond to a written text messages or they may receive gaps if messages don't come through.

Anywhere 9-1-1 text services are not available, callers should receive a "bounceback" message that says text-to-9-1-1 is NOT available in that area.

Currently 9-1-1 can only accept written words. Accepting pictures and video will be coming in the future; however, many of the carriers cannot transmit multi-media messaging (MMS) at this time.

If your phone is in roaming mode or you add 9-1-1 to a group text, they will not receive your message.

There is no cost to the person texting 9-1-1. There is an increased cost to the 9-1-1 centers that is partially offset by the 9-1-1 tax. Data regarding the full impact to agency operations and personnel costs will not be available for some time.

The FCC required the wireless carriers to offer Text-to-9-1-1 service. However it has been up to each 9-1-1 center to determine when they are capable, both technically and operationally, to accept text messages.

For the latest information on this new service, please visit www.nwtext911.info.

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Community Action Team: The First 50 Years

Part 7 – Financial Resources for Homeowners

By Leanne Murray

Community Action Team (CAT) has been helping with housing needs for about 30 of its 50 years. Previous articles in this series have covered topics such as weatherization, home rehabilitation, purchasing a home, affordable housing, and home repairs. Some of these services are available to both homeowners and renters. This article focuses on two significant programs CAT offers to homeowners

who may be encountering financial challenges.

One of the advantages to already owning a home in these times of increasing housing costs is that one doesn't have to worry about a landlord increasing rent when a lease is renewed. However, the housing crisis we're experiencing in Columbia County presents a different kind of challenge for homeowners – if they lose their home, there is nowhere else to go. The market is so tight right now that there is virtually no rental inventory at any price. That pressure makes it that much more important for households to make sure they are

up-to-date on their mortgage payments.

The "Home Rescue" Mortgage Payment Assistance (MPA) program is a tremendous resource for those whose income has been reduced in 2016 compared to income earned in a year between 2009 and 2015. Some common causes for the income reduction are loss of a spouse, full-time work reduced to part-time hours, or divorce. The program can assist homeowners in two ways – through monthly mortgage payments for up to 12 months, capped at \$20,000 or by providing a reinstatement payment of up to \$15,000 that makes a mortgage in ar-

rears current.

The MPA is available through the US Treasury's "Hardest Hit Fund" and administered by the Oregon Homeownership Stabilization Initiative (OHSI). \$220 million was allocated to Oregon in 2010 and almost 12,000 homeowners have already received assistance by way of this five-year forgivable loan. Every other Wednesday at noon OHSI makes 200 state-wide application slots available, and as is to be expected with this kind of support, the eligibility criteria are many. Homeowners can get qualification details and application

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