

Native communities deeply affected by opioid crisis

CLINICS continued from front page

treatment options to Tribal and nonTribal clients. The Tribe has acquired two different properties, one in Portland and one in Salem, so it can bring these services to fruition."

According to the National Institutes of Health, Native communities have been deeply affected by the opioid crisis, and many have been overwhelmed by opioid overdoses, deaths and a strained health care system. This has led to some communities offering a two-tiered treatment approach, which includes a culturally-centered aspect combined with medication.

In December 2018, Eric Martin, a nationally certified addictions counselor, spoke during a community meeting at the Tribal campus about the benefits of medication-assisted treatment for those struggling with opioid use disorder.

Many opioid-dependent people drop out within 72 hours of starting an abstinence-based recovery program due to the severity of withdrawal symptoms, he said.

"That is why we have methadone and suboxone," Martin said. "These medication programs were started because the counselors couldn't get them to stay in a program."

With that in mind, the Health & Wellness Center launched a medication-assisted treatment program in Grand Ronde, but also wanted to expand its health services to the two largest metropolitan areas in Oregon: Portland and Salem.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic required a major pivot, medication-assisted treatment for



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Senior Help Desk Technician Mark Donahoo works on installing a computer station at the new Medication-Assisted Treatment Clinic in Salem on Wednesday, Jan. 6.

ally include an urgent care clinic for clients who come in with other medical needs, as well as a small pharmacy.

"I'm just excited to see a building that came from nothing to this," Worth says. "Doing so during a pandemic adds another layer with supplies arriving on time."

Worth says she has reached out to the local nonprofits and other organizations to let them know about the program.

"But when word gets out that you will be opening a medication-assisted treatment facility, people come to you," she says.

Staff hired for the Salem clinic include medical, behavioral health, administrative and management employees. They began remote training on Jan. 11 with the goal to be onsite by Tuesday, Jan. 19.

"We have invited several community partners to present remotely or in person about their programs, and (for us) to share our program overview as well," Worth says. "I want to build a culture of empathy on our team and work at getting our foundation built up, refining services and practices, and working through all of the different rules and regulations."

Recently, Worth was at the Salem location meeting with the Tribe's Information Systems staff members for setup and configuration of computer and phone services. She compared opening the clinic to her favorite hobby, ultra-trail running where participants often traverse terrain for more than 50 miles to finish an event.

"There are things that can come at you all at once, but you hit a certain point where you just need to keep your head up and continue moving forward," she says.

For more information about the medication-assisted treatment clinics, contact Worth at Jennifer.worth@grandronde.org. ■



At left, Senior Application Administrator Jose Luna brings equipment into the new Medication-Assisted Treatment Clinic in Salem.

The Tribe closed on the Portland property at 3580 S.E. 82nd Ave. in July 2020. The 20,000-square-foot lot includes a former dental office and parking lot, and is located west of Interstate 205 and southeast of Mount Tabor Park. The purchase price was \$1.4 million.

Both buildings are currently being renovated and updated by Perlo Construction of Tualatin, and also must undergo various licensing requirements through the state of Oregon. When completed, the clinics will be the first Tribally operated medication-assisted treatment centers in the state. The Salem clinic is expected to open before spring arrives with a tentative date of sometime this summer for the Portland location.

The Salem facility will eventu-

TERO Worker of the Month December 2020

Name: Austin James
Employer: Freyssinet
Position: Carpenter's apprentice

Austin James first applied for the TERO Skills Bank in 2015. He is currently working on the restoration/upgrade of the D River Bridge in Lincoln City.

James said that he has had the opportunity to learn new skills and get a deeper look into bridge work, including building new types of forms, using different materials and applying them properly, reading plans and operating heavy equipment.

"TERO gave me the tools to be successful in the work force," he said. "Five years ago I had zero knowledge about construction. Now I am a carpenter's apprentice with several certifications relating to all aspects of construction. Thanks to this program, I was even able to buy my first house."

"I would really like to thank Duke Kimsey (TERO's Compliance Officer). Over the last few years he has really taken care of me. I've got some really great jobs and a ton of useful trainings that have allowed me to excel in the field. Thank you, Duke, and thank you to everyone who makes the TERO program possible."

Great job Austin!



Austin James

For more information on the TERO Skills Bank and any TERO opportunities, contact the TERO office or the TERO director.
TERO office: 503-879-1488 or tero@grandronde.org
TERO director: 503-879-1455 or harris.reibach@grandronde.org

TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE
Mail: Social Services ~ Attn: TVSO Office Phone: (503) 879-1484
9615 Grand Ronde Rd. Email: CTGRtribalsvso@grandronde.org
Grand Ronde Oregon, 97347

Taxayam solchas-man ~ Hello Veterans

Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans

2021 Events ~ Save the Dates!

(All events will be virtual until in-person events are allowed).

CTGR Veteran Bi-Monthly Meetings			
Meet up with other CTGR veterans and learn about a variety of topics either veteran or tribally related (topics TBD).			
February	16 th	Tuesday	2 p.m.
April	20 th	Tuesday	10 a.m.
June	15 th	Tuesday	2 p.m.
August	17 th	Tuesday	10 a.m.
October	12 th	Tuesday	2 p.m.
December	14 th	Tuesday	10 a.m.

CTGR Veteran Trainings		
Various trainings will be held throughout 2021. More information will be shared as details are confirmed (topics TBD).		
March June August October	Behavioral Health Trainings	Four trainings will be held throughout the year around various topics regarding behavioral health and wellness.
April September	Cultural Classes	Two cultural classes will be held in 2021.

CTGR Outreach Events		
The Tribal Veterans Service Office will hold four outreach events this year. This is an opportunity for the TVSO to personally connect with all Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans. Hope to see you at one of these events!		
February	Let's Say Hello	CTGR Veterans, let's set up a time / date to connect in the month of February and I'll buy you a cup of coffee. (virtually or via phone at this time)
May	Memorial Day Honoring	CTGR Veterans, submit your photos, stories, biographies, or information before May 21, 2021 in return for a Memorial Day gift.
July	Veterans Powwow	CTGR Veterans! Meet up at the powwow. (Time/day TBD).
November	Veterans Dinner	Enjoy a good meal and a movie with other CTGR Veterans. (If we are still in the pandemic, this event will be drive through and/or drive in).