

# Traveling homelessness panel available for your group

There's no doubt that homelessness is a contentious and emotional topic for residents of Josephine County. Should those without stable housing be denigrated as simply "a bunch of addicts," as some have said? Or is the reality more complex? A new grant awarded by the Allcare Health Foundation to the nonprofit JoCo Equity Project will support a series of speaker panels to help the public better understand homelessness.

JoCo Equity Project's mission is to promote an inclusive and equitable Josephine County through education, advocacy and community building. Allcare Health has been active in support of housing solutions for those experiencing homelessness, including the Foundry Village transitional housing project in Grants Pass and the I.V. HOPE transitional housing project in Cave Junction.

Homelessness panel speakers will talk from their personal

experience about commonly overlooked topics such as being homeless while disabled, families and children experiencing lack of housing, and the lack of stepping stones out of houselessness as well as lack of housing inventory. The panels will be led by people who have experienced homelessness, in partnership with nonprofit professionals who work in the field of homeless and social services. In some cases, the professionals

themselves have also experienced homelessness.

According to project coordinator Leslie Keller, "The most important thing to know is that people who don't have homes are still people. They deserve a roof over their head just like everyone else does."

Recently the panel did a presentation to the Rogue Gateway Rotary club. "Your girls did a wonderful job today," reacted one

club member. "You could hear a pin drop in the room. Their story is very compelling. We had lots of questions and they stood there for nearly 45 min. Answering each one with a thoughtful response."

Speakers will be available to talk with church groups and other organizations interested in becoming more informed about homelessness. If your organization is interested in hosting the panel, please call 541-295-6131 to speak to Leslie Keller.

# RCC small business management program offers scholarships for fall

JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OR – Small business owners in Southern Oregon have an opportunity to receive training and mentorship offered through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of Rogue Community College (RCC). The first 20 applicants accepted into the Small Business Management Program (SBM), with classes starting in the fall, will receive a scholarship that covers half of the tuition, a \$300 value. The scholarship is made available through the RCC Board of Education.

This nationally recognized and respected business development program has produced numerous SBDC-certified graduates in the Southern Oregon region who have gone on to demonstrate a track record of success and business growth.

The 2023 / 2024 program curriculum offers relevant and proven "best practices" for growing revenue, increasing profitability, developing a team and building an adaptable platform for long-term business sustainability.

Past participants in the SBM program have reported the following results after completing the program: improved performance through use of effective financial analysis and information; expanded markets and sales using relevant online marketing platforms; increased knowledge and application of innovative lean processes and quality improvement for specific industries; and strengthened employee teams that grow business and brand success.

The SBM Program includes monthly interactive learning sessions with other experienced business owners focused on current and relevant subjects. It also includes monthly one-on-one business coaching to meet individual business needs. A variety of subject matter experts are invited as frequent guest speakers. The program is taught over a 9-month period and is designed in stages; as each business owner's training advances, each ongoing business continues to benefit through more advanced topics

and mentoring.

The program is offered through once-a-month in-class sessions on Tuesday afternoons, 2 - 5 p.m., beginning October 3rd, 2023. Course dates for the nine-month 2023 / 2024 program will be: October 3, November 1, December 5, and, in 2024: January 9, February 6, March 5, April 1, May 7 and June 4.

This program has been developed for businesses that have been in operation for a minimum of one year. The full cost of tuition is \$618 but if applying as one of the first 20

business owners, tuition will be reduced to \$318 through the scholarship offering. Retail value of the course, if taken elsewhere, has been estimated at \$3,500.

For information on the SBM Program, please call 541-956-7494 or email Advisor Tim Busald at TBusald@rogucecc.edu. For general information, please call the RCC SBDC at 541-956-7494 or, for more information, visit: <https://sbdc.rogucecc.edu/small-business-management>.

## Letters to the editor

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be used to verify authenticity. The "News" reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.

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**(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact are strictly those of the letter writers.)**

### Reader holds commissioners to task

What is happening in Josephine County government? It's disturbing that two commissioners can override decisions by appointed commissions and end programs that support valuable services to our communities. More

disturbing is the fact that county commissioners have combined extremely necessary, but unrelated county departments. Did they then choose a director with qualifications to manage both IT and emergency services or did they simply reward a political crony?

They not only lost the cooperation of Jackson County,

these two commissioners have put us all at risk when we are faced with drastic situations like earthquakes, floods, and wildfires where qualified and coordinated management will be paramount.

It's time to put political differences aside and demand qualified county management. It's time to consider expanding the BCC to five commis-

sioners representing the entire county so that two extremely biased self-aggrandizing individuals won't further strip away needed services and endanger citizens in Josephine County.

**Libby Watts  
Grants Pass**



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