October 7, 2026 • VOLUME 33 • ISSUE 19

CASCADE BUSINESS NEWS

Enhancing & Promoting the Economic Vitality of Central Oregon Since 1994



You Keep Fixing Problems — Why Is Your Business Still Stuck?

— Page 7

# Pie Maison Offers A Premium Euro-Styled Pie Experience In Downtown Bend

**by JEFF SPRY — CBN Feature Writer**



PHOTO | BY TINA PAYMASTER

Let's face it… the Earth rotates most effectively on its axis based primarily on humanity's proximity to and the availability of exceptional pies! Comforting, satisfying and aromatic, there's nothing like the experience of a delicious slice of hand-crafted pie and now Bend is fortunate enough to have a new Old Town outlet for Central Oregon pie aficionados of all stripes.

Co-owners and founders Brittany Ellenberg and Amy Bertram opened the doors to Pie Maison this past summer and the enthusiastic response has been appetizingly phenomenal. Pie Maison operates as a traditional European bistro pie house "where classic comfort meets refined craft" by using carefully selected recipes and only the finest ingredients for their baked goods.

"Amy has started a few businesses before and we've been in Bend for about three years," Ellenberg tells *CBN*. "So we really wanted to start something in the community. We wanted to do something entrepreneurial and we looked for gaps in the market and luckily this spot opened up back in April. It was a quick turnaround and originally we hoped to open earlier this summer."

Their dream to create a deluxe Euro-styled pie shop right in downtown Bend that elevates pie from a simple nostalgic dessert into an everyday luxury has been realized. Featuring stark minimalist decor in a somewhat acoustically challenged space, Pie Maison is providing a premium pie experience to hungry locals and out-of-town visitors alike. Ellenberg and Bertram recently celebrated their grand opening on August 29 in their fresh location next to The Oxford Hotel in a space previously occupied by their friends who own Brown Bag Popcorn Company.

"We were married in Italy and we go to Europe often," Ellenberg explains on the shop's inspirations. "We really enjoy the

PAGE 8

# Annual 2026 Accomplished under 40

## Celebrating 20 Years of Honoring Young Achievers

**by JEFF MARTIN — CBN President/CEO, Cascade Publications Inc.**

Washington Trust Bank, Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors and *Cascade Business News* are excited to celebrate the 20th Annual Accomplished Under 40, honoring young professionals living in Central Oregon. That's 20 years! For perspective, this year's recipients were either playing for the Oregon Ducks basketball team or probably in K-12 when we awarded the first recipient!

We will hold the awards ceremony tonight, October 7 at The Westwoods event space at the Seventh Mountain Resort in Bend, with a fun mix and mingle, light hors d'oeuvres, a toast and quick awards celebration.

Past award recipients include many well-known community and business leaders, as well as those who tend to fly under the radar. Their common denominator has always been their commitment to community, although the way they choose to give their time is as diverse as the industries they hail from. Please take the time to read this year's recipient profiles starting on page ten.

You can also find recent past recipients on page 18, and the entire list of winners at CascadeBusNews.com/Accomplished-40.

We received over 35 nominations this year — and all are worthy — but we have to limit the number of recipients. Community involvement weighs heavily with the selection committee — age can be a factor — and the decisions are not made easily. Some folks have been nominated several years before becoming a recipient.

Thank you to all the nominators for bringing to light these incredible young people.

Cheers to the class of 2026 and thank you for all you do for Central Oregon and beyond!

*CascadeBusNews.com*

PAGES 10-18

# Nonprofits Face 'Unprecedented' Challenges in Current Funding Environment

**by ANDREA HINE — CBN Feature Writer**

"The situation facing nonprofits in Oregon is unprecedented," said Kara Tachikawa, executive director of MountainStar Family Relief Nursery, who shared these sobering statistics:

- 80% of the state's nonprofits have either already seen funding cuts (62%), or are expecting them in the very near future (18%);
- Those who have seen reductions had an average of 29% eliminated from their annual budgets, and 15% lost more than 50%;
- More than half of the nonprofits that have experienced cuts saw them in more than one type of government grant/contract — including federal, state, and local (county or city).

As one local example, Central Oregon media outlets recently reported that Redemption House Ministries, a Prineville nonprofit that delivers more than 200 food boxes a month to seniors and others in need, had its federal outreach funding cut from $115k to $27k this year — leaving it with less than a quarter of last year's amount.

**'Really Uncertain' Government Funding & 'Surging Community Demand'**

"The current funding environment is really uncertain," said Tachikawa. "And what makes this particularly concerning is that government money has always been the largest piece of the funding pie." (MountainStar, for instance, has historically relied on state government for



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY LA PINE SUNRIVER IS ON TRACK TO DELIVER TEN NEW HOMES IN THE NEXT 18 MONTHS — THE MOST EVER IN ITS HISTORY. SHOWN IS PARK VIEW, THE AFFILIATE'S LATEST DEVELOPMENT | RENDERING COURTESY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF LA PINE SUNRIVER

43% of its financing.)

Adding to the strain of trying to operate with reduced government allocations, nonprofits in Oregon and across the U.S. are also facing surging community demand due to major federal cuts and stricter eligibility rules for Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) — as well as cost-of-living increases that make basic necessities less and less affordable to more and more people.

Bringing that close to home, Oregon is among the least affordable places to live in the U.S., and according to national studies by the Common Sense Institute, costs for a family of four have increased by more than $50k since 2020.

**Foundation Grants — 'Another Hard Edge'**

According to Tachikawa, "Another 'hard edge' is that as federal and state funding is reduced, nonprofits are relying

PAGE 20



PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BEND OR
PERMIT NO 473

Cascade Business News
PO Box 53
Bend, Oregon 97709
541/388-5665

FOR LEASE

SPACE AVAILABLE IN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

New construction ready for occupancy!

20723 Brinson Blvd
Ste 110

7,759 SF, 1 SUITE

- Two 14' roll up doors
- 6,319 SF of fully insulated and heated warehouse space
- 1,440 SF of heated/cooled, two-story office space
- 3 restrooms, work areas, break room, office
- Free span roof
- Clear height 20' - 24'
- 3 phase 200 amp electrical



Strong fit for service businesses, contractors, trades, distribution users,
or other light industrial operators looking for a clean and efficient Bend location.



ANGIE MOMBERT
Principal Broker
541.408.3543
angie.mombert@remax.net

42 NW Greenwood Avenue, Bend 541.728.0033
info@rmkporegon.com www.keypropertiesoregon.com

RE/MAX COMMERCIAL

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Business & Industry ..... 2
Hot News ..... 3
City Desk ..... 4
Accomplished Under 40..... 10
Nonprofit Charitable & Advocacy Groups ..... 19
Accounting & Bookkeeping Services..... 30
Accounting Firms..... 30
Who's Who ..... 34
Healthy Communities..... 36
Business Calendar..... 37
Building Permits ..... 37
Town & Country ..... 39

CASCADE cbn BUSINESS NEWS

A Division of Cascade Publications Inc.

Opinions expressed by contributing writers and guest columnists do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher and/or editorial board. Questions and comments about a particular article should be addressed to the individual contributor. Letters to the Editor will be accepted and possibly printed if signed by the writer. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited without written permission.

*CBN* is published the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

Subscriptions are $40 for one year ($50 for out of tri-county).
*CBN* is a division of Cascade Publications Inc.
which also publishes the monthly
*Cascade Arts & Entertainment* magazine, *Book of Lists* and *Sunriver Magazine*.
Locally owned and operated since 1994.

PO Box 53, Bend, Oregon 97709
541-388-5665
CascadeBusNews.com
Send press releases/photos to cbn@cascadebusnews.com

## CONTRIBUTORS

MAT HUNNICUTT ..... 5
JIM DARCEY ..... 6
CHRISTY LAWRENCE ..... 7
JAMES ERICKSON ..... 9
GIA HARTMEIER ..... 20
EVA GILL ..... 22
MOUNTAINSTAR FAMILY RELIEF NURSERY ..... 24
MEGAN KANTRIM ..... 24
MONICA ELSOM ..... 25
BRIDGET McGINN ..... 26
MARY PAULSON ..... 26
JON BAKER ..... 27
TYLER CARSKADON ..... 27
LYNNE OUCHIDA ..... 28
KRISTIN RODRIGUEZ ..... 29
KIM BEELER ..... 29
KRYSTA SMITH ..... 31
MICHAEL CHO ..... 33
GEORELL BRACELIN ..... 36
NOEL JAVIER ..... 36

## PRODUCERS

Founder ..... Pamela Hulse Andrews
President/CEO ..... Jeff Martin
Editor/Production Director/
Feature Writer ..... Marcee Hillman Moeggenberg
Content Proofreader ..... Emma Carpenter
Feature Writer/
Online Newsletter Editor ..... Leah Etling
Feature Writer ..... Andrea Hine
Feature Writer ..... Simon Mather
Feature Writer ..... Noah Nelson
Feature Writer ..... Jeff Spry
Distribution ..... David Hill

## Varsity Real Estate Relocates to Kiln in Bend's Old Mill District

Varsity Real Estate has relocated its headquarters to Kiln, located at 501 SW Hill St. in Bend's Old Mill District. The move, effective September 1, 2026, reflects the brokerage's continued expansion and commitment to providing an elevated professional environment for its agents and support teams.

Varsity Real Estate has experienced steady growth over the past year, expanding its roster of agents and teams across Central Oregon. The

Continued on Page 38 ▶

## Apply now for a Fall Fuel Reduction Grant in Deschutes County

Deschutes County Natural Resources is accepting applications for the 2026 Fall Fuel Reduction Grant Program. The county has allocated $50,000 to support projects that reduce wildfire risk in communities across Deschutes County.

Fuel Reduction grants help communities complete short-term projects that remove vegetation that can fuel wildfires and improve defensible space around homes and other buildings.

Preference will be given to

Continued on Page 38 ▶




## COCC Generates $349 Million in Annual Economic Impact for Central Oregon

Central Oregon Community College contributes $349.2 million in added income to the Central Oregon economy each year and supports 4,136 regional jobs — equivalent to approximately one out of every 41 jobs in the region — according to a new independent economic impact study conducted by Lightcast.

The study examined COCC's economic impact and return on investment using fiscal year 2023-24 data. It found that the

Continued on Page 37 ▶

## Bend Chamber Partners with Moda Health to Continue Association Health Plan for Oregon Employers

The Bend Chamber of Commerce announced that Moda Health will become the primary medical carrier for the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan, continuing an important group health insurance option for eligible employers across Oregon.

Beginning October 1, 2026, Moda Health will provide medical coverage for new enrollments in the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan. The transition

Continued on Page 38 ▶

## Olde Towne Pizza Company Serves Up a New Chapter Under New Ownership in Bend

Olde Towne Pizza Company, a beloved fixture in the local dining community, is proud to announce it is officially operating under new ownership. Local entrepreneurs Kathy Degree and Shannah Werner have stepped in to lead the long-standing downtown pizzeria, bringing a renewed energy, a commitment to scratch-made quality, support for local youth sports and an elevated community experience while

Continued on Page 38 ▶

## Central Oregon's Innovation Community Comes Together for Fourth Annual High Desert Innovation Week

Central Oregon's entrepreneurial community will take center stage this fall as Bend hosts the fourth annual High Desert Innovation Week, October 13-16. The four-day celebration brings together entrepreneurs, investors, students, and community partners for a series of events highlighting the people, ideas and industries shaping the region's future.

High Desert Innovation Week is organized by community-building

Continued on Page 38 ▶



# Business & Industry




## DESCHUTES COUNTY

♦ Deschutes County Solid Waste will host free household hazardous waste collection events in La Pine, Sisters and Redmond in October.

Residents can safely drop off accepted household hazardous waste items during the following one-day events:

**La Pine:**
South County Services
Center parking lot
51340 U.S. Highway 97
Sunday, October 4, 9am-1pm

**Sisters:**
Sisters Recycling Center
328 Sisters Park Drive
Sunday, October 11, 9am-1pm

**Redmond:**
Negus Transfer Station
2400 NE Maple Ave.
Sunday, October 18, 9am-2pm

Accepted items include oil and latex paints and stains, thinners, solvents, fuels, oil-soaked rags and absorbents in non-returnable containers, pool and spa chemicals, garden products, including herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers, vehicle fluids, including coolants, lubricants, fuels, brake fluid and transmission fluid, barbecue grill-size propane tanks and camp stove cylinders, aerosols, including paints, garden sprays and cleaners, mercury and mercury-containing items, including thermometers and thermostats, fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent bulbs, rechargeable batteries and household cleaners.

Items not accepted include business-generated hazardous waste, medical waste, explosives, fireworks and ammunition, compressed gas cylinders, except propane tanks and camp stove cylinders and containers larger than five gallons.

Household hazardous waste is accepted free of charge at the Knott Landfill every Friday and Saturday from 9am-3pm. The Household Hazardous Waste drop-off area is near the recycling drop-off area at the landfill. The facility is located at 61050 SE 27th St. in Bend.

## BEND

♦ The City of Bend is beginning its 20-year growth plan, Bend Made. Bend Made is the City of Bend's plan for the next 20 years, guiding how the city grows with intention and purpose. The plan coordinates housing, infrastructure and jobs as one system, so where we live, how we get around and how we make a living all grow together. Oregon requires cities to plan for future growth. Bend Made is how our community chooses to do it—shaped by the people who live here, now and for decades to come. It's our time to connect, imagine and decide who Bend becomes—together.

Community involvement is built into every step. With the launch of Bend Made, the City is using a community engagement tool called Social Point to collect information and feedback from the community.

Social Point is a site that offers a variety of participation methods, including surveys, questions and interactive maps. All feedback will be recorded as part of the project. The site can be accessed through the City's Bend Made webpage, bendoregon.gov/bendmade.

There is already a survey available to get involved in planning Bend's future. The Housing Needs Survey provides an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on housing experiences and better understand the needs of community members living in Bend.

♦ The City of Bend is hosting a neighborhood Roundtable with the Bend City Council and three neighborhood districts in the southwest area of town to discuss growth, infrastructure projects, complete neighborhoods and other topics relevant to southwest Bend.

The roundtable will take place October 12, 2026, from 5:30-7:30pm at Oregon State University-Cascades in Edward J. Ray Hall located at 1500 SW Chandler Ave. in Bend.

While this meeting will focus on the southwest area of town, all community members are welcome to attend.

The evening will begin with a brief presentation from City staff, followed by a roundtable discussion featuring City Council members and representatives from the Southwest Bend, Century West, and Southern Crossing Neighborhood Districts. After the discussion, attendees will have the opportunity to connect with staff, ask questions, and learn more about current and upcoming projects.

♦ Community members are invited to an open house on Thursday, October 8, 6-8pm at Pilot Butte Middle School in Bend. The event will include information on the proposed upgrades of four intersections, two on Olney Avenue and two on Revere Avenue.

Stop by to meet the project team and learn about proposed concept designs intended to enhance traffic flow, improve safety and strengthen connectivity for people traveling through the area. The project focuses on four key intersections: Olney Avenue and Eighth Street, Olney Avenue and Fourth Street, Revere Avenue and Eighth Street and Revere Avenue and Fourth Street. Proposed improvements include new roundabouts or traffic signals at each intersection, as well as replacement of aging waterlines where needed.

Participate in-person or online and provide input on your priorities for traveling in this area. The online option is available October 8-22 at bendoregon.gov/olneyrevere4.

The four intersections are important connections for residents and visitors traveling to schools, medical centers, neighborhoods, parks and other destinations. The Bend Transportation System Plan identifies these intersections as priority improvements that support a more integrated transportation network, helping people move more safely and efficiently throughout the community. This project is funded in part through the voter-approved 2020 Transportation GO Bond.

♦ Applications are now open for the City of Bend Community Advisory bodies. Community committees, boards and commissions are a great way to get involved with local government. The City has several Council-appointed advisory groups that make recommendations to City Council and/or City administrative staff. Applications are being accepted for the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, the Core Area Advisory Board, the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Environment and Climate Committee, the Human Rights & Equity Commission, the Landmarks Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Transportation and Mobility Advisory Committee.

Advisory body members are eligible for a stipend ($40/meeting, not to exceed $500/year) to help lower barriers to participation. Applications are due on October 30, 2026, at 5pm.

The community advisory groups accepting applications are:

- **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee**
  Contact Racheal Baker, Housing Division Manager, at 5541-323-8550 or rbaker@bendoregon.gov.
- **Core Area Advisory Board**
  Contact Jonathan Taylor, Urban Renewal Project Manager, at 5541-322-6332 or jtaylor@bendoregon.gov.
- **City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee**
  Contact Cassandra Kehoe, Equity & Inclusion Manager, at 541-693-2141 or ckehoe@bendoregon.gov.
- **Environment and Climate Committee**
  Contact Cassie Lacy, Senior Management Analyst, at 541-323-8587 or clacy@bendoregon.gov.
- **Human Rights and Equity Commission**
  Contact Mellissa Kamanya, Community Partnerships Specialist, at 541-382-5615, or mkamanya@bendoregon.gov.
- **Landmarks Commission**
  Contact Heidi Kennedy, Senior Planner, at 541-617-4524 or hkennedy@bendoregon.gov
- **Planning Commission**
  Contact Renee Brooke, Planning Manager, at 541-330-4008, or rbrooke@bendoregon.gov.
- **Transportation and Mobility Advisory Committee**
  Contact Janet Hruby, Assistant City Engineer, at 541-306-1083, jhruby@bendoregon.gov.

The City of Bend offers a stipend program for City advisory board, committee and commission voting members who choose to participate. The intent is to expand opportunities for community members to connect with the City and lower barriers to engagement. The program will provide members of City advisory boards, committees and commissions with a stipend of $40 per meeting, not to exceed $500 per person annually. This stipend covers assumed costs of volunteering on an advisory group such as travel, parking, stable internet connection and other expenses. Please note that non-voting members, alternate members, Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization and Budget Committee members are not eligible for the stipend.

To learn more and apply for a committee, visit bendoregon.gov/committees. For additional information on the Advisory Body Stipend Program visit bit.ly/4hALlrR.



# Sitting on a Big Gain?

## Opportunity Zones 2.0 May Change Your Tax Math

**by MAT HUNNICUTT, Partner — True Wealth Group**



Most tax incentives reward what you earn. Opportunity Zones reward what you do next.

If you are thinking about selling appreciated real estate, company stock, or a stake in a business, the Opportunity Zone program offers a way to reinvest that gain in communities that need capital, with meaningful tax benefits for patient investors. Congress made the program permanent in 2025 and rebuilt its core rules, effective January 1, 2027. Rural communities, including much of Central Oregon, come out ahead.

**What Changes in 2027**

An Opportunity Zone is a designated low-income census tract. Investors reach these zones through Qualified Opportunity Funds, which invest in real estate and operating businesses inside them.

For investments made after December 31, 2026, tax on the original gain may be deferred until you sell or five years from the date you invest, whichever comes first. Hold for five years, and ten percent of the deferred gain is excluded from tax. Hold for at least ten years, and the fund's own appreciation may be excluded entirely, up to a new 30-year limit. The zone map will be redrawn every ten years under stricter standards, and funds face new annual reporting requirements with penalties for noncompliance.

**How It Works in Practice**

Say you sell a rental property and realize a $500,000 gain. You generally have 180 days from the sale to invest that gain into a Qualified Opportunity Fund. Only the gain needs to be reinvested. You then elect deferral on your tax return for that year.

Five years later, the deferred gain comes due. In a standard fund, ten percent is excluded, so you would owe tax on $450,000. In a qualified rural fund, 30 percent is excluded, so you would owe tax on $350,000. Plan for that bill from day one, since your money will still be invested. If you hold for ten years or more, any growth in the fund itself may be free of federal capital gains tax when you sell.

**Why Rural Central Oregon Stands Out**

Rural areas are generally defined as places outside cities of more than 50,000 people and their surrounding urbanized areas. In our region, that may include much of Crook and Jefferson counties and parts of Deschutes County beyond Bend.

Beyond the larger 30 percent benefit, renovation projects in rural zones only need improvements equal to 50 percent of the building's basis, rather than doubling it. That could make main street buildings and workforce housing in our smaller towns more practical to finance. Operating businesses can qualify too, if enough of their property, employees, and income are in a zone.

**Finding and Evaluating a Fund**

There is no government-approved list of Opportunity Funds. Funds certify themselves with the IRS, which makes your own due diligence essential. Most are offered as private placements, often limited to accredited investors, and are typically found through fund sponsors, CPAs, and industry directories.

Before committing, ask whether the fund's properties are confirmed to be in a qualifying 2027 zone, what experience the sponsor has with similar projects, what it charges, and how and when it expects to exit. Opportunity Fund investments are generally illiquid, often concentrated in a single project, and carry real business and real estate risk. Rural projects can add smaller markets and fewer experienced sponsors to that list.

**A Note for Current Investors**

If you invested under the original rules, your deferred gain becomes taxable on December 31, 2026, whether or not you sell. If you realize a new gain late this year, the 180-day window may allow you to invest in early 2027 under the new rules.

**Investing Where We Live**

Opportunity Zones 2.0 is a more predictable and durable program, and it may be especially meaningful for rural Central Oregon. Used thoughtfully, it can align your tax strategy with investment in the communities we call home. If you have questions about how Opportunity Zones might fit into your plans, we would love to have that conversation.

*Advisory Services offered through Skyliner Wealth, LLC dba True Wealth Group, a registered investment advisor. Skyliner Wealth, LLC does not offer or recommend Opportunity Zone funds. Please consult your CPA and/or attorney before investing in any fund.*

*mytruewealthgroup.com*



YOUR BOOKS MAY BE ACCURATE.
BUT ARE THEY HELPING YOU MAKE BETTER DECISIONS?

Most bookkeeping tells you what already happened.
That's useful at tax time but it doesn't tell you:

- Which work is making money.
- Where profit is disappearing.
- Whether you can afford your next hire.
- Or why sales are growing while cash still feels tight.

I know that feeling.
I grew a business to $2.2 million, managed 15 employees, and eventually sold it. Even with accurate accounting, I couldn't always tell where the money was going or how to make the 'right' decision.

That's why I created a different kind of bookkeeping firm.
We keep your books accurate, then help you use the numbers to decide what to do next.



Amanda Bedell
Founder | Former $2.2M Business Owner

BEDELL-COMSTOCK
Bookkeeping & Tax Services

Decision-built bookkeeping for business owners who want their hard work to pay off.

RESULTS HAVE INCLUDED:
Examples from prior client engagements. Results vary.

$57,000
in additional profit identified in 30 days

$1.2 million
in labor savings uncovered in 10 weeks.

HERE'S MY OFFER:
If your business generates $600,000 or more annually, your first three months of bookkeeping are free.

Start with a complimentary Financial Clarity Review. We'll use your numbers to identify opportunities to improve profit and cash flow before you commit to ongoing services.

Stop guessing where your money went. Start making decisions with numbers you can trust.

SCAN TO CLAIM YOUR OFFER.

bedellcomstockbookkeeping.com

# Could a Thousand Years of Collective Business Experience Be Valuable To You?

**by JIM DARCEY, Chapter Chair — SCORE Central Oregon**



It just might be! And it is available to anyone free of charge. That might sound exaggerated, but read on.

Our SCORE chapter, headquartered in Central Oregon, has about 50 volunteer business mentors on our team. All are people who have either run their own businesses or been in management/leadership situations in business organizations, including both men and women, and most are retired or semi-retired and thus have extensive experience. The average career is over 20 years, so considering that our team has a thousand years of collective experience is real and probably a conservative estimate.

How might this translate to helping you?

Are you starting a business venture, or have an already up-and-running small business and want to grow it and improve profitability and efficiency?

Starting and growing a business can be daunting. What do you work on first? What are the priorities? Got a business up and running but need to hone the marketing to increase sales? Got a good plan in place to grow? Are you clearly aware of the "SWOT" elements (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) that would pertain to your business?

These are some of the areas for which the support and engagement of a mentor can be a very valuable asset to you as an entrepreneur. They can "overlay" their experience onto your business situation and use that to assist you, along with using the many educational tools that are part of the SCORE program. The common thread among all mentors is the interest and desire to share their knowledge and help entrepreneurs.

Mentors help point you in the right direction, asking pertinent questions and steering you to the best resources to help you move forward. Unlike a "consultant," a mentor won't tell you what decisions to make but present the facts as they are and guide you to come to your own conclusions.

Chances are you have friends and/or family who have ideas and input regarding your business. While that can be useful, the difference with a mentor is there can be much more "objectivity," and that can be very helpful. Mentors working with SCORE are also bound by a strict code of ethics that includes complete confidentiality. Besides all that, SCORE mentoring is always completely free of charge.

In the last year, our local chapter has fulfilled well over 500 mentoring requests. Statistics show that aspiring or established entrepreneurs who work with SCORE mentors start businesses, create jobs, and increase revenue. Working with a mentor has been shown to significantly increase the rate of success in businesses, as opposed to "going it alone."

Of course, the core outcome results from the help provided.

Here are a few of the many comments and feedback we receive from those who have received mentoring:

"My mentor is so knowledgeable and encouraging, but also with common sense recommendations that I appreciate."

"As I continue to build the foundation of my business, I know my mentor will be able to guide me with solid advice. I believe this is critical to my success."

"My mentor is very knowledgeable, personable and supportive. I felt like I had a successful future ahead and that it was attainable. I haven't felt this optimistic in ages."

"She listened to my needs, gave tangible action-oriented advice, was very personable and knowledgeable, and was just generally enjoyable to connect with."

The local SCORE chapter is holding an open house "Move Your Business Forward" event on October 21 at the Deschutes Central Library starting at 5:30pm. There will be an opportunity to get a further overview of how mentoring works and learn more about the extensive free SCORE business education opportunities. Members of our mentor team will be there to meet with you personally and answer questions as well. See the ad in this edition of *CBN* to get registration information.

To take advantage of this support available to you as an entrepreneur — either with a startup business or one already up and running — mentoring can be requested by going to the SCORE website. In addition, if you have the extensive business experience noted above and would like to join our team and "give back" as a volunteer, you can also learn about that opportunity on our website.

*centraloregon.score.org*



# You Keep Fixing Problems — Why Is Your Business Still Stuck?

**by CHRISTY LAWRENCE, Founder — Mighty Growth**



My very first client hired me to help them close more deals.

They were an established independent insurance brokerage with a strong reputation, the kind of firm that won its community's People's Choice award year after year. When sales flattened, the diagnosis seemed obvious: the team needed to get better at closing.

A few weeks in, it was clear they didn't have a closing problem. They had an opening problem.

When a warm lead came through the door, the team closed it. What they weren't doing was starting conversations. No one was proactively reaching out, following up or creating new opportunities. They were waiting for business to come to them, and it was coming less often.

Closing training would have made them better at something they already did well. Instead, we built systems and skills around starting new conversations, and sales improved.

I see versions of this all the time. Owners know something isn't working, so they go after the problem they can see: sales are down, employees aren't taking ownership, projects are running behind, margins are shrinking or the owner is working too much.

Those problems are real. But they're often symptoms of a bottleneck somewhere else.

**Why the Same Problems Keep Coming Back**

Running a small business can feel like fighting a wildfire. Every week there's a new spot fire. You contain one, turn around and another flares up.

A client is upset. A deadline slips. A deal falls through. An employee quits.

So you fix it. Three months later, something remarkably similar happens.

When the same kinds of problems keep coming back, "How do we fix this?" is the wrong question. The better question is: **What is creating this problem?**

That question leads somewhere very different.

A professional services firm I work with recently came into a meeting with a pressing problem. Work was stacking up, the team was falling behind and a major deadline was days away.

Why?

The first answers were reasonable. Labor Day fell late. Clients were slow to send information. Someone had been out.

All true. And none of it was in their control.

So we kept asking. Why did a few disruptions put the deadline at risk? Because the firm had no plan for the six weeks leading up to a major deadline.

Why not? Because the owner assumed the team was approaching deadlines the same way she was, but there were no written expectations or plans. The problem wasn't a bad week. It was a missing system.

It's easier to adjust a system than it is to adjust misaligned expectations.

**Ask Why Until the Answer Changes**

Asking "why" at least three times is one of the simplest ways to find a bottleneck. The first answer is usually what happened. By the third, you're usually looking at why it keeps happening.

*Sales are down.*

Why? *We aren't getting enough leads.*

Why? *Almost all our business comes from referrals, and we don't have another reliable way to create opportunities.*

Now you have something to work with.

Two more questions help.

**Have we solved this before?** If you keep having another hiring problem, another slow quarter, another missed deadline or another stretch where everything lands back on the owner, there's likely a larger constraint underneath.

**If we fixed this tomorrow, what still wouldn't work?** If fixing the problem in front of you wouldn't change the trajectory of the business, keep looking.

**What's Actually Holding Your Business Back?**

At any given time, most businesses have one or two constraints with an outsized effect on growth: lead generation, sales, capacity, hiring, leadership, process or a business that still depends too heavily on the owner.

The hard part is knowing which one deserves your attention now.

That's the work of "Find Your Growth Bottleneck," a free 90-minute lunch workshop I'm hosting Thursday, October 29, at the Mighty Growth Studio, 115 NW Oregon Ave., Suite 17, in Bend. Instead of leaving with another long list of things you should be doing, you'll work through your own business, name the bottleneck most likely limiting your growth and leave with a clear place to start. Seating is limited to eight. Register at mightygrowth.biz.

You probably don't need more things to work on. You need to know which one matters most.

*Christy Lawrence is the founder of Mighty Growth, a Bend-based business development advisory firm for owner-led companies. Reach her at christy@mightygrowth.biz.*


# Health insurance that works for your business.



## Take care of your team with group health insurance through the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan.

Whether you're reviewing current benefits or offering coverage for the first time, it helps to know your options.

The Bend Chamber Association Health Plan connects eligible businesses with group medical coverage through Moda Health as the primary medical carrier. Work with a local insurance agent to compare coverage and costs—and find coverage that works for your business and your employees.

**Not a Bend Chamber member? Ask about joining to get started.**

**Moda Health is an option for Bend businesses.**

Moda's changes to individual insurance plans are separate from the employer group coverage available through the Bend Chamber.

**Call us today to learn more.**



**Shelley Junker**, Membership Manager
shelley@bendchamber.org
541.598.5275

Scan to explore plan options, eligibility and local insurance agents.

BEND CHAMBER | moda HEALTH

Bend Chamber membership required. Coverage is subject to employer and employee eligibility, participation and contribution requirements.

# Kiln Fires Up Grand Opening Party

**by SIMON MATHER — CBN Feature Writer**



(L-R) THE KILN BEND TEAM: AMALIE ZINSSER, EMILY RIECHEL, SYDNEY RAPP, ABBY SCOTT AND JULI SOMERS



KILN BEND MEMBERS



PHOTOS | BY HANNAH TURNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Kiln — Bend's new 42,000-square-foot flexible co-working space in the Old Mill District — threw a Grand Opening Celebration recently, with some 400 attendees enjoying live music, local food, drinks and an energetic party atmosphere.

Guests were also given the opportunity to tour the state-of-the-art facility, which features fully furnished private offices, open and resident desks, conference rooms and content creation studios — complemented by lifestyle amenities including a theater, refresh rooms, wellness zones and vibrant communal lounges "designed to foster connection and creativity".

The Bend location, which underwent an extensive creative transformation of the former Ibex Global call center headquarters, sits on 4.6 acres, boasting a 150-space parking lot and convenient access off the Bond & Wilson roundabout.

The new hub is already emerging as a key anchor among the Old Mill District's diverse mix of businesses, restaurants and entertainment venues. "The response from the Central Oregon community so far has been fantastic!" Kiln Bend Community Manager Juli Somers said. "We have a variety of industries and more moving in every month, with a lot of companies making use of the flexible membership term, starting month-to-month."

Company leaders say that by blending workspace, wellness and community under one roof, Kiln seeks to reimagine the workday experience for entrepreneurs, remote workers, small businesses and enterprise teams alike.

The company already has numerous locations across the Western U.S., and each Kiln location is uniquely designed to reflect the energy and culture of its host city, while offering access to a broader network of professionals and resources.

Membership programs allow participants to use any facility within the group and various membership tier options are available, depending on individual needs.

The concept is designed to support teams of all sizes, from solo professionals to large enterprises, all complemented by front desk services, stocked kitchens, 24/7 access, mail services and month-to-month flexibility.

A variety of spaces are also available for booking meeting rooms and hosting private events.

*kiln.com*

## Pie Maison

*Continued from page 1*

European lifestyle of community, fresh ingredients, sitting down enjoying a meal, having a place to gather, and not the rush of it. We're one for sourcing things locally, so we have Hood River Marionberries, we hand-juice and hand-zest our lemons every morning. I don't use seed oil in my butter crust. It's a pate brisse butter crust, which is French, and it's a flaky all-butter crust. Everything from the ingredients to the interiors of the store with the herringbone floors and the walnut, we wanted to create a very different environment for Bend and make you feel like you're sitting down and having a treat for yourself."

Their specialty menu currently offers five staple pies: Marionberry Streusel, S'Mores, Cookies and Cream, Lemon Meringue, and a gluten-free Marionberry Streusel. A rotating menu of seasonal favorites for the holidays will be available and are already being set up for pre-orders.

"People are certainly really raving about our pies and the quality of them and how delicious they are and the variety of our flavors," Bertram adds. "There's something for everyone. We get people that want a more traditional pie who go for the Marionberry and there's people who are chocolate lovers and they'll go for the S'Mores pie. We've already had people wanting to order for birthdays and celebrations and Thanksgiving, so that's been really fantastic."

Their fall flavors are already hitting the counter this week that will bolster their lineup with Pumpkin, Pumpkin Spiced Latte, and a Pecan and a Salted Caramel Apple Pie coming later.

Pie Maison is located at 920 NW Bond St., #106, in Bend and is open 1-9pm Tuesday-Saturday. For by-the-slice or whole pie prices, ordering or more info please call or visit them online.

*piemaison.com • 541-241-8719*



(L-R) AMY BERTRAM AND BRITTANY ELLENBERG | PHOTO BY ANDREW BAYDA

NIGHTLY BUSINESS PATROLS

98.45% CLIENT RETENTION RATE



OREGON DPSST # 858

Security PROS INCORPORATED
Certified Security Professionals
1994 Celebrating 32 Years 2026

541-330-0404
info@securityprosbend.com
securityprosbend.com

Outboards • Inboards
Jets • Drives • Electrical

Mike's Marine

541.639.1099

56 Years of Personal Service

MERCURY MerCruiser
YAMAHA
HamiltonJet

Mike Sullivan
bendboating@gmail.com
332 Barclay Drive, Sisters, OR 97759

FREE E-Headlines



Sent Directly to Your Email
To Receive, Send Your Email to:
CBN@CascadeBusNews.com
CASCADE BUSINESSNEWS



ASK THE EXPERTS AT COCC



# AI Might Assist, But You're the Boss

by Expert JAMES ERICKSON — Central Oregon Community College

## Question

**I keep hearing that AI can help my small business save time, improve marketing and make it easier to get things done. But how do I know what I should actually be using AI for?**

**A:** Thanks for this question. Artificial Intelligence, or AI, has become the latest trend and has found many applications in small business and beyond. You can use AI as a tool to make your business more efficient, but ultimately your judgement, personality and relationships should stay the center of your business.

Four things to consider:

**1. Use AI where it makes sense.** AI is a tool, much like a hammer. Sometimes you need it, sometimes you need a screwdriver. In business, you might need a spreadsheet, template or even an in-person conversation, and sometimes you'll find it more efficient to use an AI tool. But just because AI can do something, doesn't mean it should. Before using AI, ask "What specific problem am I trying to solve, and does this problem need AI?"

**2. Don't let AI replace your personality.** One of the great things about small business is the personal connection customers have with you. Your voice, experience, relationships and personality are a big part of what makes your business unique. AI can produce the polished and professional content, but polished is not necessarily the same as authentic.

Use AI to generate first drafts or to complete an outline or simple design layout, then add your own extra touches and judgement to make it uniquely your brand and message. Before you hit send, print or publish, always ask "Does this sound/look like us?"

**3. Better input = better output.** AI can and will do whatever it is told to the best of its ability, but it isn't a mind reader. Instead of prompting with "write a marketing email," try something specific. Here's an example:

"Write an email to my current 40-year-old female customers to promote a fall sale. Keep the tone friendly and simple. Also keep it under 250 words, and have a clear call to action of 'visit our website.' Use this past email as a guide [pasting in your selected email], optimize for readability and click-through rate."

Think of it in terms of giving a project to an employee. Vague instructions will lead to vague results. The more information, the more refined the project will be.

**4. Trust, but verify.** Confidence is AI's strong suit — even when it's wrong. Verify facts, figures and other important information before acting on them, especially when legal, financial or customer-sensitive issues are involved. You are the one who provides direction and will ultimately be held accountable for whatever actions you take. In other words, AI doesn't have "skin in the game." You do.

Central Oregon Community College's Small Business Development Center offers free, confidential professional business advising and a variety of low-cost courses to help entrepreneurs through the business lifecycle: cocc.edu/sbdc.

**About the Expert:**

James Erickson is a business adviser with COCC's Small Business Development Center. An entrepreneur with more than 20 years of experience building and operating businesses, he founded, bootstrapped and grew StrideBox, a subscription company, from startup to more than $3 million in revenue. He also owned and operated a marketing agency. A Marine Corps veteran, Erickson holds a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Oregon State University.

*cocc.edu/sbdc*



Hearthstone at Redmond Ranch

STARTING AT $364,990

- Attached townhomes with enhanced exterior packages
- Low-maintenance lifestyle with close access to parks & trails
- Affordable Redmond living



Parkside Place

STARTING AT $399,999

- Offering single-family and attached townhome living
- Low-maintenance lifestyle
- Affordable new construction homes in Bend
- In district for new Bend Senior High School

Visit Our Website for More Information
Hayden-Homes.com

HAYDEN HOMES

OR CCB 172526

# 2026 Accomplished 40 & Under Award Recipients



**Kaitlin Baker**
*Architect*
**SĀJ Architecture**

**Professional Accomplishments:**
Kaitlin has worked in the architecture field since 2022 and earned her license just two years into her career. Her experience includes K-12 schools and commercial projects throughout Oregon and Ohio. As an undergraduate, Kaitlin participated in academic research related to cancer treatment, becoming a published study coauthor. Her understanding of scientific research made Kaitlin an obvious fit to coordinate SĀJ Architecture's building-performance research, including post-occupancy surveys and analysis. She also has a specialized interest in building envelope detailing and energy compliance.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**
Kaitlin moved from Ohio to Central Oregon in 2022. It was important for her to get involved in her new community. Since being here, she has become a core member and event organizer of Central Oregon Women in Construction (COWIC). COWIC aims to connect women who work in the architecture, engineering, and construction fields in the region. As a volunteer, Kaitlin has organized the group's mentorship program, which offers support for emerging AEC professionals. She also helps setting up events through AIA Oregon's Bend Section. As well as volunteering her time at Habitat for Humanity builds and Central Oregon Trail Alliance events.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**
Kaitlin holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Master of Architecture from The Ohio State University, allowing her to balance the art and science of building design. She's driven in both her professional development and her project delivery. She is quick to offer a helping hand and is eager to tackle challenges, especially ones out of her comfort zone. Kaitlin strives to continuously learn and improve in and outside her profession.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**
Kaitlin believes communication is the foundation of successful leadership, and that great leaders are clear, concise, caring, and consistent in the way they share information and motivate teams. From her short time at SĀJ Architecture, she has been inspired by the communication and transparency the firm has provided.



**Emily Boyd**
*Government Affairs Manager*
**Bend Chamber**

**Professional Accomplishments:**
Emily brings more than a decade of experience spanning public policy, political campaigns, nonprofit and community work, communications, event production and the private sector to her role as government affairs manager at the Bend Chamber. Her career began in legislative affairs, tracking and translating policy developments across all 50 states and Congress, and has included national political advance work, community-based training and advocacy, private-sector roles, and entrepreneurship.

At the Bend Chamber, Emily leads public policy and advocacy efforts, serving as a connector between Bend's business community and policymakers at the local, regional and state levels. She helps shape the Chamber's legislative agenda, analyzes policy issues affecting the regional business climate, develops testimony and policy positions, launched and authors the Chamber's Advocacy in Action newsletter, and translates complicated issues into information businesses can understand and act on. She also manages the Chamber's Advocacy Council and leads advocacy programming that creates opportunities for businesses, elected officials and community leaders to engage directly with one another.

Emily's career has also given her a front-row seat to politics at nearly every level. She has worked on congressional campaigns, trained prospective candidates and campaign leaders, and led national political events. She is also the founder of Wield Co., a small business created to help independent authors build sustainable careers through public relations, events and brand management - an experience that has strengthened both her entrepreneurial spirit and her appreciation for what it takes to build and operate something of your own.

A proud CU Boulder graduate, Emily completed her undergraduate degree in just three years, an early reflection of the curiosity, ambition and eagerness to stretch beyond her comfort zone that has continued throughout her career.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**
Emily's work is rooted in the belief that strong communities are built through relationships and collaboration. Through the Bend Chamber, she works with businesses, nonprofits, public agencies and elected leaders on issues central to Central Oregon's economic future, including housing, childcare, infrastructure, workforce development and the overall cost and predictability of doing business.

Across her experiences, Emily has been most energized by work that connects people who might not otherwise find themselves at the same table and creates space for productive conversation about complicated issues.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguish Them from Their Peers:**
Emily has the unique ability to be both politically astute and deeply human. She is curious and warm, listens before advocating, and looks for common ground without avoiding hard conversations. She pairs thoughtful analysis with authentic relationships, bringing humility, strong instincts, and a genuine willingness to learn and grow professionally.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**
Emily believes good advocacy starts with listening. She approaches policy and partnerships with curiosity, preparation, respect, and a solution-oriented mindset. Her goal isn't simply to make the strongest argument in the room, but to understand what is driving different perspectives, identify areas of common ground, and help move conversations toward practical solutions.

Ultimately, Emily sees advocacy as a form of relationship-building. Whether she is working with a small-business owner, community partner, policymaker or colleague, she wants people to feel heard and respected, even when they disagree. Her goal is to build trust across differing viewpoints and connect public policy decisions to the real experiences of businesses, workers, and communities.

Continued on Next Page ▶

Congratulations
to Lindsey Maguire
and Kaitlin Baker:
CBN Accomplished Under 40!

At SĀJ Architecture, we know great design starts with great people. Lindsey and Kaitlin are dedicated to our community, clients, and profession, and we are thankful to have them as a part of our team.



LINDSEY MAGUIRE
AIA, NCARB
Project Architect



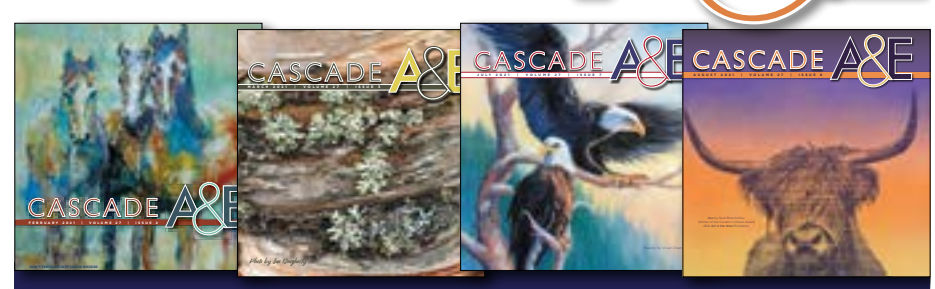
KAITLIN BAKER
AIA, NCARB
Architect

/sāj/
Architecture

BEND + PORTLAND
(541) 330-6506 | saj-architecture.com
info@saj-arch.com

SĀJ Architecture is a certified
AIA Oregon Emerging Professional Friendly Firm.

CASCADE A&E
MAGAZINE



Dedicated to Arts & Culture in Central Oregon
541-388-5665 • CascadeAE.com

# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from previous page*



**Odessa Cleavenger**
*Project Architect*
**BBT Architects**

**Professional Accomplishments:**
Odessa became a licensed architect in 2026, earning licensure in under six years, well ahead of the 12-year national average. Over the past three years, she has shown strong technical growth and leadership, supporting interior design for BSHS Phase 1 and leading exterior design and structural coordination for Phases 2 and 3.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**
Born and raised in Bend, Odessa gives back through Habitat for Humanity and BBT's MLK Day of Service, embracing a "full circle" connection to the place she calls home.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**
Odessa stands out for her quiet determination and humility. An accomplished runner who continually seeks new challenges, even qualifying for the Boston Marathon this year while supporting a friend training. This steady drive mirrors her professional work ethic, revealing a teammate who pushes herself while lifting others through consistency and care.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**
She leads with a human centered design approach, translating diverse stakeholder and community input into clear spatial ideas and actionable solutions. A thoughtful decision-maker, she weighs options and downstream impacts carefully. As a visual storyteller, she uses drawings, diagrams, and renderings to communicate design and guide confident decision-making.



**Katie Darquea**
*Marketing & Creative Director*
**Broken Top Brands**

**Professional Accomplishments:**
As Marketing & Creative Director for Broken Top Brands, Katie Darquea leads a team of three while managing agency partners across Amazon, photography, and digital marketing. She has driven the creative vision behind major licensing partnerships with Roxy and Billabong while preserving Broken Top's identity through successful national retail expansions, including Whole Foods.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**
Katie actively serves on the marketing committee for Opportunity Knocks, supporting community engagement while collaborating with fellow business leaders to strengthen local nonprofit initiatives.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**
Katie blends strategic thinking with exceptional creative execution. She effortlessly shifts between leading teams, developing products, managing agencies, and building nationally recognized brands. Her ability to balance innovation with operational excellence makes her an invaluable leader whose impact extends far beyond traditional marketing.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**
Katie believes great brands are built through authenticity, collaboration, and consistency. She leads with humility, empowers those around her to succeed, and understands that thoughtful creativity paired with disciplined execution creates meaningful customer experiences and long-term business growth.

Continued on Page 12 ▶

cascadebusnews.com

Congratulations

to all the

**2026 Accomplished 40 & Under**

Award Recipients

CASCADE cbn BUSINESS NEWS

541-388-5665

cbn@cascadebusnews.com • CascadeBusNews.com



# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from page 11*



**Jordan Dawley**
*Partner & Shareholder*
**Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

As a lifelong Central Oregon resident, Jordan is grateful to build both his career and family in the community that helped shape him. After earning degrees in Accounting and Economics from the University of Oregon and beginning his career as an auditor with the Oregon Department of Revenue, he became a CPA in 2018 and joined Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors in 2019. In 2025, he was admitted as a Shareholder of the firm and now leads its dental practice niche, advising practice owners throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond on tax strategy, business growth, profitability, and long-term planning.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Jordan believes success carries a responsibility to give back. He is actively involved in supporting organizations that strengthen the Central Oregon community, including Sparrow Clubs, Ronald McDonald House, Oregon Adaptive Sports, and outreach initiatives through Westside Church. He is passionate about investing his time and resources in causes that create meaningful opportunities and support for local families.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

A Bend native and graduate of Mountain View High School, Jordan is known for his infectious positivity, genuine enthusiasm, and ability to build meaningful relationships. He approaches every interaction with a people-first mindset, believing trust, connection, and collaboration are at the heart of both personal and professional success. Clients and colleagues value his approachable, coaching-oriented style and his commitment to helping others achieve their goals.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Jordan's leadership philosophy is rooted in servant leadership and a people-first approach. He believes the best business outcomes are achieved when individuals feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. Whether advising clients through important business decisions or mentoring the next generation of professionals, he strives to lead with humility, optimism, and authenticity. His goal is to create a lasting positive impact by helping others reach their full potential while fostering strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect.






**Savanna DeLuca**
*Owner*
**Wild Heart Therapy + Consulting**

**Professional Accomplishments**

Savanna DeLuca, LPC is the owner of Wild Heart Therapy + Consulting, where she provides somatic and experiential therapy and works with leaders, professionals, and organizations. Her consulting work brings mental health expertise beyond the traditional therapy room through team building, facilitation, workshops, and retreats designed to strengthen communication, connection, resilience, and the emotional health of organizations.

Savanna is also an adjunct instructor in Prescott College's graduate counseling program, where she teaches somatic, nature-based, and adventure-based approaches to counseling. She holds certifications in Brainspotting and Clinical Adventure Therapy and has built a career at the intersection of mental health, education, leadership, and experiential learning.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement**

Savanna is a Leadership Bend Class of 2023 graduate and serves on the Bend Chamber Emerging Talent Ambassador and Advisory Council (AAC). She is a member of City Club of Central Oregon and member of the High Desert Museum's High Desert Project. Since 2023, she has volunteered with Cascades Volunteers, supporting stewardship of Central Oregon's public lands, and has also volunteered with Healing Reins.

Through Wild Heart Therapy + Consulting, Savanna offers free outdoor and nature-based trainings for therapists and helping professionals and created and hosted the Balanced Bend Mental Health Festival, bringing together community members and local professionals around mental health, connection, and well-being.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguish Her from Her Peers**

Savanna's work is grounded in the understanding that emotional health extends beyond the individual — it shapes our relationships, our leadership, our workplaces, and our communities. She combines clinical expertise in neuroscience and somatic psychology with experiential and nature-based approaches to help people better understand themselves, connect with others, and create meaningful change.

What distinguishes her work is the breadth of where she applies this perspective. Whether working with a therapy client, supporting a leader, facilitating a team, teaching future therapists, or creating community experiences, Savanna focuses on helping people develop greater self-awareness, navigate challenges more effectively, and build stronger relationships.

**Business Leadership Philosophy**

Savanna believes healthy organizations are built by healthy humans. Her approach to leadership begins with self-awareness: understanding how we respond under pressure, how we affect the people around us, and how those patterns influence communication, decision-making, and relationships.

She believes effective leadership requires both compassion and accountability. Creating emotionally healthy workplaces does not mean avoiding discomfort, conflict, or high expectations; it means building the capacity to navigate them with greater awareness, curiosity, honesty, and connection. Savanna strives to bring those principles to her own leadership and to the individuals, teams, and organizations she supports.



**Jason Golob**
*Owner*
**Constant Studios**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Brought $800,000+ in millwork sales and created three local jobs in Bend to date in 2026.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Jason supports local suppliers and invests in staff. This year he's creating fly boxes that were auctioned for the Clark-Skamania Flyfishers annual auction to support the club, which promotes conservation, education, and angling mainly in Southwest Washington and beyond (they usually have a couple of events in Central Oregon each year). He has a 2.5-year-old and a 3-month-old, so he is heavily involved in Bend's early childhood community. In his previous business, he built furniture for charitable auctions and participated in a work-based learning program for high schoolers, both in Brooklyn.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Educated and worked in Brooklyn since 18. Brings NYC drive, industry knowledge, and network to Bend.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Give a damn. Work as hard as you can. Treat people like you would want to be treated. Enjoy the ride.

Continued on Next Page ▶

## Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from previous page*



**Spencer Gravelle**
*President*
**Scott's Roofing**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

At 34, Spencer purchased Scott's Roofing and grew it from 17 to 28 employees and one Bend office to locations in Bend and Redmond. Scott's Roofing has grown revenue 3x since 2023. Under his leadership, the company earned Best Roofing Company in Central Oregon and Redmond in 2026.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Spencer gives back through school & holiday drives, youth & school sponsorships, NatureConnect, Petersen Rock Garden, Deschutes County Fair 4-H, local golf tournaments, Sara's Project, and Stroke Awareness of Oregon.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Spencer's commitment to continuous learning distinguishes him from his peers. He's intentional about growing as a leader and as a person, constantly seeking new knowledge, perspectives, and ways to improve. His willingness to seek the truth, adapt, and challenge himself allows him to lead with greater purpose, humility, and effectiveness.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Spencer believes great leadership is about elevating those around you. His goal is to make Scott's the best place to work by investing in employees, supporting their growth, and creating a culture where people feel valued, motivated, and excited to come to work. By attracting and retaining great people, success follows.



**Hunter Hall**
*Developer*
**Limitless Solutions USA LLC**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Hunter Hall is co-founder of Limitless Solutions USA, advancing solar, battery storage and resilience projects across Oregon. He signed his first 320-acre Lake County project and is negotiating contracts on 1,120 additional acres, with a goal of 2,000 acres in development by year-end, while pursuing community-focused entrepreneurial ventures.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Board Member of Stroke Awareness Oregon and leader of Bend Guys for Good, supporting philanthropy, community fundraising, local partnerships and civic engagement across Central Oregon.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Hunter stands out for combining hands-on door-to-door solar experience with large-scale renewable-energy development. He is equally comfortable speaking with homeowners at the doorstep, landowners, utilities, public agencies and community partners. That ground-level perspective, paired with entrepreneurship and persistence, helps him turn ambitious ideas into real, executable projects.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Hunter leads by building alignment around shared value. He believes strong businesses should solve real problems, create durable community benefits and give partners a reason to succeed together. His approach is persistent, collaborative and opportunity-driven: listen first, find the practical path forward, and keep moving until an idea becomes executable.

Continued on Page 14 ▶



Congratulations
to
Spencer Gravelle
from all of us at Scott's Roofing!

SCOTT'S ROOFING
SINCE 2003

541-203-2466

@scottsroof SCOTTSROOF.COM @scottsroofingbendor

Accomplished under 40



Congratulations
Hunter Hall

Limitless SOLUTIONS USA

limitlesssolutionsusa.com

# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from page 13*



**Alex Harrison**
*Senior Project Engineer*
**Skanska USA Building**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Alex Harrison, a University of Illinois civil engineering graduate, joined Skanska's Central Oregon team two years ago as a senior project engineer. He has played a key role in delivering significant community projects, including the Jackstraw Apartment Building, St. Charles Health System's Redmond Cancer Center, and is currently working on the Redmond Municipal Airport Terminal Expansion, where he consistently elevates team performance through mentorship and collaboration.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Leadership Bend Class of 2026 graduate. Partnering with local higher education programs to help develop and strengthen construction management pathways. Active supporter of Central Oregon's construction community, mentorship, and engagement.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Alex is a natural mentor who invests in the success of others. He combines technical expertise with humility, tackling complex challenges head-on while creating opportunities for teammates to learn and grow. His willingness to step in, solve problems and support colleagues makes him an invaluable leader and trusted team member.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Alex believes leadership means taking ownership beyond the boundaries of your role. When challenges arise, he focuses on solutions rather than responsibility. His willingness to step into unfamiliar territory and help, regardless of title or scope, defines his leadership philosophy and approach to teamwork.



**Emma James**
*Partner & Wealth Advisor*
**Exemplar Wealth Advisors**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

- Wealth Advisor and Partner at Exemplar Wealth Advisors.
- Certified Exit Planning Advisor (CEPA)
- Graduate of the 2023 Leadership Bend Class
- Series 7 and 66 securities registrations, and state Life and Health Insurance licenses.
- Double bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon – Spanish and International Studies.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Emma is deeply invested in strengthening the Central Oregon community through civic engagement, business leadership, and volunteer service. She is an active member of Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) and the Bend Chamber of Commerce, a proud graduate of the 2023 Leadership Bend class, and currently serves on the advisory board for the Small Business Development Center at COCC. For more than a decade, Emma has also enriched the local arts community as the longtime leader, teacher, and organizer of Tango in Bend. She further supports the community through volunteer work with Out Central Oregon and the Humane Society of Central Oregon.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguish Them from Their Peers:**

Emma brings genuine curiosity, passion, and enthusiasm to every relationship, taking a sincere interest in the experiences and stories of others. Her diverse personal and professional background allows her to approach challenges with fresh perspective and creativity. Her business partner, David, describes her as a confident and highly professional leader who remains remarkably humble. Her business coach, Christy, recognizes Emma for her deep community engagement, dynamic leadership, and unwavering commitment to stewardship and client care.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Emma believes that curiosity is the foundation of compassionate and effective leadership. By asking thoughtful questions, listening deeply, and fostering meaningful dialogue, she helps create outcomes that are both purposeful and aligned. By connecting people to the right resources and education, Emma empowers people to live with greater confidence, joy, purpose, and vitality.

Continued on Next Page ▶










# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from previous page*



**Maarty Leunen**
*VP, Business Client Advisor*
**Summit Bank**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

After graduating from the University of Oregon with a degree in economics, Maarty Leunen was drafted by the Houston Rockets and went on to play professional basketball for 13 years in Turkey, Germany, and Italy. Since joining Summit Bank five years ago, Maarty has brought the same work ethic, competitiveness, and team-first approach to banking. He is known by clients and colleagues as someone who is steady, dependable, and genuinely focused on helping others succeed.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Maarty has stayed closely connected to the Central Oregon community where he grew up. In 2015, he created the Maarty Leunen Basketball Camp, which he continues to lead and manage. Since it began, the camp has served more than 1,500 students throughout Central Oregon, giving young athletes access to high-level coaching, encouragement, and mentorship.

Now in its eighth year, the Annual Maarty Leunen Desert Rose Golf Fundraiser, organized in partnership with the Rotary Club of Redmond, has raised more than $150,000 for local charities. The event has become a valuable way to bring people together in support of organizations serving the region.

As head varsity basketball coach at Ridgeview High School, Maarty has continued to make a difference in the lives of young athletes. His success as a professional basketball player is impressive, but the time he gives to students is what stands out most. He spends countless hours coaching, mentoring, and supporting players both on and off the court.

Maarty has also served on the Board of Directors for the Redmond Chamber of Commerce. In that role, he has supported local businesses, community organizations, and civic efforts that help strengthen Redmond and the surrounding area.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

What separates Maarty from many of his peers is the way he treats people. Despite his success as an athlete, coach, banker, and community leader, he remains humble, kind, and approachable. He does not seek attention or recognition. Instead, he shows up, does the work, and puts others first.

Whether he is working with a client, coaching a student-athlete, talking with a parent, or supporting a colleague, Maarty leads with respect. He listens carefully, encourages others, and sets an example through his actions. People trust him because he is consistent, sincere, and focused on doing the right thing.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Maarty's approach to leadership is centered on service, integrity, and relationships. He believes leadership is not just about personal success, but about helping others grow and succeed.

Colleagues, clients, and community members describe Maarty as approachable, honest, and easy to trust. He is competitive and driven, but never at the expense of others. He understands that the best leaders bring people with them, support those around them, and make their teams stronger.

Maarty should be named to the 40 and Under list because his impact reaches well beyond his professional accomplishments. He has built a career marked by discipline, humility, and service, while continuing to give back to the community that helped shape him. Through his work at Summit Bank, his leadership with local organizations, his basketball camp, his fundraising efforts, and his role as a coach and mentor, Maarty has consistently used his platform to support others. He represents the kind of leader Central Oregon needs: grounded, generous, hardworking, and committed to making his community stronger.



**Lindsey Maguire**
*Architect*
**SĀJ Architecture**
**Professional Accomplishments:**

Lindsey's career has spanned a wide range of project types and scales since she joined the profession in 2012. A licensed architect in Oregon and North Carolina, Lindsey has worked on a variety of projects from coast to coast. Examples include the Trone Center, a K-12 STEM facility for the Bullis School in Maryland; the Student Health Center at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina; and Montara, a 68-unit affordable housing project in San Mateo, California. In Oregon, she has increasingly focused on long-range planning and public-sector projects, including leading facility master planning efforts for the cities of Ashland and Medford (ORW Architect of Record) and long-range facility planning for Oregon school districts with SĀJ Architecture. She recently became an Oregon Department of Education Technical Assistance Program Certified Assessor, furthering her ability to help communities thoughtfully plan for their facilities and future needs.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Since moving to Bend from the Bay Area in 2021, Lindsey has become actively involved in organizations that reflect both her professional skills and personal interests. She served on the board of Central Oregon Locavore, where she contributed to marketing efforts and helped support a small renovation of the organization's Third Street location. For the past four years, she has served on the board of the Central Oregon Chapter of the Oregon Dressage Society. An equestrian herself, Lindsey has organized local dressage competitions, creating opportunities for riders and strengthening the Central Oregon dressage community.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguish Them from Their Peers:**

As a dual-trained architect and urban designer, Lindsey is comfortable moving between scales — from the details of an individual building to the long-term needs of a school district or community. She is particularly drawn to projects that require listening, collaboration, and consensus building. Her strength lies in translating complex needs and different perspectives into thoughtful, actionable solutions. She approaches stakeholder engagement as an integral part of design, creating conversations that help clients and communities understand their priorities and see a path forward.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Lindsey leads with curiosity, kindness, and humor. She believes good leadership begins with listening well, asking thoughtful questions, and creating an environment where people feel comfortable contributing their ideas. Her approach is collaborative while remaining focused on moving a team toward a shared goal. She values mentorship and supporting younger architects as they develop their skills and professional confidence. Lindsey believes the strongest solutions rarely come from one person alone, but from bringing different perspectives together and giving participants a meaningful role in the outcome.

Continued on Page 16 ▶




**Free E-Headlines**
Sent Directly to Your Email

To Receive, Send Your Email to:
CBN@CascadeBusNews.com
CASCADE cbn BUSINESS NEWS

# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from page 15*



**Randi Osbon**
*AVP, Senior Community Branch Manager*
**First interstate**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Since joining First Interstate as a Teller in 2016, Randi has risen through the roles of Banker, Madras Branch Manager, and Redmond Branch Manager. Her reliable leadership and skill in balancing operational excellence with genuine community engagement also earned her a recent promotion to Senior Community Manager.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Randi completed Leadership Redmond, leads K–12 financial literacy programs, hosts Safe Banking for Seniors fraud workshops, and drives community volunteer initiatives across Central Oregon.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Randi distinguishes herself through an authentic, relationship-first leadership style. She translates civic awareness into action by protecting vulnerable seniors from fraud, mentoring youth in essential money skills, and actively developing her colleagues. For Randi, true success is measured by the positive, lasting difference she makes in others' lives.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Randi champions leadership rooted in service and connection. She guides by personal example, dedicating time to mentor colleagues and uplift her community. By pairing sound banking operations with civic duty, she ensures everyone around her gains the tools and confidence to thrive.

CascadeBusNews.com






**Mark Reinhardt**
*Of Counsel*
**Best Best & Krieger LLP**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Mark advises clients on transactional matters ranging from startup formations to multibillion-dollar joint ventures and M&A transactions. Mark has also worked for Judges on the U.S. Ninth and Tenth Circuit Courts of Appeals, and Uganda's Deputy Chief Justice. He currently serves on the Oregon State Bar Business Law Section Executive Committee.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Mark has extensive local and international service experience, including volunteering for Young Life, Uganda's Constitutional Court, and sustainable business development programs in Rwanda.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

While Mark graduated from Oregon State University's Cascades campus in Bend and has always called Central Oregon "home," his years working for appellate court judges and decade working for a large international law firm have provided him with training and perspective that is unique within the Central Oregon legal community.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Good leadership requires humility, integrity, a clear sense of duty. Try to understand others before trying to persuade or push them. Make principled decisions with practical consequences in mind, exercise authority with restraint, and measure success by the trust, growth, and shared purpose you create in others.



**Cassie Ringgenberg**
*Escrow Officer*
**Deschutes Title**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Top-producing escrow officer with Deschutes Title, known for delivering exceptional service, clear communication, and a high-energy approach. Clients consistently praise her responsiveness, professionalism, and commitment to a seamless closing experience.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Beyond her success in the title and escrow industry, she owns and operates the Marathon Gas Station in Redmond, demonstrating her entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to the community.

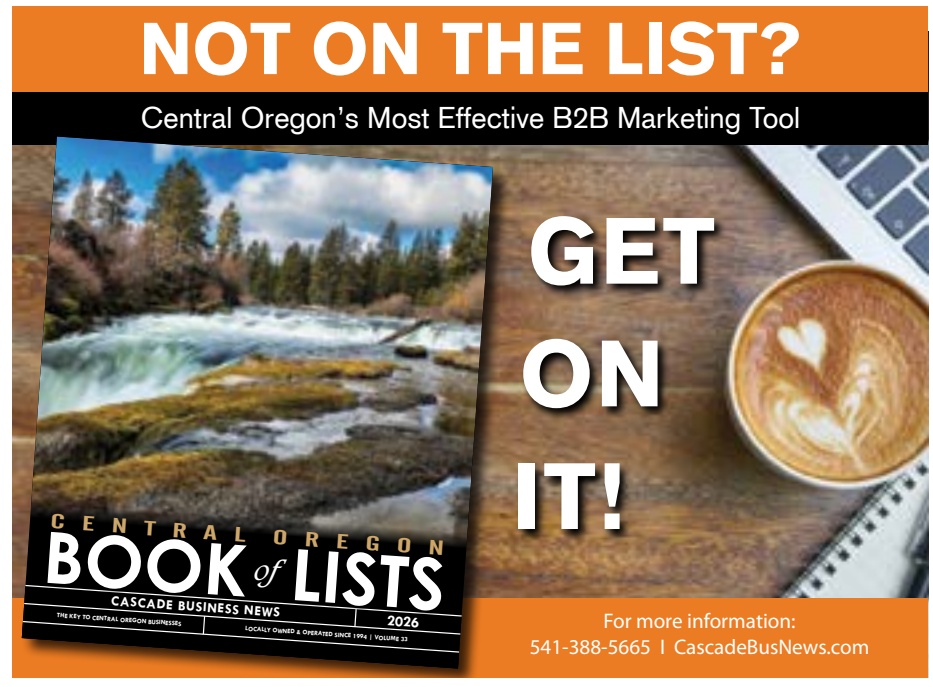
**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

As a mother of three and a devoted supporter of her children's 4-H activities, she embraces life on the farm while remaining deeply involved in her community. Her passion and commitment shine through in every endeavor.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Lead with integrity, serve with purpose, and build relationships that last. Success comes from hard work, clear communication, and a genuine commitment to helping others achieve their goals.

Continued on Next Page ▶



# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from previous page*



**Jordan Shouse**
*Certified Public Accountant & Partner*
**Callan Accounting CPAs & Advisors, LLC**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Jordan began her public accounting career at Callan Accounting CPAs & Advisors in 2015 as a Staff Accountant, earning her CPA license in 2017, and becoming a Partner in 2024. In addition to advising businesses and individuals on tax strategy, entity structure, and financial planning, she plays an active leadership role in the firm's operations, team development, and continued growth. She is focused on building strong teams, improving processes, and creating a culture that allows both employees and clients to succeed.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

As Controller and a Board Member of Opportunity Knocks, Jordan supports the organization's mission by mentoring entrepreneurs and providing guidance on tax planning, entity structure, financial literacy, and nonprofit stewardship.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguish Them from Their Peers:**

Jordan combines strong technical expertise with an approachable, people-focused leadership style. She has a talent for making complex financial topics understandable and for helping others feel confident in making important decisions. Colleagues and clients value her as a trusted advisor who leads with humility, integrity, and a genuine interest in helping others grow and succeed.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Jordan believes effective leadership starts with trust, accountability, and a commitment to continuous improvement and learning. She believes the strongest businesses are built by investing in people, developing strong relationships, and creating an environment where others can do their best work. Her leadership philosophy is centered on providing thoughtful guidance, empowering those around her, and creating lasting value for clients, colleagues, and the broader community.



**Awbrey Swanson**
*Financial Advisor, Certified Financial Planner*
**Bend Wealth Advisors**

**Professional Accomplishments:**

Awbrey was one of only a handful of registered client associates at Merrill Lynch to hold the Certified Financial Planner certification. In October 2020, she played a key role in launching Bend Wealth Advisors, helping build the firm from the ground up. In less than five years, Awbrey advanced from registered client associate to senior financial planner and junior partner, a trajectory that reflects both her expertise and the trust she has earned from clients and colleagues alike.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

Awbrey's expertise extends well beyond her own client work. She was tapped by the largest wealth management practice at Raymond James as a subject matter expert in wealth management regulatory compliance and serves as a go-to resource for fellow advisors navigating the financial intricacies of divorce. Outside the office, she contributes to the Queen of Hearts initiative in honor of her late mother, who was cared for by the organization's dedicated professionals last year.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Awbrey is deeply committed to proactively serving clients with complex wealth management needs. She has earned the Certified Financial Planner certification, Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor designation, and Certified Divorce Financial Analyst certification, and she pairs that expertise with a strong work ethic and a calm, steady presence no matter the situation. She is, in every sense, a true professional.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

At Bend Wealth Advisors, Awbrey has taken ownership of developing the firm's operational processes and plays a central role in defining the staffing and skills the team needs to serve clients effectively and grow the business. A natural leader, she oversees a team of five and leads by example, rolling up her sleeves to tackle challenges firsthand and then sharing what she learns with the rest of the team.

Continued on Page 18 ▶







Your recognition as an Accomplished Under 40 honoree is a testament to your talent, professionalism, and dedication to others. We are proud of the impact you have on our clients, our team, and our community every day.

**Well-deserved and well-earned!**

Your Bend Wealth Advisors Family

BEND
WEALTH ADVISORS
523 N.W. Colorado Ave. | Suite 100
Bend, OR 97703 | 541.306.4324
bendwealth.com

© 2026 Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC. Investment advisory services offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. Bend Wealth Advisors is not a registered broker/dealer and is independent of Raymond James Financial Services.

# Accomplished Under 40

*Continued from page 17*



**Victoria Tranca**
*Project Manager*
**Pinnacle Architecture**
**Professional Accomplishments:**

Originally from Romania, Victoria moved to Central Oregon and built her career through perseverance, continuous learning, and dedication to others. Rising from project designer to project manager, she now leads complex healthcare and behavioral health projects, including new substance use disorder treatment facilities that expand access to critical care across Oregon.

**Civic, Industry & Community Involvement:**

As a Sisters-area small farm owner, Victoria is deeply connected to her local community. Whether through her professional work or personal service, Victoria is dedicated to improving lives in Central Oregon. She has partnered with nonprofits including Habitat for Humanity, Shepherd's House, and Mountain View Community Development to help bring impactful community projects to life. She also volunteers with NeighborImpact, delivering food to individuals and families facing barriers to access.

**Specific Characteristics that Distinguishes Them from Their Peers:**

Victoria leads with empathy, self-awareness, and genuine care for the people around her. Clients value her commitment and reliability, while colleagues appreciate her openness, mentorship, and encouragement. She naturally looks for different perspectives, helping teams move beyond challenges and toward solutions. Simply put, she makes the people around her better.

**Business Leadership Philosophy:**

Victoria believes great leadership starts with understanding people. Drawing from a lifelong commitment to growth and learning, she leads with authenticity, accountability, and compassion. Her approach focuses on building trust, developing others through hands-on mentorship, and creating collaborative environments where teams and clients can succeed together.




# 40 & Under Accomplished Winners — All Years

*Please note that some of the previous winners have changed positions, some have even changed their names, but we've listed them exactly as when they first won the award. Due to space restrictions, please find the winners of 2006-2022 online at cascadebusnews.com/accomplished-40.*

## 2023

**Amanda Bird-Zimmerman** — Marketing Manager, Charitable Giving Lead, Old Mill District | Hayden Homes Amphitheater
**Caitlin Granberry** — Staffing Consultant, PrideStaff
**Caitlin Sims** — Branch Manager, Washington Trust Bank
**Christine Redmon** — Owner, Blade + Ink
**Eli Harrison** — Broker, Compass Commercial Real Estate Services
**Emily Freed** — Project Manager, Pinnacle Architecture
**Emily Kirk** — Co-anchor, Good Morning Central Oregon — KOHD/KBNZ
**Genevra Obregon** — Design Staff, BBT Architects
**Heather McMeekin** — Partner/CPA, Price Fronk & Co.
**Heather Wall** — Director of Human Resources, Brightways Counseling Group
**Jenelle McCleary** — Owner & Managing Principal Broker, Realty One Group Discovery
**Jenn Kovitz** — Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Central Oregon Community College
**Jenni Carver Ross** — Clinical Operations Director, Partners In Care
**Kasey Every** — Account Executive, Every Idea
**Madeline (Mattie) Dumm** — Safety Manager, Rosendin
**Matt Stephens** — Associate Director, Drug Product Manufacturing, Biogen
**Paige Welsh** — General Manager, StretchLab
**Renata Garbowski** — Financial Advisor, AGP Wealth Advisors
**Shaunette White** — Owner, High Desert Chocolates
**Shawn Evilsizor, PE, SE** — Buildings Group Office Leader, Morrison-Maierle

## 2024

**Ryan Amerongen** — CCIM, Broker, RE/MAX Key Properties
**Michael Bird** — Financial Advisor, ASI Wealth Management
**Emmah Collins** — Certified Clinical Medical Assistant & Neurodiagnostic Technician, Pacific Crest Neurology
**Sally Compton** — Executive Director, Think Wild
**Mandy Davis** — Director of Operations, Total Real Estate
**Myles Eastman** — Commercial Relationships Manager, First Interstate Bank
**John Evans** — Property Manager, Compass Commercial Property Management
**Morgan Farnell** — Nonprofit Administrator, High Desert Chamber Music/United Way
**Dinah Green** — Commercial Real Estate Broker, Green Tree Commercial Real Estate
**Michael Klautzsch** — Project Executive, Apollo Mechanical Contractors
**Nathan Leigh** — Sustainable Lead, BBT Architects
**Sean M. Neary** — Attorney, Fitch & Neary PC
**Jacob Parla** — Owner, Parla's Tax Service LLC • Ryan's Produce
**Scott Parr** — HR Director, J Bar J Youth Services
**Katie Pelchar** — Sales Manager, loanDepot
**Angela Saraceno** — Philanthropy Manager, St. Charles Health System
**Kyle Schenk** — General Manager/Operations Director, Fly & Field Outfitters • Owner, Troutdoors Marketing & Media
**Alyssa Snow** — Registered and Licensed Occupational Therapist, Founder and Clinical Director, Little Hands Therapy
**Kevin Watkins** — Founder, fare·well (formerly Farewell Media)
**Chad Young** — Project Manager, Skanska USA Building Inc

## 2025

**Pat Addabbo** — Executive Director, Oregon Adaptive Sports
**Brian Barks** — Director of Industry Relations, Systems West Engineers
**Emily Boynton** — Senior Development Officer, Mosaic Community Health
**Jimmy Clark** — Resident Services Manager & Home Care Administrator, Touchmark
**Lauren Evans** — Business Development Specialist, LRS Architects
**Jennifer Graham MA** — Youth Programs Manager, East Cascades Works
**Kevin Hansen** — Project Manager, EC Electric
**Ellen Hassett** — Project Architect, BBT Architects
**Holley Jensen** — Partner, Director of Property Management, Broker, Compass Commercial Property Management
**Brad Lesher** — Project Manager, Sierra James
**Trevor Lewis** — Business Developer, Express Employment Professionals
**Celeste McGowan** — CEO + Principal Designer, Iron Roots Design + Build
**Allison Phillips, M.S., CCC-SLP** — Founder, Sagebrush Speech Therapy
**Camille Poynter** — Director of Human Operations, fare•well
**Ashleigh Schwerbel** — Wealth Management Banker, U.S. Bank
**Dustin Smith** — Director of Mountain Operations, Mt. Bachelor
**Sam Terrell** — Principal Broker, Northwest Ranch Group, LandLeader NW
**Eric Webber, PE** — Bend Operations Manager, Vice President, Morrison-Maierle
**Melanie Whedon** — Architect, TEN OVER STUDIO
**Amanda Windlinx** — Student, COCC and OSU Cascades HC

## 2026

**Kaitlin Baker —** Architect, SĀJ Architecture
**Emily Boyd —** Government Affairs Manager, Bend Chamber
**Odessa Cleavenger —** Project Architect, BBT Architects
**Katie Darquea —** Marketing & Creative Director, Broken Top Brands
**Jordan Dawley —** Partner & Shareholder, Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors
**Savanna DeLuca —** Owner, Wild Heart Therapy + Consulting
**Jason Golob —** Owner, Constant Studios
**Spencer Gravelle —** President, Scott's Roofing
**Hunter Hall —** Developer, Limitless Solutions USA LLC
**Alex Harrison —** Senior Project Engineer, Skanska USA Building
**Emma James —** Partner & Wealth Advisor, Exemplar Wealth Advisors
**Maarty Leunen —** VP, Business Client Advisor, Summit Bank
**Lindsey Maguire —** Architect, SĀJ Architecture
**Randi Osbon —** AVP, Senior Community Branch Manager, First interstate
**Mark Reinhardt —** Of Counsel, Best Best & Krieger LLP
**Cassie Ringgenberg —** Escrow Officer, Deschutes Title
**Jordan Shouse —** Certified Public Accountant & Partner, Callan Accounting CPAs & Advisors, LLC
**Awbrey Swanson —** Financial Advisor, Certified Financial Planner, Bend Wealth Advisors
**Victoria Tranca —** Project Manager, Pinnacle Architecture

# Heart of Oregon Corp's New Campus

## Redmond Ribbon Cutting Welcomes Community to Facility

**by NOAH NELSON — CBN Feature Writer**





RENDERING OF THE COURTYARD AT HEART OF OREGON CORPS' NEW CENTRAL CAMPUS BUILDING IN REDMOND | RENDERING COURTESY OF HEART OF OREGON CORPS




HOC'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAURA HANDY | PHOTOS BY NOAH NELSON

As a result of their Legacy 25 Campus Campaign that raised more than $8 million, the nonprofit organization Heart of Oregon Corps (HOC) welcomed the community to tour their new youth workforce campus, located in Redmond. The first of its kind in the region, the campus is set up to provide more than 200 youth per year with a centralized location to support them in their professional and personal development; the same role campuses play for those attending colleges and universities, only now it's available to those choosing professional training and certification during and after high school.

The benefits of this campus show up in spades. A centralized location will support more efficient travel, equipment usage, and staffing responsibilities. The campus also provides space for youth job skills training, educational activities, and will allow for expanded services provided through partnerships with local organizations. In addition, the campus provides early education and childcare services, natural resources certifications, trade certifications, driver's education prep, and a career center, along with laundry facilities, recreational space, a kitchen and cafeteria, personal/break spaces, and access to resources like mental health support and housing referrals.

The ribbon, along with a log and a 2x4, was cut to officially open the new campus on September 30, 2026; the ribbon with a large pair of scissors, and the log and 2x4 with a chainsaw. The opening ceremony had a set of guest speakers, including HOC's executive director Laura Handy, many current and former HOC board members, construction partners, and two names known from Oregon politics: Oregon State Senator Anthony Broadman and Former Oregon State Senator Tim Knopp.

HOC has been helping Oregon youth find their way in life for 26 years, mostly operating out of small locations across the tri-county area, supported by the generosity of many local organizations who were willing to lend their space. In 2020, HOC leadership asked their youth what they would need out of a new facility, and things started to come to life when the land the facility has since been built upon was sold to HOC by the Opportunity Foundation of Central Oregon.

On September 30, 2025, the first construction broke ground, and exactly one year later, HOC cut the ribbon (and wood) to celebrate the official grand opening.

The project was made possible through a staggering amount of community effort and support, from businesses big and small giving what they can, to receiving additional state funding to support the construction of renewable energy on campus.

Handy welcomed the community to the facility and gave a message to the youth of HOC; one that inspires hard work, self-confidence, and reminds them that no matter where they go or what they achieve, they will always have a home base with HOC, here in Redmond.

*heartoforegon.org*



# Operation School Bell Helps Local Students Thrive

## Assistance League of Bend Builds Confidence, Dignity & Connection

**by GIA HARTMEIER, VP Marketing — Assistance League of Bend**

Assistance League of Bend is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has been bringing comfort and hope to local children and adults facing hardship for more than 35 years.

Guided by compassion, each of its initiatives is designed to meet real needs with dignity and respect.

At the heart of its mission is Operation School Bell, which provides more than 2,700 students with new school clothes, shoes, and coats each year. Children select items that fit and reflect their personal style, fostering dignity, confidence, and a sense of belonging. The benefits extend well beyond physical comfort — new clothes nurture emotional well-being, boost self-esteem, reduce the likelihood of bullying, and inspire success in and out of the classroom.

Assistance League of Bend is the leading provider of new clothing for children in need throughout Deschutes County, where 50 percent of school-aged children qualify for free and reduced-price meals based on household income. A local teacher shared: "I've seen the positive impact of new clothes — including improved attendance, better behavior and greater social and school engagement."

Operation School Bell also includes complementary initiatives that support children through high school formal wear, literacy programs, cooking education, and holiday celebrations.

In addition, Assistance League of Bend supports community members facing the challenges of illness and aging. Volunteers provide handmade hats and other comfort items for individuals undergoing cancer treatment and bring care and connection to seniors by providing hygiene items, handmade greeting cards, and holiday gifts to Medicaid recipients living in local assisted living facilities.

Assistance League of Bend's ability to transform lives is made possible through the generosity of the Central Oregon community. Every contribution stays local, and with no paid staff, the greatest possible share of every dollar directly supports the programs and people they serve.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF BEND

*AssistanceLeagueBend.org*
*marketing@assistanceleaguebend.org*

## Nonprofits

*Continued from page 1*

to a greater extent on foundations that, as a result, are getting more requests than ever before — as many as three-to-four-times as many applications — making this source more competitive. Even local governments are scrambling," she said, "as district attorney offices, for example, are experiencing funding cuts."

### Budget Restructuring & Re-Examination of Services

As a result of these factors, many Oregon nonprofits are restructuring their entire budgets. As Tachikawa has learned in talking with other executive directors, "This takes the form of creating three budgetary tiers: going ahead as planned; functioning if only small cuts are experienced; and trying to survive if forced into starvation mode."

Another born-of-necessity strategy, as articulated by Kim Gammond, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of La Pine Sunriver, is to re-examine the services offered. "We'll have to acknowledge that this is the economic reality setting in, and adapt to it — even if this means determining which programs remain feasible or necessary."

### 'Background Level of Stress'

Yet another challenge, Tachikawa noted, is that "economic uncertainty has created a background level of stress, and is a consistent topic of conversation among nonprofit leaders. In many cases, this stress "has resulted in — or is verging on — staff burnout," she said.

At the national level, The Center for Effective Philanthropy found that 46% of nonprofit CEOs now say burnout is "very much" a concern, up from 29% in 2025. This is not limited to top leadership: 25% of CEOs report burnout is significantly impacting their staff, and 56% say they are managing in an atmosphere of heightened fear, stress, and low morale.

### Increasing Reliance on Individual Donors

As nonprofits are less able to depend on the government and foundations for operational funding, "this puts pressure at the individual giving level, and has resulted in more asking," said Gammond.

At MountainStar, Tachikawa has seen that more affluent people are "wanting to be really generous." The organization's 2026 flagship annual fundraiser, for example, "was our largest event ever," she said.

Randy Graves, executive director of the Redmond Senior Center, noted that "For the last two years, our end-of-year capital campaign reached its $100k goal (with four people contributing $10k each). As a result, we have been able to put a sizeable amount of money aside that allows me to sleep at night."

The organization has seen paid membership and annual donations grow by over 300% in the past two years, enabling expanded services and deeper community impact that inspire financial support. It was chosen by the Redmond Chamber of Commerce as its most recent "Business of the Year" in the customer service category — an accolade earned because "We love what we do, and it shows," said Graves.

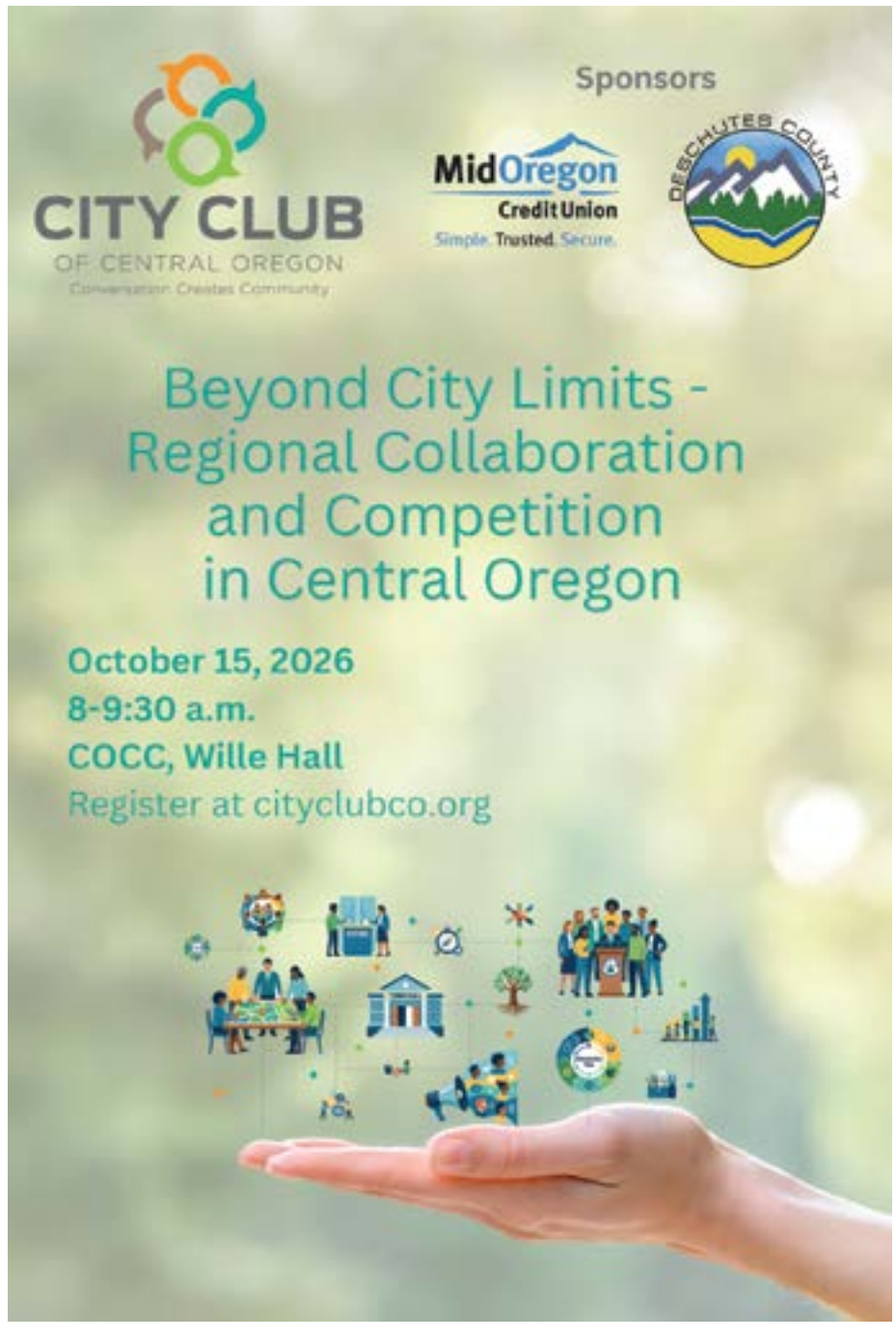
### 'Making a Difference'

"Because of what's happening, and an awareness of greater needs, people seem more likely to volunteer, if they are able to do so," said Betsy Warriner, who was named Bend's 2017 Woman of the Year for her tireless work in volunteerism and community engagement.

She added: "To the people who ask 'What can I do?' my answer is that even one little step makes a difference — analogous to the importance of a single vote in elections. There's no better anecdote to feeling helpless than getting involved with other people in making a difference — we can inspire each other to take on problems and try to find solutions to the challenges we're facing."

*habitatlapinesunriver.org*






Summit Bank Vice President Zak Sundsten, Bend-Redmond Habitat for Humanity Chief Financial Officer Juline Bodnar, and Summit Bank Central Oregon Market President Gary O'Connell

Bend-Redmond Habitat for Humanity helps local families build equity through home ownership. Summit Bank helps nonprofits and businesses in Oregon build stronger financial futures. Together, we're investing in community.

SUMMITBANK

OREGON'S BUSINESS BANK™

Bend and Redmond | 541-317-8000 | www.SBKO.bank

Member FDIC

# Growing with Purpose

## J Bar J Youth Services Builds for the Future

**by EVA GILL, Marketing Creative — J Bar J Youth Services**

For nearly six decades, J Bar J Youth Services has grown by paying attention.

When young people in Central Oregon have faced a need without an answer, the organization has looked for a way to respond. What began in 1968 as a residential program for boys has grown into a network of programs serving youth and families through residential treatment, shelter and housing, mentoring, family support, anti-trafficking services, education and more.

That growth has never simply been about becoming a larger organization. It has been about building the right resources at the right time — and continuing to evolve as the needs of young people and the community around them change.

Today, that evolution is taking several new forms.

**Building More Than a Building**

Construction is underway on a new Support Center at the J Bar J Boys Ranch campus, bringing the organization's central administrative and support services together under one roof.

For an organization with programs and staff working across Central Oregon, the new facility will create something deceptively simple but increasingly important: room to work together. Dedicated meeting space, workstations for visiting program staff and centralized administrative services will make it easier for teams to collaborate, share resources and support the programs doing the direct work with youth.

But perhaps the most important part of the project is what happens to the building administration leaves behind.

The current administration building will be transformed into transitional housing for young people moving forward from residential treatment at J Bar J Boys Ranch. It will offer an important step between the highly structured environment of treatment and a return to life in the community — a place where youth can practice the skills they have learned while continuing to receive support as they prepare for greater independence.




It is a project designed to solve two needs at once: strengthening the infrastructure behind J Bar J's programs while creating more opportunities for the youth they serve.

That kind of thinking is increasingly important for nonprofits. Every dollar, every building and every partnership needs to work harder. The new Support Center is an investment not only in space, but in J Bar J's ability to serve Central Oregon efficiently and sustainably for decades to come.



GRAPHIC AND RENDERING | COURTESY OF J BAR J YOUTH SERVICES

**New Ways to Learn, Connect and Grow**

Innovation is also happening within J Bar J's work with youth.

Through its Equine Inclusive Treatment program, young people across J Bar J programs have opportunities to develop relationships with horses and, in the process, learn more about themselves.

Horses offer immediate and honest feedback. Young people learn to pay attention to body language, boundaries, trust and communication. They practice emotional regulation, problem solving, self-advocacy and healthy relationship skills in real time.

For youth who may have spent years hearing adults tell them what they need to change, the experience can be remarkably different. A horse responds to what is happening in the moment.

One student described that connection simply: "Ray has brought me great happiness that I haven't felt in a long time."

Those moments are why J Bar J continues to explore new approaches. Innovation in human services doesn't always mean new technology or a new system. Sometimes it means finding a different way to reach a young person — and giving them another opportunity to discover what they are capable of.

**Expanding the Conversation**

This year, J Bar J is also trying something entirely new: a podcast.

LIFT — Leaders Inspiring Forward Thinking — brings J Bar J Chief Operating Officer Keith Riggs together with community leaders, experts and changemakers for conversations about the issues shaping Central Oregon.

The podcast reflects a broader understanding of what it means to serve young people well. Youth do not grow up separately from the communities around them. Housing, education, economic opportunity, public policy, strong families and healthy communities all influence the futures available to them.

LIFT creates space for thoughtful conversations about those connections and for the people working across sectors to learn from one another.

For J Bar J, it is another form of community building — and another way to ask a question that has guided the organization throughout its history: What can we do better for the young people growing up here?

**A Safe Place in Redmond — and a Door That Stays Open**

Sometimes growth means building something entirely new. Sometimes it means making sure people know a resource already exists.

In Redmond, Cascade Youth & Family Center's Canal House provides transitional living and support for young people experiencing homelessness. Its presence means youth in Redmond don't have to make their way to Bend before they can find a safe place to sleep, a caring adult or help figuring out what comes next.

One young man's story shows what that support can make possible.

In early summer, at just 17 years old, he reached two milestones on the same day. That morning, after months of hard work, he walked across a stage and received his GED. Later that day, he received another important piece of paper — and the keys to his first apartment.

He was officially living on his own.

His story didn't end when he left Canal House.

He continued calling staff to check in and stopping by to visit. On New Year's Eve, now 18, he asked if he could spend the evening at the program. It happened to be life-skills night, and the young people were making vision boards about housing, goals and their futures.

He joined them.

This time, however, he wasn't the new kid trying to understand the rules. He was the young adult explaining what he had learned — how to pay an electric bill, file taxes, submit a maintenance request and set realistic goals.

When another young person arrived at the program speaking only Spanish and struggling to connect, the former resident was there again. He spoke with him in Spanish, exchanged phone numbers and helped a new young person feel a little less alone.

It is difficult to imagine a better measure of success.

A young person came through the door needing support. Later, he came back through that same door because he had support to give.

**Growing Alongside Central Oregon**

J Bar J Youth Services has been part of Central Oregon since 1968. Today, it is the region's largest social services organization helping youth, their programs provide a continuum of support for young people and families.

J Bar J Boys Ranch and J5 provide residential treatment and short-term stabilization for adjudicated boys, supported by the J Bar J Learning Center and hands-on vocational education. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon connects young people with caring adult mentors. Cascade Youth & Family Center provides

Continued on Page 28 ▶

Abuse doesn't stay at home.

Intimate partner violence directly affects employee safety, absenteeism, and productivity across Central Oregon.

Supporting survivors protects your workforce and strengthens our local economy.

$103,767

Average lifetime economic cost per victim (CDC)

Driven by lost wages, productivity, and healthcare expenses.

Learn how your company can get involved.

Development@Saving-Grace.org

SAVINGGRACE
Imagine Life without Violence

Saving Grace offers shelter, advocacy, crisis support, and the resources survivors need to move toward safety and a life free from abuse.
saving-grace.org

# Brighter Futures for Youth

## *Help Youth Now. Change Their Trajectory for a Lifetime. Donate Today.*

*We Are*

**J BAR J YOUTH SERVICES**

**RISK: Family Conflict**



*75.5% - 90%* of youth in shelters cite *family conflict* as a critical issue leading to their homelessness

**Crisis Intervention**

Cascade Youth & Family Center offers crisis intervention services, including family mediation

**RISK: Human Trafficking**



Approximately *36%* of runaway and homeless youth reported trading sex for a place to stay or another need

**A.T. Project (Anti Trafficking)**

Direct support and assistance to victims and survivors of human trafficking

**RISK: Lack of Mentors**



Mentors contribute significantly to the future success of youth. Yet *1 in 3* young people will grow up without a mentor

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of CO**

Creating and supporting one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth

**RISK: Homelessness**



*75%* of homeless youth *drop out* of school. Those without a high school diploma or GED are *4.5x more likely* to *experience homelessness*

**The Loft & Canal House**

Longer term shelter and support focused on personal accountability while youth complete their education & develop essential life skills

**RISK: Pregnancy & Parenting**



Single parenting youth are *3x more likely to experience homelessness* than their non-parenting peers

**Grandma's House**

Shelter and programs for youth who are pregnant or parenting where they can continue their education and gain life skills



jbarj.org

# MountainStar Celebrates 25 Years of Keeping Kids Safe & Families Strong

**provided by MOUNTAINSTAR FAMILY RELIEF NURSERY**

For 25 years, MountainStar Family Relief Nursery (MountainStar) has walked alongside Central Oregon families during some of their most challenging moments, providing early intervention and therapeutic services designed to prevent child abuse and neglect before it happens.

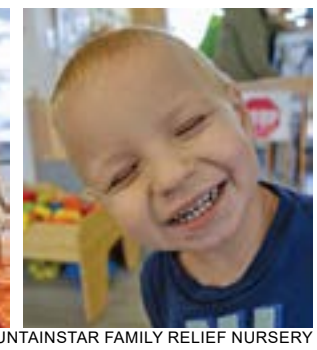
Founded in 2001, MountainStar has grown from serving families in Bend to reaching communities across the region, with services in La Pine, Bend, Redmond, Madras and Prineville, as well as outreach services in Warm Springs. Today, more than 1,300 children and family members turn to MountainStar each year for support.

Families come to MountainStar voluntarily, often while navigating overwhelming stress. Through therapeutic early childhood classrooms, home visiting, parent coaching, basic-needs assistance, and connections to community resources, MountainStar partners with caregivers to strengthen families and create safe, nurturing environments where young children can thrive.

The results demonstrate the power of prevention: 98% of children served remain safe from abuse and neglect, while families build skills, stability and connections that can have an impact for generations.

MountainStar's 25th anniversary is also a celebration of the Central Oregon community that has made this work possible.

"For 25 years, our community has stepped up for children and families – not only by believing in MountainStar's mission, but by investing in prevention," says Staley Slaughter, MountainStar development director. "Every donor, volunteer, business partner, and community advocate has helped create a stronger safety net for families. This milestone belongs to all of us, and we are incredibly grateful for the community that continues to stand with us – strengthening families so children can grow up safe, healthy, and supported."



PHOTOS | COURTESY OF MOUNTAINSTAR FAMILY RELIEF NURSERY

As Central Oregon continues to grow, MountainStar is looking toward its next 25 years with the same belief that has guided its work from the beginning: when we support families early, we can change the trajectory of a child's life.

*mtstar.org*

# Building a Safer Central Oregon

## The Role of Local Businesses in Ending Intimate Partner Violence & Sexual Assault

**by MEGAN KANTRIM, Development Director — Saving Grace**

Intimate partner violence and sexual assault directly affect Central Oregon's workforce, businesses, and economy. Across our region, more than 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. They are our employees, clients, neighbors, and colleagues.

The economic strain on businesses is significant. The CDC estimates the average lifetime cost per victim exceeds $103,767 for women and $23,400 for men, driven largely by lost productivity, healthcare costs, and absenteeism. Domestic and sexual violence account for nearly 8 million lost days of paid work annually — the equivalent of over 32,000 full-time jobs. When employees face abuse, the resulting safety concerns, missed work, and job turnover impact entire teams.

**Essential Community Infrastructure**

When a crisis occurs, specialized resources must already exist. Saving Grace provides that essential safety net across Central Oregon — offering emergency shelter, a 24-hour helpline, legal advocacy, and crisis support that empower individuals who have experienced abuse to achieve safety and stability.

**Crucial Partners in a Healthy Community**

Local businesses are vital to sustaining this infrastructure. Every company has unique strengths, and there are flexible ways to partner with Saving Grace:

- **Financial Giving & Sponsorships:** Direct contributions or program sponsorships funding emergency shelter nights and 24/7 helpline operations.
- **Capability Matching:** Leveraging core business services — such as lodging, legal aid, or fleet support — to meet direct client needs.
- **Employee Engagement:** Hosting workplace giving campaigns, donation drives, or awareness events.

By partnering with Saving Grace, local businesses protect their workforce, strengthen economic stability, and help create a safer, healthier Central Oregon for everyone.

*Saving-Grace.org*
*Development@Saving-Grace.org*









# Protecting the Mission

## Insurance Questions for Central Oregon Nonprofits

**by MONICA ELSOM, Owner & Principal Agent • Insure Pacific**



Central Oregon's nonprofits do remarkable work. On any given day, they are helping children and families, supporting seniors, caring for animals, expanding access to housing and behavioral health services, and enriching our community through education and the arts.

I have worked with many nonprofit organizations over the years, both professionally and in the community. Their missions vary widely, but they share a challenge: they must manage the risks of running an organization while directing as many resources as possible toward the people they serve.

A nonprofit may have a small staff, a working board and dozens of volunteers. It may operate from a building it owns, provide services at several locations, or take its programs into schools and homes. Funding can shift from year to year, while the need for its services rarely does. Insurance decisions have to account for that reality.

Here are several areas nonprofit leaders and boards should revisit regularly.

Board and leadership decisions: Board members make decisions about finances, staffing and the direction of an organization. Directors and Officers Liability coverage can help address certain claims arising from those decisions. Organizations with employees should also review Employment Practices Liability coverage. Board members should know what protection the organization provides rather than assume their personal insurance will respond.

Employees and volunteers: Volunteers are essential to many nonprofits, but their coverage may differ from an employee's. It is worth asking how general liability, workers' compensation and any volunteer or participant accident coverage apply to the work people actually perform.

New or changing programs: Insurance does not automatically adjust when a nonprofit adds an after-school program, begins transporting clients, hosts an overnight trip or opens a facility to another group. A program that began as a small pilot can become a major part of an organization's work without anyone revisiting its insurance.

Work beyond the main location: Fundraisers, field trips, home visits and community events can bring staff and volunteers into settings quite different from their usual workplace. Leaders should understand how their coverage applies when activities take place away from the organization's building.

> The most consequential gap is not always an absent policy. It may be an exclusion, a limit, a deductible, or a condition in a policy the organization has carried for years.

Professional services and safeguarding: Organizations serving children or vulnerable adults, or providing counseling, education or healthcare services, may face risks that require specialized coverage. Insurance is one part of the picture. Background checks, clear procedures and regular training matter as well.

Sensitive information: Even a small nonprofit may hold donor records, employee information, or details about the people it serves. A cyber incident can interrupt services as well as create substantial costs. The question is not simply whether a policy says "cyber," but what help the organization could call on if an incident occurred.

Buildings and interruptions: A property value carried forward at renewal may no longer reflect the cost of rebuilding. Leaders should also consider how a covered loss that makes a building unusable would affect programs, revenue and ongoing expenses.

The most consequential gap is not always an absent policy. It may be an exclusion, a limit, a deductible, or a condition in a policy the organization has carried for years. Those details are easiest to understand before there is a claim.

A useful review begins with the organization's work: What services do we provide today? Who do we serve, and where? What do our employees and volunteers do? Have we added a program, vehicle, contract or location? What would interrupt our ability to serve the community?

These are good questions for an executive director and board to ask together, especially before the next renewal. The answers can help them decide which risks to reduce through better procedures, which to insure and where limited dollars will do the most good.

Central Oregon depends on its nonprofits. Taking time to understand what could interrupt their work is one way to help keep their missions moving forward.

*insurepacific.com*



# Mosaic Community Health Ready to Help Central Oregonians Navigate Coming Medicaid Changes

## As Oregon Health Plan Updates Take Effect, Mosaic's Enrollment Team Offers Free, One-On-One Help for All

**by BRIDGET McGINN, Communications Manager — Mosaic Community Health**

With major changes coming to Oregon Health Plan (OHP) coverage, Mosaic Community Health is stepping up to make sure Central Oregon patients and community members don't fall through the cracks. Mosaic's Enrollment team has spent recent months preparing — adding staff, completing state-required certification training and planning to provide free, one-on-one support — so that anyone affected by the changes has somewhere local and trustworthy to turn.

"Mosaic team members have been preparing for months so that our community can have local support during this transition period, and so that no one loses health insurance coverage simply because a form or a deadline felt confusing," said Cy Erickson, patient access manager at Mosaic Community Health. "We want everyone in Central Oregon to know that our help is free and available to anyone in the community, not just Mosaic patients."

Approximately half of Mosaic's patients rely on OHP for their health coverage — an estimated 17,000 people across the region. That scale is why Mosaic took action early: expanding Enrollment capacity and training Community Health Workers so that patients can get answers from someone they already trust, rather than navigating the changes alone.

**What's Changing**

The changes stem from new federal requirements the state is rolling out under the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). This month, OHA began mailing informational notices to about 600,000 OHP members statewide; no immediate action is required, but members are encouraged to keep their contact information current. Starting January 1, 2027, some adults ages 19-64 will also need to show they meet new work or activity requirements when they apply for or renew coverage — rules that apply only to some members, with exemptions for pregnancy, disability-based eligibility, Medicare enrollment, and other qualifying situations.

Mosaic's message to the community is simple: however the details apply to you, our team can walk you through it.

**How to Get Help**

Patients and community members — whether or not they currently see a Mosaic provider — can call Mosaic's Enrollment line at 541-647-2717 for free, one-on-one help completing renewals, understanding notices from the state, or exploring other coverage options for anyone who no longer qualifies for OHP. Help is available in Spanish and English.

More information is also available online. For English, go to bit.ly/Mosaic-OHP-Help. For Spanish, go to bit.ly/Mosaic-OHP-Ayuda.

OHP members can also reach the state directly at benefits.oregon.gov or 1-800-699-9075, although Mosaic encourages Central Oregon residents to start with a call to Mosaic's Enrollment line for a local, personal point of contact.

Mosaic will continue to share updates and resources with the community as the changes take effect.

**About Mosaic Community Health:**

Mosaic Community Health is a nonprofit community health center that serves Central Oregonians from all walks of life. Through a network of more than a dozen clinics across the region, we offer integrated health services that address each patient's medical, dental, behavioral health, nutrition and medication needs. Our care is never influenced by how much money our patients make, what language they speak or the status of their insurance coverage. Mosaic Community Health provides quality care for all. New patients are always welcome.

*MosaicCH.org • Benefits.Oregon.gov • 1-800-699-9075*




# Our Students, Our Future

**by MARY PAULSON**




(L-R BACK ROW) JAMIE GOLDMAN, MICHELE EMERY, SARA ODENDAHL (L-R FRONT ROW) BRITTA PELLS, PRESLEY QUON (FROM MT. BACHELOR), AND ANNE WESTERHOFF | PHOTO COURTESY OF BEND-LA PINE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Founded in 1988, the Bend-La Pine Education Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization made up of parents, community leaders, educators, and citizens. United by a shared commitment, we believe that maintaining a strong and dynamic public school system is vital to the social and economic health of the community.

Through the generosity of local business leaders, foundation partners, and individual donors, we invest in classrooms and students through Classroom Enrichment Grants, Activity Fee Scholarships, and Perseverance Scholarships.

**Classroom Enrichments**

This program directs resources straight into classrooms, giving teachers the support they need to bring innovative learning experiences to students.

Funded projects include:

- STEAM/STEM initiatives
- Career and Technical Education
- Art, Music and Theatre programs
- Humanities and Language Arts programs

Last year, the Foundation invested $98,400 in 107 elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, supporting creative instructional programs across the Bend-La Pine school district.

**Activity Fee Scholarships**

Activity Fee Scholarships help ensure that cost does not prevent any student from participating in sports and other after-school opportunities. By covering activity fees, the program gives all students the chance to stay engaged, build confidence, and develop valuable life skills outside the classroom. Last year, 219 students received scholarship assistance through this program.

**Perseverance Scholarships**

The Perseverance Scholarships honor students who have shown exceptional determination, resilience, and commitment in the face of adversity. This program recognizes students who continue to pursue their goals with dedication and persistence, while also celebrating the hopes and ambitions they hold for their future. To date, 31 students have received scholarships to pay for their college education.

We invite you to join our Foundation in supporting our public schools, educators, and students.

*blpedfoundation.org*

# Bethlehem Inn Works to Break Cycle of Poverty

**by JON BAKER, Development Director — Bethlehem Inn**

Oregon has the highest rate of unsheltered families experiencing homelessness in the nation. Every day at the Bethlehem Inn, we see the impact of homelessness on children and adults. Participants in our program range from one day old to eighty-plus years old. While the circumstances that lead them to our shelter vary, many of the adults we serve share a common thread: a traumatic childhood shaped by circumstances that were beyond their control. Attending school while hungry, exhausted from a cold night in a car, or dealing with an unending and unstable home situation severely limits one's ability to build a stable life. We are dedicated to rewriting their futures.

Since 1999 Bethlehem Inn has served those in need through the support of the community. A child staying at Bethlehem Inn receives nutritious homemade meals, a welcoming room with their family, transportation to their school, clothing, and support for their parents to break the cycle of poverty. We understand that everyone needs help sometimes, and when they do, they can find it at Bethlehem Inn.

Over the coming years, Bethlehem Inn will be expanding services to reach more children and families who would not otherwise have the opportunity. Our mission to transform lives together through shelter, help, and hope is rooted in community. Together we can rewrite the future of families in Central Oregon. Be part of the solution: make a donation or volunteer today.

*bethleheminn.org*



PHOTO | COURTESY OF BETHLEHEM INN

# Partners In Care Helps Patients Heal at Home

**by TYLER CARSKADON, Marketing Manager — Partners In Care**

For more than 47 years, Partners In Care has been a trusted, independent, nonprofit healthcare organization serving patients and families across Central Oregon's 10,000-square-mile service area. Our local team understands the unique needs of the communities we serve and is committed to helping people receive high-quality care where they are most comfortable: at home.

### What Is Home Health Care?

Home health care provides skilled medical services in a patient's home, helping individuals recover from surgery, illness, or injury while remaining in a familiar and comfortable environment. Ordered by a physician and delivered by nurses, therapists, and other healthcare professionals, home health care is designed to improve recovery, manage chronic conditions, and reduce the risk of unnecessary hospital readmissions.

### How Is It Different from Other In-Home Services?

Unlike non-medical home care, which focuses on assistance with daily activities such as bathing, meal preparation, and housekeeping, home health care is medical in nature and requires a physician's order. It is also different from hospice care, which provides comfort-focused support for individuals with a life-limiting illness. Home health care is restorative, with the goal of helping patients heal, regain strength, and maintain independence.

### Who Qualifies for Home Health Care?

Patients may qualify for home health care when a physician determines they need intermittent skilled nursing or therapy services and are considered homebound. Homebound does not mean someone can never leave home; it means leaving requires considerable effort or assistance. Common reasons for home health services include recovery after surgery, wound care, chronic disease management, stroke rehabilitation, and transitioning home after a hospital stay.

### What Services Are Included?

Home health care can include skilled nursing, physical, occupational and speech therapy, medical social services, and limited home health aide support when part of a broader care plan. Care is provided on a part-time basis and continues as long as the patient meets eligibility requirements and requires skilled services. With the right support at home, patients can heal more comfortably, safely, and independently in the place they know best.

*PartnersBend.org*



# HSCO Offers 50% Off All Dog Adoption Fees

**by LYNNE OUCHIDA — Humane Society of Central Oregon**

The Humane Society of Central Oregon (HSCO) is offering 50% off adoption fees for all available dogs from Thursday, October 1 through Saturday, October 10 as part of its Barktober adoption promotion. The discount includes dogs of all ages, from puppies and adolescents to adults and seniors.

"There is no one right age to adopt," said Amber Kostoff, HSCO executive director. "Some people love raising a puppy, while others are looking for an adolescent to join them on adventures or an older dog who is ready for a quieter home. Our client care team can help adopters find the dog that fits their household style."

Each dog adoption includes spay or neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a microchip, collar, identification tag, and leash. Adopters also receive a complimentary health exam at a participating local veterinary clinic, food to help their new pet transition home, a toys-and-treats goodie box, and special offers from local pet businesses.

HSCO's standard adoption process still applies and required dog licensing fees are separate from the adoption fee.

HSCO's seasonal adoption promotions are designed to expand access to adoptable pets by providing financial assistance and pet care support to adopters. So far in 2026, HSCO has facilitated 754 adoptions, helping animals in need move from the shelter into loving homes throughout the community. With HSCO's kennels currently at capacity, additional shelter space remains essential to meeting diverse community needs, including housing stray animals, accommodating court-ordered pet holds, accepting owner surrenders, and providing urgent care for pets in crisis.

Available dogs can be viewed at hsco.org. HSCO is located at 61170 SE 27th St. in Bend and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10am-5:30pm.



BENSON



WESLEY | PHOTOS COURTESY OF HUMANE SOCIETY OF CENTRAL OREGON

**About the Humane Society of Central Oregon:**

Founded in 1961, the Humane Society of Central Oregon (HSCO) serves people and animals across the region through animal sheltering and adoption, veterinary outreach, pet food assistance and other programs that support the human-animal bond. As a socially conscious shelter, HSCO is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for every animal and the community it serves.

*hsco.org*

## J Bar J

*Continued from page 22*

crisis intervention, street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional living, independent living and supportive housing for youth experiencing homelessness or family crisis. Grandma's House provides shelter and support for pregnant and parenting youth. Kindred Connections surrounds families in crisis with practical support and caring relationships. The at:project provides comprehensive support for survivors of human trafficking.

Across these programs, the circumstances may be very different, but the goal is remarkably consistent: give young people safety, support, skills and opportunities so they can build futures of their own.

Central Oregon has changed enormously since J Bar J first opened its doors nearly 60 years ago. The challenges facing young people have changed with it.

So J Bar J keeps changing, too.

A new building. A new place for young people to take their next step toward independence. A horse offering a lesson that couldn't have happened in a classroom. A conversation between community leaders. A shelter in Redmond where a teenager can find safety — and one day return to show someone else the way forward.

Growth, at its best, isn't about becoming bigger.

It's about becoming better able to meet the moment — and building a community where every young person has the opportunity to move toward a stronger future. Every young person deserves the opportunity to thrive.

*jbarj.org*



PHOTO | COURTESY OF J BAR J YOUTH SERVICES



# Stronger Families. Stronger Community.

**by KRISTIN RODRIGUEZ, Executive Director — Family Resource Center of Central Oregon**

Parenting doesn't come with a handbook and no family should have to figure it all out alone.

For more than 30 years, Family Resource Center of Central Oregon (FRC) has been helping parents and caregivers build stronger relationships with their children and create healthier, more connected families. Serving Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson Counties, FRC provides free, evidence-based parenting education, workshops, coaching, and family support.

FRC's programs give parents and caregivers practical tools they can use every day. Through programs such as Circle of Security, The Incredible Years, and Make Parenting a Pleasure, parents and caregivers learn how to better understand their children's needs, navigate challenging behaviors, manage stress, strengthen communication, and build lasting connection.





PHOTOS | COURTESY OF FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER OF CENTRAL OREGON

But FRC is about more than parenting classes. It's about belonging.

Families find welcoming, judgment-free spaces where they can learn, connect with other parents and caregivers, share experiences, and discover they are not alone. FRC works alongside schools, early learning programs, community organizations, and other local partners to make support accessible to families throughout Central Oregon, including those experiencing isolation, financial stress, transportation challenges, or limited resources.

When a parent or caregiver feels supported, a child benefits. When families have the tools and connections they need, our entire community becomes stronger.

Whether you're a parent or a caregiver looking for support, a community partner interested in collaboration, or a local business or donor who wants to invest in Central Oregon families, there is a place for you at FRC.

Together, we can create a community where families feel supported, children can thrive, and every parent and caregiver knows they don't have to do this alone.

Strengthening families. Building connection. Creating stronger communities.

*frconline.org*

# Salvation Army Helps Donors Build a Legacy

**by KIM BEELER, Director of Communications & Marketing — The Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army Cascade Division Gift Planning team is dedicated to helping donors create meaningful gifts that support The Salvation Army's mission while achieving their personal, family, and financial goals. Through thoughtful planning and personalized service, we help individuals make charitable gifts that create lasting impact for future generations.

Gift planning offers multiple ways to support programs and services that help individuals and families throughout Oregon and Southern Idaho. Whether through a bequest in a will or trust, a charitable gift annuity, a beneficiary designation, gifts of appreciated assets, or other planned giving strategies, donors can choose an approach that reflects their values, priorities, and charitable intentions.

Many gift planning options can also help provide for loved ones. Donors may be able to structure gifts in ways that create reliable income for a spouse, children, or other beneficiaries, helping provide long-term financial security while still supporting causes they care about. Thoughtful planning can balance family needs with charitable goals, creating solutions that benefit both.

We serve as a trusted resource, providing information and guidance on charitable giving opportunities. We work closely with donors and their professional advisors, including attorneys, accountants, and financial planners, to help ensure that gifts are structured to honor each donor's wishes and long-term objectives. Every conversation is centered on understanding the donor's goals, family priorities, and vision for the future.

Many planned gifts offer potential benefits such as lifetime income, financial security for loved ones, tax advantages, and estate planning solutions while advancing The Salvation Army's mission. Most importantly, these gifts help ensure the continued availability of programs that provide hope, compassion, and assistance to people in need. The Salvation Army Cascade Division Gift Planning team is honored to help donors create a legacy of service, compassion, and faith that strengthens communities and benefits future generations.

*cascade.salvationarmy.org*



# Accounting & Bookkeeping Services

## Accounting Firms *(Listed Alphabetically)*

| Company / Address | Phone | Fax | WebSite/Email | Contact | Staff | CO Year Est. | CPAs | Services |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alliance Professionals LLP<br>439 SW Umatilla Ave., Ste. 110<br>Redmond, OR 97756 | 541-548-1735 | 541-923-0211 | www.redmondorcpas.com<br>jwerner@alliancepros.net | Jennifer J. Werner | 7 | 1992 | 2 | Construction, real estate, agriculture & small business. Tax & financial, accounting & advisory service. |
| Ashford & Associates, LLP<br>1143 NE Fourth St.<br>Bend, OR 97701 | 541-382-1021 | 541-382-7273 | www.ashfordcpa.com<br>katie@ashfordcpa.com | Katie Ashford | 5 | 1977 | 1 | Business consulting, estate & trust preparation, entities & individual income tax preparation in the areas of construction, real estate, professional services, medical, agriculture, manufacturing & retail. |
| Azure Tax & Accounting LLC<br>225 NW Franklin Ave., Ste. 3<br>Bend, OR 97703 | 541-550-5700 | 541-550-5718 | www.azurecpa.com<br>adam@azurecpa.com | Adam Groves | 10 | 2017 | 7 | Tax planning & preparation & consulting for small business,individuals, trusts & estates & bookkeeping services. |
| Callan Accounting CPAs & Advisors, LLC<br>855 SW Yates Dr., Ste. 101<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-388-3838 | 541-385-3270 | callancpas.com<br>johnita@callancpas.com | Johnita Callan | 20 | 1987 | 7 | Full scope of tax preparation & business accounting. |
| Capstone Accounting & Tax<br>257 S Pine St.<br>Sisters, OR 97759 | 541-549-1237 | 541-549-4465 | www.capstoneaccounting.com<br>info@capstoneaccounting.com | Lance Brant | 9 | 2004 | 3 | Services tax, audit, business start up, financial planning, small business consulting & planning. |
| Capstone Accounting & Tax<br>180 NW Second St.<br>Prineville, OR 97754 | 541-447-6565 | 541-447-4274 | www.capstoneaccounting.com<br>info@capstoneaccounting.com | Lance Brant | 10 | 2004 | 4 | Tax planning & preparation, real estate, construction, agriculture, manufacturing, financial statement preparation, bookkeeping, business consulting & 1031 exchanges. |
| Capstone Accounting & Tax<br>345 SE Third St.<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-382-5099 | 541-388-1056 | www.capstoneaccounting.com<br>info@capstoneaccounting.com | Lance Brant | 20 | 2004 | 4 | Services tax, audit, business start up, financial planning, small business consulting & planning. |
| Capstone Accounting & Tax<br>735 SW Ninth St.<br>Redmond, OR 97756 | 541-548-3569 | 541-548-3580 | www.capstoneaccounting.com<br>info@capstoneaccounting.com | Lance Brant | 7 | 2017 | 3 | Services tax, audit, business start up, financial planning, small business consulting & planning. |
| Chris Mahr & Associates CPAs<br>805 SW Industrial Way, Ste. 1<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-647-2104 | 541-647-2189 | www.mahrcpas.com<br>kelli@mahrcpas.com | Chris Mahr | 4 | 2011 | 2 | Tax planning & preparation, business planning & consulting, audits of municipalities, commercial & nonprofit entities. Reviews & compilations. |
| Devon A. Gaines CPA, PC<br>404 SW Columbia St., Ste. 230<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-323-6750 | 541-330-0254 | www.dgainescpa.com<br>vikki@dgainescpa.com | Vikki Groshong | 3 | 2009 | 1 | Provides tax planning services & prepares individual, partnership, corporate & nonprofit tax returns. |
| Fowler & Co., Inc.<br>550 SW Industrial Way, Ste. 201<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-550-1656 | 541-550-1656 | www.fowler-cpa.com<br>pr@fowler-cpa.com | Greg Fowler | 6 | 2014 | 1 | Business services: tax planning & preparation, business growth strategies, management improvement coaching, financial modeling, bookkeeping. Personal services: tax planning & preparation, personal financial strategies, retirement planning. |
| Gerdes Financial LLC<br>120 SW Crowell Way, Ste. 100<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-389-7090 | 541-389-6620 | www.gerdesfinancial.com<br>mandy@gerdesfinancial.com | Mandy Larson, Todd M. Gerdes | 2 | 1988 | 2 | Tax preparation, estate & gift taxation, real estate & 1031 exchanges, retirement planning, QuickBooks support, business succession planning & compilation services. |
| Hogue Accountancy, LLC<br>2514 NE Division St.<br>Bend, OR 97703 | 541-382-8234 | 541-389-6084 | www.hogueaccountancy.com<br>carrie@hogueaccountancy.com | Travis Hogue | 4 | 1998 | 1 | Tax returns, financial statements, bookkeeping & accounting. Install/training. |

*Continued on Page 32*


OREGON'S PREMIER CPA & ADVISORY FIRM




As one of Oregon's largest locally-headquartered CPA and advisory firms, Jones & Roth delivers trusted financial expertise. From audit and assurance, accounting, business advisory, tax, retirement planning, and consulting, our team serves businesses, nonprofits, and individuals throughout the Pacific Northwest. jrcpa.com

Jones & Roth
CPAs & Business Advisors

Bend | Eugene | Hillsboro

Not listed?
Call 541-388-5665
or email cbn@cascadebusnews.com
& get your company on a list!

NIGHTLY BUSINESS PATROLS

98.45% CLIENT RETENTION RATE




Security PROS INCORPORATED
Certified Security Professionals
1994 Celebrating 32 Years 2026

541-330-0404
info@securityprosbend.com
securityprosbend.com

# Relationships Matter Here

**by KRYSTA SMITH, Senior Manager — Kernutt Stokes**



Our community is unique in so many ways. Central Oregon is home to a wide array of businesses of different industries and sizes. As individuals, we treasure our time spent outside of the office. As professionals, we place a high value on personal, community-focused connections. A conversation on a trail, a chairlift, or at a community event can become a trusted referral, a new partnership, or the beginning of a long-term business relationship.

That relationship-driven culture is one of our region's strengths, but it is being tested by forces outside of our small but mighty community. Central Oregon continues to attract talent, investment, and entrepreneurial activity, even as employers contend with housing affordability, workforce constraints, higher operating costs, and economic uncertainty.

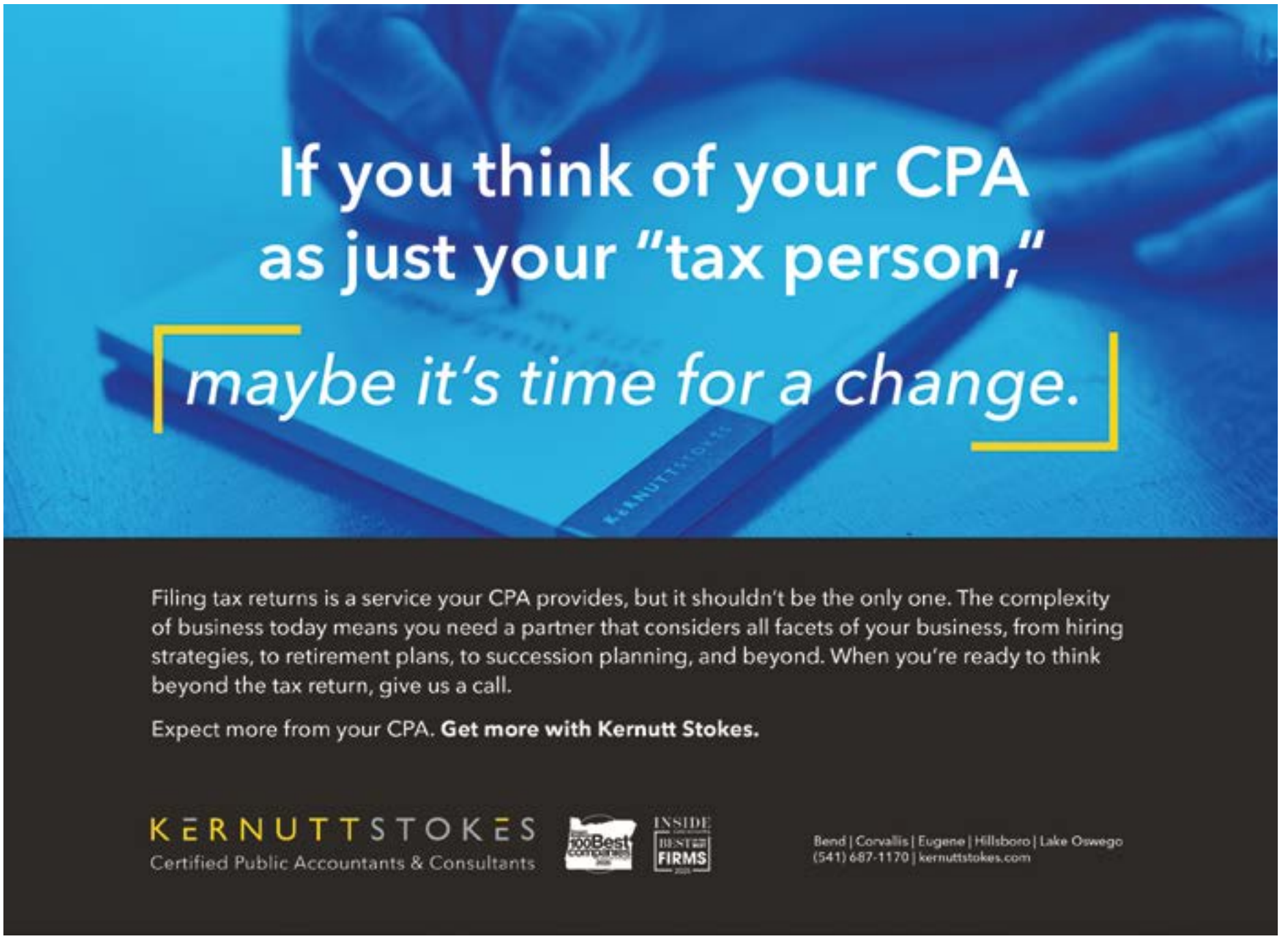
> Our ties to the community are not separate from our work; they help us understand the people and businesses in the community we get to call home.

The professional services industry is also in a period of uncertainty. Private equity investment has expanded across accounting and other advisory industries, often bringing additional capital, scale, and operational discipline, but it can also increase the emphasis on utilization, growth targets, and standardized measures of financial success. Those measures have value, but they can crowd out service quality and strong connections. Artificial intelligence introduces a different kind of change. It can automate research, organize information, and reduce repetitive work, but some worry about its impact on job availability and human connection.

> A conversation on a trail, a chairlift, or at a community event can become a trusted referral, a new partnership, or the beginning of a long-term business relationship.

Kernutt Stokes shares many of the qualities that define Central Oregon's business community. Founded in Eugene in 1945, we remain Oregon-based and locally owned. In Bend, our team participates in the Bend and Redmond Chambers of Commerce, supports Economic Development for Central Oregon, and contributes time and resources to various local nonprofit organizations. We value human connection and community involvement. We also cherish our capacity so that we can better serve our clients. Our ties to the community are not separate from our work; they help us understand the people and businesses in the community we get to call home.

*KernuttStokes.com*



# Accounting & Bookkeeping Services

## Accounting Firms *(Listed Alphabetically)*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

| Company / Address | Phone | Fax | WebSite/Email | Contact | Staff | CO Year Est. | CPAs | Services |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors<br>300 SW Columbia St., Ste. 201<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-382-3590 | 541-382-3587 | www.jrcpa.com<br>info@jrcpa.com | Jordan Dawley, Evan Dickens, Brian Newton | 15 | 1946 | 8 | Tax, audit, assurance, advisory, business transitions & retirement plans for companies of all sizes. Specialized industry practices in construction & real estate, dental, medical & nonprofit organizations. Retirement plan audit specialists. |
| Kernutt Stokes<br>1777 SW Chandler Ave., Ste. 280<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-749-4020 | 541-345-8540 | www.kernuttstokes.com<br>adelaney@kernuttstokes.com | Amy Delaney, Trever Campbell | 14 | 1945 | 8 | Tax, audit/assurance, client accounting services, retirement plan services, estate planning, business consulting. Industries include family-owned business, construction, agriculture, transportation, medical/dental, beverage, manufacturing & real estate. |
| Michael J. Mohan, CPA<br>106 N Main St.<br>Prineville, OR 97754 | 541-447-3299 | 541-447-2854 | www.mohancpa.com<br>office@mohancpa.com | Mike Mohan | 6 | 1983 | 1 | Tax planning & preparation, tax audits, financial statements, estate planning, financial planning, payroll & bookkeeping. |
| Mode Hanus, LLP<br>354 SW Upper Terrace Dr., Ste. 103<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-385-0534 | 541-385-0547 | www.bendtax.com<br>info@bendtax.com | Patti Mode, Michelle Hanus | 2 | 1971 | 2 | Income tax planning & preparation for businesses & individuals. Business consulting including start-up, acquisition & succession planning. Accounting services, including bookkeeping, payroll & financial statement preparation. |
| Nelson & Nicassio Tax Accountants, LLP<br>45 NW Hawthorne Ave.<br>Bend, OR 97703 | 541-382-3468 | 541-382-0533 | www.nnbendtax.com | Larry Nelson, Andrea Nicassio | 4 | 1994 | 1 | Tax preparation for individuals, small to medium size businesses & medical practices audits of municipalities, commercial & non-profit entities estate taxation. |
| Patrick Casey & Co. LLP<br>796 SW Bradbury Way, Ste. 101<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-322-2142 | 541-322-2146 | www.patrickandcasey.com<br>dover@patrickandcasey.com | Kyle Dover, Cody W. Martin | 17 | 1980 | 8 | Income taxes, accounting services & business consulting. |
| Pro CFO<br>320 SW Century Dr., Ste. 405<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-728-0444 | N/A | www.procfo.com<br>srunyon@procfo.com | James Jans | 8 | 2007 | 4 | Helps family-based entrepreneurial businesses that have contributed to their communities as one of their line items. Provides key fractional CFO & accounting services to allow these businesses to carry out their lifelong mission. |
| Riley Wigle CPAs, LLC<br>53 NW Irving Ave.<br>Bend, OR 97703 | 541-389-6401 | 541-389-5940 | www.rileywiglecpas.com<br>info@rileywiglecpas.com | Kristin Wigle, Meah Cukrov | 6 | 1979 | 4 | Financial statement presentation, business consulting. Tax preparation for construction, real estate, 1031 exchanges, manufacturing & retail. |
| Sorren<br>395 SW Bluff Dr., Ste. 200<br>Bend, OR 97702 | 541-382-4791 | 541-388-1124 | www.sorren.com | Breanna Whitley | 28 | 1973 | 14 | Financial statements & audits, tax planning & preparation, financial planning, business consulting, bookkeeping & payroll services & estate planning. |
| Tyler Accounting LLP<br>3155 NE Elizabeth Ct.<br>Bend, OR 97701 | 541-389-1237 | 541-389-2207 | www.tyler-accounting.com<br>info@tyler-accounting.com | Merle Tyler, Barbara Tyler | 3 | 2009 | 1 | Full-range of accounting, tax preparation, business consultation, estate tax returns, Quickbooks training & bookkeeping services. |
| Werner Crawford Accounting, LLP<br>250 NW Claypool St.<br>Prineville, OR 97754 | 541-447-7776 | 541-416-8926 | george@cpa-wc.com | George Werner, Susan Crawford | 5 | 2008 | 3 | Tax, financial & estate planning, tax preparation, payroll bookkeeping, financial statements. |

**This is a sampling of Central Oregon's Accounting Firms. If you would like to be added to this list, please email cbn@cascadebusnews.com.**


One stop writing shop
Incubating writers & writing

Do you have a book or a blog you want to write?

Two-time *New York Times* bestselling writer—
Linden Gross—can help.

WRITING COACH ▪ EDITOR ▪ WRITER



Writing that sounds like you ONLY BETTER.

541-317-1509 | linden@lindengross.com | OneStopWritingShop.com

PAYING TOO MUCH FOR YOUR PRINTER'S MAINTENANCE?

$59.00

- ✓ Cleaning/Repair Labor Onsite in Bend
- ✓ 10% OFF "New Customer" First Toner Order *(Compatibles Only)*
- ✓ No Contract Necessary
- ✓ Mention Cascade Business News & Receive an Additional 5% Discount
- ✓ Small Enough to Care; Big Enough to Take Care of You!
- ✓ Free Recycling of Printers, Toners & Ink Cartridges
- New Tree Planted with Every Service & Sale



If we cannot fix it, No charge to you!
2669 NE Twin Knolls Dr., Suite 205, Bend
(541) 318-5211
Find us on: facebook

PRINTER RESOURCES AND RECYCLING
23 Years proudly serving Central & Eastern Oregon

www.MyPrinterResources.com

# Planning a Business Exit?

## Oregon's QSBS Change Could Affect What You Keep

**by MICHAEL CHO, Partner, CPA — Capstone Accounting & Tax – Bend**



For business owners considering an exit, one of the biggest questions is simple: How much will I actually keep?

That answer just changed for Oregon owners.

Qualified Small Business Stock (QSBS) has long been an important federal tax benefit for qualifying founders, employees and investors. Under Internal Revenue Code Section 1202, eligible shareholders may exclude some or all of the gain from selling qualifying C corporation stock from federal income tax.

**Beginning in 2026, Oregon no longer follows that federal treatment.**

What Changed?

Under Senate Bill 1507, Oregon now requires taxpayers to add back federally excluded QSBS gain when calculating Oregon taxable income. In practical terms, a gain that may be excluded from federal tax can still be subject to Oregon tax.

That difference can be significant. For example, a $10 million gain that is fully excluded federally could still result in approximately $990,000 of Oregon tax at the state's top individual rate.

At the same time, federal QSBS rules became more generous in 2025 for certain newly issued stock, creating an even greater difference between the federal and Oregon tax treatment.

Who Needs to Pay Attention?

QSBS applies to qualifying stock originally issued by a C corporation and is subject to specific requirements, including rules around the company's size, business activities and the shareholder's holding period.

That means not every privately held business qualifies. Many small businesses operate as LLCs or S corporations.

**But if you are a founder, early employee or investor holding qualifying C corporation stock and you may sell in the next several years, Oregon's change should be part of your planning.**

It is also important to avoid making an entity change solely to pursue QSBS. A conversion to a C corporation involves tax, legal and operational considerations, and Oregon's new treatment changes the potential benefit. The right structure depends on the broader goals and circumstances of the business.

Plan Before You Have a Buyer

The biggest takeaway is not simply that Oregon changed its tax law. It is that exit planning needs to happen before the exit is underway.

If you are considering a sale in the next three to five years, start by looking at:

- Entity structure and ownership
- QSBS eligibility and holding periods
- Federal and Oregon tax exposure
- Asset versus stock sale considerations
- Purchase price allocation, earnouts and timing
- Financial records and documentation

**Early planning gives you time to understand the options** and address issues while there is still time to make informed decisions.

A successful exit is about more than the sale price. It is about understanding what you will actually keep after taxes and transaction costs and making sure that outcome supports what comes next.

> A successful exit is about more than the sale price. It is about understanding what you will actually keep after taxes and transaction costs.

Start Planning Now

You do not need a buyer or a firm sale date to start planning. In fact, waiting until you are ready to sell can limit your options and leave significant money on the table.

**If you are considering an exit in the next three to five years,** now is the time to understand what your business could be worth, how the transaction may be taxed, and what you can do today to maximize what you ultimately keep. The earlier you plan, the more time you have to identify opportunities, address potential tax issues and structure the transaction with your after-tax proceeds in mind.

A business sale may be one of the largest financial decisions you ever make. Don't wait until the deal is on the table to find out how much you will actually keep. Contact me at Capstone's Bend office, and let's start planning now to protect the value you've spent years building.

*capstoneaccounting.com*



# who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who who's who



Leah Etling

**Leah Etling** has joined the **Cascade Publications Inc.** team in a part-time capacity as the Feature Writer/Online Newsletter Editor. After writing feature articles for *Cascade Business News* over the last 19 months, the publication welcomes the veteran news professional to its staff.

Etling is an award-winning journalist who started her print journalism career at age 16 at the Santa Barbara News-Press. After receiving her bachelor's in history with honors at UC Santa Barbara in 2000, she earned a master's in journalism from UC Berkeley, where her thesis on the status of women as sportswriters was published by the Associated Press Sports Editors association (2002). Working at the Santa Rosa Press Democrat and Santa Barbara News-Press from 2001-2006, Etling earned awards for her long-form feature writing and breaking news reporting from the Associated Press Sports Editors (2002), California Newspaper Publishers Association (2002 and 2004) and National Education Writer's Association (2003).



Sean Hemenway

**The Shelter Studio** welcomes **Sean Hemenway** as our newest project manager, a dedicated professional who will manage our increasing workload while ensuring we maintain the high standards of oversight, quality and tight scheduling you expect from us.

Hemenway has over 25 years of experience in hospitality, commercial, and residential design, working on projects from small ADUs to large developments. He focuses on residential design, emphasizing the connection between people, place, and lifestyle. Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Hemenway's architectural background helps him create homes that fit seamlessly within their surroundings.

He studied at BCIT and the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design, gaining practical experience while working in Vancouver. Hemenway is committed to staying updated on industry trends and sustainable practices to ensure each home is tailored to the client's needs.

Hemenway's presence on the team allows us to keep our surging momentum going without missing a beat. For our general contractors and clients on active sites, Hemenway is working to streamline communication, protect project timelines and uphold quality standards.



Sophie Anguilla

The **Bethlehem Inn** welcomes **Sophie Anguilla** as development coordinator. She has a background in fundraising as well as event planning both in the nonprofit and for profit sectors. Anguilla grew up in Portland, Oregon, and has a bachelor of arts from St. Mary's College of California, where she focused her studies on Justice, Community, and Leadership. She also has a certificate in Nonprofit Fundraising and an Executive Leadership Certificate from The People's Nonprofit Accelerator. Anguilla is delighted to immerse herself in Central Oregon's nonprofit community and share her talents with the Bethlehem Inn, an organization she has admired throughout her 11 years in Bend.



David Gilmore



Lauren Kelling



Jenny Andrews

**The Agency Bend** is expanding its roster of Central Oregon real estate professionals with the addition of **David Gilmore** and The Kelling Andrews Group, led by **Lauren Kelling** and **Jenny Andrews**.

With more than 26 years in real estate, Gilmore brings extensive experience in luxury real estate, client service and relocation to The Agency Bend. A native of San Diego, Gilmore began his real estate career in 1998 in the coastal community of Del Mar. His background also includes luxury hospitality, an experience that has shaped his highly service-oriented approach to real estate.

Gilmore works with both buyers and sellers, with particular expertise in relocation and luxury home marketing. His approach combines strategic marketing, video and social media with personalized guidance throughout the transaction.

The Kelling Andrews Group brings together two Central Oregon professionals with complementary backgrounds and a shared emphasis on relationships, creativity and service.

Kelling has called Central Oregon home for 13 years and brings more than a decade of experience as a Downtown Bend business owner. Her entrepreneurial background, local knowledge and experience building a relationship-driven business have translated naturally into her real estate career. She works with local buyers and sellers as well as clients relocating to Central Oregon and those seeking investment opportunities.

Andrews has been a licensed Oregon broker for more than five years and has worked across multiple facets of the real estate industry, including as an agent, transaction coordinator and listing coordinator. Her background in finance and fashion, combined with her experience as a collegiate golfer at the University of Denver, informs her approach to real estate with equal parts strategy, creativity, curiosity and competitive spirit.

Robinson also welcomed Gilmore, noting that the two have worked alongside each other throughout their careers.

The additions come as The Agency Bend continues to grow its presence in Central Oregon. The brokerage combines local market expertise with the resources of a global real estate and lifestyle brand, offering clients a collaborative approach, concierge-level service, creative marketing, cutting-edge technology and access to a global network.



Patty Halsey

**InsureBend** and its founder Henrik Jahn announce a strong addition to their local health insurance team, **Patty Halsey**.

Halsey brings more than five years of insurance industry experience serving individuals and families, small businesses and Medicare. Her expertise and compassion come from over twenty years of working alongside Central Oregon businesses, nonprofits and community leadership. She is thrilled to be working with a locally-owned agency that makes customer care and genuine connection their highest priority.

When not advising clients, you can sometimes see Halsey, an ardent supporter of the performing arts, on stage in local musical theater productions or volunteering for Central Oregon Veterans Associations.



Perry Atkinson

**theDove Media, Inc.**, led by President and CEO **Perry Atkinson**, announced that it has completed its acquisition of KBND-TV 14 in Bend, with the acquisition officially closing on September 22. The station will now operate under the new KDJA call letters and will be known to viewers as **KDJA-TV 14**.

KDJA-TV 14 will continue serving Bend and surrounding Central Oregon communities on Channel 14, offering theDove's primary television programming along with additional programming across its subchannels.

Over the air viewers can watch KDJA-TV 14 on channel 14, with Newsmax on 14.2, CBN News on 14.3 and NRB TV on 14.4. In Central Oregon, KDJA-TV 14 is also available on TDS Telecom cable channels 13 (SD) and 613 (HD), and on TDS+ channel 15.

The television station joins theDove's existing Central Oregon radio station, KDJA 94.9 FM, creating a unified and recognizable identity for theDove's television and radio ministry throughout the region.

KDJA-TV 14 viewers can expect trusted Christian programming, biblical teaching, meaningful conversations, family-focused content and current events presented through a Christian worldview. Programming includes theDove-produced shows *Focus Today*, *Mornings on theDove*, *Season to Shine*, *The Ancient Church* and *Ministries on the Move*, along with nationally recognized Christian programs.

**Economic Development for Central Oregon** (EDCO) has announced the five Early Stage finalists who will compete at the 2026 Bend Venture Conference (BVC), taking place October 15-16.

Recently, ten Early Stage semifinalists pitched their companies in a fast-paced, three-minute format at Worthy Brewing for Central Oregon PubTalk. The audience and a panel of expert judges selected the five finalists who will advance to the Early Stage competition at BVC.

In addition to advancing to the BVC main stage, EYEONIZE, the audience favorite at PubTalk, walked away with a $5,000 award courtesy of Washington Trust Bank. Central Oregon Early Stage finalists at BVC will also be eligible for an award of at least $40,000 to be announced during the conference.

In alphabetical order, the Early Stage finalists that will compete at the BVC are Closeoutdoor (Bend) — Revolutionizing the way that brands deal with excess inventory; Ebb Health, Inc. (Portland, Oregon) — Developing a platform for durable relief of neuropathic pain; EYEONIZE (Bend) — Energize Your Eyes, Lateral Systems (Lake Oswego, Oregon) — Automated monitoring platform for commercial indoor farms watches out for what can go wrong 24/7 to reduce waste and improve farm efficiencies; and VeriBuy (Bend) — Turns a dealer's phone walk-around into a defensible trade-in offer: an objective condition grade, a fair price and a report the seller can see.

Recently, **Maragas Winery** earned "outstanding" ratings for two of their wines with acclaimed international wine critic James Suckling.

**Doug Maragas**, winemaker and vineyard manager for Maragas Winery for over two decades, explained that when encouraged in an email from the Oregon Wine Board that now would be a good time to submit wines for evaluation by James Suckling, arguably, the world's current foremost wine critic, Maragas submitted two of their wines.

Although Maragas makes multiple limited production wines from Cabernet Franc and Petite Sirah to Pinot Gris, Maragas felt Zinfandel and Riesling were "two opposite ends of the wine type spectrum and would be most telling of the quality and breadth of what we can grow and produce here in Central Oregon."

The results are in, and both wines received outstanding ratings by James Suckling. Legal Zin received a score of 90, and the dry Riesling Cuvée 23 received a score of 93.

After medalling in the *San Francisco Chronicle* Wine Competition for decades and this current evaluation by James Suckling, the conclusion is straightforward — this is a great place to grow grapes and make very tasty, naturally made wine.

Fifteen Oregon arts organizations will receive $10,000 grants to strengthen K-12 arts education for the upcoming year through the **Oregon Arts Commission**'s Arts Learning grant program.

Arts Learning grants support projects that provide K-12 students with responsive learning opportunities in and through the arts. These projects also foster the exchange of knowledge between artists and educators and positively impact the achievement, skills and attitudes of learners.

Applications were evaluated by a community review panel. The panel's funding recommendations were then approved by the Oregon Arts Commission.

Funds for this grant program are provided by the state of Oregon general fund through its support of the Oregon Arts Commission and by a federal grant to the Arts Commission by the National Endowment for the Arts.

More Who's Who Next Page ▶

## Who's Who

*Continued from previous page*

The FY2027 Arts Learning Grants Awardee in Central Oregon will go to the **Open Arts Center** in Bend to support equitable access to arts education for students at Bear Creek Elementary, a bilingual Title I school in Bend that recently lost dedicated arts instruction. The Open Arts Center will partner with school educators to provide three sequential six-week artist residencies during the 2026-2027 school year, engaging approximately 75-90 students in hands-on visual, performing and interdisciplinary arts experiences led by professional teaching artists. It will culminate with public showcases of student learning.

The **Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission** is now accepting applications for the 2026 Cannabis Technical Rules Advisory Committee. By joining the focused advisory committee meetings, you'll collaborate with industry leaders, public health experts, and agency partners to address key issues in the marketplace. Apply by 5pm October 7 by completing the application form at bit.ly/4rEWkoJ.

The **Deschutes Historical Museum** announces its return of Escape the Museum: The Curse of the Curate's Collection, an escape room experience based on real local history. Up to six players team up working together to solve puzzles, follow the clues, and uncover the whereabouts of the Curate's collection. Assisting historian A.R. Chive, your team of research interns are tasked to locate a collection of missing 19th-century artifacts before your rivals do…Tick-Tock… you only have 60 minutes, so every second is crucial to your escape!

The Real Story is that in 1909, *The Bend Bulletin* reported that Rev. J. A. Mitchell, local curate and acquirer of antiquities, was "collecting towards a museum" for the community of Bend. After his death in 1911, Mitchell's relics and curios were frequently exhibited around town, eventually finding a permanent home at the Deschutes Public Library. However, in 1969, the few remaining items in the collection mysteriously disappeared from a small, locked room in the library's basement. The only remnants of the once-noted collection, purchased by the public and the City of Bend in 1912 for the formation of a museum, were never found. UNTIL NOW!

The Curse of the Curate's Collection escape room program kicks off October 2 and October 3. This year the museum has increased the fun to five weekends and includes 60 one-hour slots of history mystery throughout the month of October. Tickets are available online via deschuteshistory.org or bit.ly/4hpgsYD.

The **High Desert Museum** is now accepting nominations for the 2027 Jordan Schnitzer Prize of the West (the Prize), an award that celebrates and honors uncommon collaboration and innovation in solving the legacy challenges of the American West.

Launched in partnership with Jordan D. Schnitzer and the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, nominations will be accepted on the High Desert Museum's website through December 31, 2026. For more information on the Jordan Schnitzer Prize of the West, nomination eligibility, and selection process, visit highdesertmuseum.org/schnitzer-prize.

In a moment when the American West is confronting unprecedented ecological challenges, the Prize seeks to highlight innovative responses to urgent issues such as water scarcity, wildfire, tribal sovereignty, land stewardship, ecosystem change, best ranching practices and more—offering models that can be replicated in other areas of the country facing similar pressures.

Now in its second year, the $50,000 prize is awarded annually to an individual or a small group of individuals whose work addresses the environmental and conservation challenges of the American West, with a particular focus on innovation, impact, and collaboration. In addition to the $50,000 cash prize, the winner will receive a piece of original artwork during an award ceremony in Portland, Oregon.

An esteemed panel of 13 advisors with deep backgrounds in tribal leadership, ranching and farming, water policy and river restoration, and prominent academic centers focused on the American West selected Parry's nomination.

The Prize advisers also recognized four esteemed finalists in 2026: **Amy Bowers Cordalis**, **Kelley Delpit**, **Julie Rentner** and **Laura Van Riper**.

Applications and nominations for the Prize will be evaluated by a panel of advisers composed of former tribal leaders, ranchers and farmers, water policy and river restoration practitioners, a poet laureate and renowned historian, directors of prominent academic centers that focus on the study of the American West, and more.

The **Central Oregon Tool Library** is celebrating one year of making tools accessible to all.

The Tool Library provides a wide range of tools that can be checked out just like you would a book at the library. The complete inventory can be viewed online at cotool.org, where you can create a membership account which acts as your "library card," allowing you to reserve tools in advance or stop by the shipping container to browse. Membership fees are voluntary with a sliding scale, suggested donation based on income.

The Central Oregon Tool Library is a community project making tools accessible to all. Borrowing instead of buying reduces waste and costs, fosters skills, and builds connections.

September 18-September 27, communities across Oregon and Southwest Washington came together for **SOLVE**'s annual Beach & Riverside Cleanup. During a ten-day volunteer effort, 1,553 volunteers participated in 96 cleanup and restoration projects across 15 counties, contributing more than 3,100 hours of service. Projects took place in Clackamas, Clark, Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Deschutes, Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Washington, and Yamhill counties.

Together, volunteers removed nearly 9,000 pounds of litter and debris, helping prevent pollution from traveling through local waterways to beaches and the Pacific Ocean. Volunteers also cleared over 9,450 square feet of invasive species, an area larger than three tennis courts, and mulched 300 plants to support healthier habitats and more resilient landscapes.

Locally, **Pick It Up, Bend!** returned for a second year at the Old Mill District. Fourty-two volunteers spent the morning removing 175 pounds of litter from some of Bend's most popular recreational spaces. The event also continued SOLVE's partnership with the Johnson Ohana Foundation. SOLVE joined Jack Johnson's concert in Bend as a Village Green partner, connecting a morning of local volunteer action with an evening focused on community and the environment.

*Pick It Up, Bend!* 2026 was made possible through the support from Old Mill District, Hayden Homes Theatre, Lithia & Driveway and Cascade Disposal, and part of SOLVE's growing *Pick It Up!* regional cleanup initiative, which unites residents, businesses and local organizations to improve shared public spaces city by city.



LORI AND LIA LUBBESMEYER | PHOTO BY GWEN SHOEMAKER PHOTOGRAPHY

After 17 years working from their Old Mill District studio, twin sisters **Lori** and **Lisa Lubbesmeyer** have come to know the area from countless angles.

The owners of **Lubbesmeyer Art Studio & Gallery** have walked and biked along the Deschutes River on their way to work, watched the light change across the buildings and smokestacks, and experienced the district through every Central Oregon season.

They've also watched the district evolve as it continues to embrace the timber history that powered Bend for decades.

So when the Lubbesmeyers were selected as the **Old Mill District**'s 2026 Winter Art Series artists, they drew from these years of observations to create what they call a "love letter" to the district they've called home for nearly two decades.

This sentiment was heavily reflected in their final art submission, titled *Then and Now*.

The piece is a mixed-media painting that blends elements of the past and the present to celebrate the Old Mill District's 25th anniversary. It combines recognizable landmarks with more subtle references to the Old Mill District's history, restoration, and connection to the Bend community.

This is the tenth year the Old Mill District has commissioned an original art piece as part of its Winter Art Series. Each year, the artwork is featured as the backbone of the district's winter marketing campaign.

This year's selection was a full-circle moment for the Lubbesmeyers. Lori and Lisa were the first artists chosen when the Old Mill District began its annual Winter Art Series in 2017. That original piece featured the brilliant colors for which the sisters are well known.

They took a considerably different approach this year, however. *Then and Now* uses a muted winter palette that the sisters felt also suited a silver anniversary.

Within the piece are several familiar Old Mill District landmarks such as the iconic smokestacks and red powerhouse building, the Hayden Homes Amphitheater, the Mill A building, and Bend's historic train depot that was saved and moved to the district in 1999.

Other details require a closer look. A small mound references the massive amounts of sawdust removed as the former mill site was being redeveloped. And the flow of the river into the sky represents the restoration and renewal of a stretch of the Deschutes River once choked with logs and industrial debris.

In addition, historic images of Old Mill District founder Bill Smith and his wife, Trish, are also incorporated into the piece. The sisters used multiple focal points to move viewers through the artwork and make room for the places and ideas they wanted to represent. The restrained use of color serves a similar purpose. Several buildings appear primarily in black and white, a reference to historic photographs of the property. In addition, this allows the eye to move through the piece rather than settle immediately on one element. The result rewards viewers who spend some time with the painting.



**New hires, promotions, accolades, awards, retiring? Send us your Who's Who!**

Send a high resolution head shot and a short, 100- to 150-word writeup
to CBN@CascadeBusNews.com to be seen in the next edition of *Cascade Business News*.

# Drop Thesis Partners with Returning Veterans Project to Expand Access to Psilocybin-Assisted Therapy for Veterans

**by GEORELL BRACELIN — Drop Thesis**

Drop Thesis, a licensed psilocybin service center in downtown Bend, announces a new, exciting partnership with the Returning Veterans Project (RVP), a nonprofit serving veterans, service members, and their families across Oregon and Southwest Washington since 2005. Together, the two organizations have launched The Path Forward Program, an initiative that allows local and regional businesses to directly sponsor psilocybin-assisted therapy journeys for veterans in Central Oregon — at no cost to the veteran.

The partnership addresses a gap that has long stood between veterans and emerging mental health treatments: cost. Under the program, sponsorship, fully tax-deductible and routed through RVP's 501(c)(3), covers a veteran's complete three-phase journey: preparation, a guided psilocybin experience at Drop Thesis's licensed Bend facility, and structured integration support.

"We started Drop Thesis because we watched this work change lives, and as we've grown, we see how veterans need a way to access this kind of support that doesn't depend on their ability to pay," said Gary Bracelin, Drop Thesis founder and partner. "Partnering with RVP means we're not just offering a service, we're offering a real path forward, backed by an organization veterans already know and trust."

The partnership arrives alongside a growing body of clinical research into psilocybin's potential for veterans specifically. A pilot clinical trial from The Ohio State University's Center for Psychedelic Drug Research and Education, published in July 2026 in Communications Medicine, found that 75% of veterans with severe, treatment-resistant PTSD were in full remission one month after psilocybin-assisted therapy — with no serious adverse events. Separately, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has launched a major multi-site study, PIVOT (Psilocybin Intervention for Veterans Overcoming Treatment-Resistant Depression), enrolling at least 240 veterans across five VA medical centers through 2031.



"Veterans should have options for care, both within and parallel to the traditional system," said Amy Almond-Schmid, executive director of the Returning Veterans Project. "This partnership gives us another meaningful tool to offer the veterans who come to us looking for something that can help. Since 2005, RVP has worked to remove the barriers, including cost, stigma, and access, that keep veterans from the healing they deserve. This partnership is a natural extension of that mission."

The Path Forward Program is designed to be simple for sponsoring businesses. RVP helps determine veteran eligibility and manages the charitable funds, while Drop Thesis provides all clinical care, from initial preparation through final integration.

Sam Gross, a therapist, licensed psilocybin facilitator at Drop Thesis, and U.S. Army veteran, will help lead the program's veteran-facing work. "As both a therapist and a veteran, I understand how important trust, choice, and feeling understood can be when someone is considering a new approach to their mental health," said Gross. "What excites me about The Path Forward Program is that it gives veterans another option and removes cost from the equation. Being able to support fellow veterans through that process, both clinically and as someone who has worn the uniform myself, is incredibly meaningful to me."

RVP has served more than 5,200 veterans, service members, and their families since its founding, connecting them to free, confidential mental and physical health services through a network of licensed volunteer providers. Since opening in Bend in 2023, Drop Thesis has become a leading licensed psilocybin service center in Central Oregon, offering guided journeys grounded in preparation, facilitation, and integration.




PHOTOS | COURTESY OF DROP THESIS

Businesses interested in sponsoring a veteran's journey through The Path Forward Program can reach out to portal@dropthesis.com, call Drop Thesis directly at 458-202-7111, or contact Gary Bracelin at gary@dropthesis.com to learn more. Veterans who are interested in the program can call 458-202-7111 or reach out directly to kris@dropthesis.com.

**About Drop Thesis:**

As one of the first in the nation, Drop Thesis is a state-licensed psilocybin service center located in downtown Bend, offering guided, professionally facilitated psilocybin experiences grounded in preparation, safe administration, and structured integration.

**About the Returning Veterans Project:**

The Returning Veterans Project (RVP) founded in 2005, is a nonprofit organization connecting veterans, service members, and their families to free, confidential mental and physical health services across Oregon and Southwest Washington. Clients use RVPs online directory to access individualized care from a network of highly qualified volunteer health Providers, without any fees or strings attached.

*dropthesis.com*
*returningveterans.org*

# Praxis Health Finalizes Its 2027 Insurance Network Early to Help Patients Navigate a Shifting Market

**by NOEL JAVIER, Director Of Marketing — Praxis Health**

As Open Enrollment approaches on October 15, Praxis Health is confirming which insurance carriers it will be in-network with for 2027, ahead of the usual timeline. The move comes amid a wave of disruption across the health insurance industry, marked by payer exits and shifting contracts among both national and regional insurers. Praxis Health's goal is straightforward: give patients the time and clarity they need to choose coverage that keeps their care team in place, rather than leaving them to navigate a surprise mid-year.

Recent examples include Providence's move to wind down most of its health insurance business, Health Net's exit from parts of the market, and continued network narrowing among national carriers including United Healthcare. Employers, health systems, and patients across Oregon are all navigating similar decisions right now. Against that backdrop, Praxis Health chose to finalize its 2027 network today rather than wait.

"Insurance is changing all around us and we'd rather not wait for the market to settle before making a clear decision about our insurance network," said Dr. Jessica Morgan, chief medical officer of Praxis Health. "Every insurer we work with has real strengths and real limitations. We cannot control those factors, but what we can control is being decisive, transparent, and early, so our patients have enough time to plan"

No insurance partner is perfect. Network strength varies by community, coverage differs between Medicare Advantage and commercial plans, and factors like prior authorization and referral approval all shape a patient's real-world access to care. Praxis Health weighed all of these factors before finalizing this decision, and its goal, and its obligation to patients, is to ensure every decision supports access to care.

The shift is landing differently in every community Praxis Health serves, and local providers are already navigating it with their own patients. In Portland, Chris Aichele, ARNP, has been direct about what network changes mean in daily practice.

"I've had patients lose access to specialists they had been seeing for years," said Chris Aichele, ARNP, Pacific Medical Group North Portland, Praxis Health. "Not because their condition changed but because their insurance plan is no longer contracted with their specialist. I've had planned surgeries get cancelled when a specialist and insurance company can't negotiate with one another and the contract ends with little notice. Leaving these decisions until the last minute hurts patients. We want our patients choosing their next plan on their own terms, with enough time and information to do it right."

Praxis Health CEO Dan McCarthy echoed that commitment. "We built this organization to be a reliable primary care leader in this state, and we want to align with insurers who are equally invested in a sustainable care network for our communities. That means finalizing our carrier lineup now, ahead of open enrollment, so our patients have enough time to make an informed decision about their healthcare."

Patients enrolled in an affected plan will receive direct notice, access to a dedicated support line, and in-clinic help evaluating their options. Medicare Open Enrollment runs October 15 through December 7; ACA marketplace and employer benefits enrollment periods follow later this fall, and Medicaid and CCO members should also confirm their coverage with their clinic. Because an insurance carrier's own provider directory isn't always current, Praxis Health recommends checking GoPraxisHealth.com/insurance-updates for the most accurate 2027 coverage information rather than relying on a carrier's listing alone. Medicare Advantage members will be presented with the full range of in-network plans; Praxis Health does not recommend a specific replacement plan and encourages members to consult a licensed insurance broker, a SHIBA/SHIP counselor, or 1-800-MEDICARE for personalized guidance.

Praxis Health's focus is on making this easier for our patients. Patients have the final say in choosing their own insurance and care team; our job is simply to give them the time and information to choose well.

Praxis Health will continue to be in-network with Aetna, Cigna, First Choice, PacificSource, Moda, and Regence BlueCross BlueShield in 2027, with additional partnerships expected to be announced soon, but will not be contracting with United Healthcare*. Patients with questions can call their clinic, for a full list of our clinics click here or visit GoPraxisHealth.com/insurance-updates.

**UHC Commercial to be determined for 2027, UHC Medicare Advantage terminated for 2027. Providence and Health Net are no longer offering insurance in 2027.*

**About Praxis Health:**

Praxis Health is a provider-led, independent primary care organization with more than 30 clinic locations across Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Built on the belief that independent, whole-person primary care leads to better outcomes and stronger communities, Praxis Health partners with patients, employers, and reliable insurance carriers to deliver consistent, relationship-based care.

*GoPraxisHealth.com*

# Central Oregon Business Calendar

*Event Details at CascadeBusNews.com/Business-Events*

## BUSINESS EVENTS



**October 7**
6pm City of Bend Virtual and In-Person City Council Business Meeting at Bend City Hall Council Chambers.

**October 7**
6:30pm City of Madras Virtual and In-Person Planning Commission Meeting at Madras City Council Chambers.

**October 8**
8-9am Madras – Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Coffee Cuppers at Madras – Jefferson County Chamber.

**October 8**
11:45am-1pm Connect W Munch & Mingle at Currents at The Riverhouse, Bend.

**October 8**
6:30pm Madras – Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Candidate Forum, Madras Mayor, at Madras City Council Chambers.

**October 10**
11am League of Women Voters of Deschutes County Candidate Forum 2026, U.S. Congressional District 5 Candidates at Ridgeview High School, Redmond.

**October 12**
5:30-7:30pm City of Bend Southwest Bend Area Neighborhood Roundtable at OSU-Cascades Edward J. Ray Hall, Bend.

**October 12**
6:30pm Madras – Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Candidate Forum, Jefferson County Sheriff, at Jefferson County Health and Wellness Campus Community Room.

**October 13**
9-10:30am Opportunity Foundation Free Business Breakfast at VFW, Redmond.

**October 13**
4:30-6pm Bend Chamber Biz & Bevs networking event at Kiln.

October 13
5:30-7pm SCORE Free, Confidential One-on-One Small Business Counseling at Bend Central Library.

**October 14**
4-6pm Bend Chamber Bend Emerging Talent Expert Lab: Project Management - Get Stuff Done on Purpose at Touchmark at Mt. Bachelor Village.

**October 14**
5pm Bend Outdoor Worx BreakOut Pitch Event at Volcanic Theatre Pub, Bend.

**October 14**
5:30pm League of Women Voters of Deschutes County Candidate Forum 2026, Deschutes County Commissioners followed by Sheriff Candidates, at Deschutes County Government Bldg., Sawyer Room, Bend.

**October 15**
8-9am Madras – Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Coffee Cuppers at Jefferson County Library.

**October 15**
8-9:30am City Club of Central Oregon October Forum, Beyond City Limits – Regional Collaboration and competition in Central Oregon, at COCC Wille Hall, Bend.

**October 19**
6pm League of Women Voters of Deschutes County Candidate Forum 2026, Sisters City Council Candidates, at Sisters Firehouse Community Hall, Sisters.

October 20
5-6:30pm SCORE Free, Confidential One-on-One Small Business Counseling at Redmond Library.

**October 21**
1-3pm The Cascades East Transit (CET) Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee Meeting at Cascades East Transit, Hawthorne Conference Room, Bend.

**October 21**
5-7pm Connect W's Dinner Meeting, The Mental Side of Entrepreneurship, at High Desert Music Hall, Redmond.

**October 21**
6pm League of Women Voters of Deschutes County Candidate Forum 2026, La Pine City Council, followed by La Pine Mayoral Candidates, at La Pine Park & Recreation Community Center Gym.

**October 27**
5:30-7pm SCORE Free, Confidential One-on-One Small Business Counseling at Bend Central Library.

## WORKSHOPS & TRAINING



**October 29**
11:30am-1pm Mighty Growth Workshop, Find Your Growth Bottleneck, at Mighty Growth, Bend.

**(Ongoing)**
COCC Small Business Development Center Virtual Classes.

# Building Permits

***DESCHUTES COUNTY 9.15.26 & 9.22.26 9.29.26***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| $2,450,000.00 | - | Commercial (New) 14,000 sf. at 63305 Gibson Air Rd. Bend 97701 OR Owner: City of Bend PO Box 431 Bend, OR 97709 Builder: Elite Electric, LLC 541-788-4868 Permit # 247-26-001740 |
| $222,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) at 67855 SE Sherman Rd. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: State of Oregon Military Dept PO Box 14350 Salem, OR 97309 Builder: Mission Building and Renovation, LLC 541-550-2747 Permit # 247-26-002877 |
| $260,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 1,610 sf. at 56896 Venture Ln. Sunriver 97707 OR Owner: Hasco Holdings, LLC 2860 N Santiago Blvd Orange, CA 92687 Builder: Goodman Construction, LLC 541-815-0666 Permit # 247-26-002263 |

***CITY OF BEND 9.15.26 & 9.22.26***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| $190,610.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 6,467 sf. at 63619 Old Deschutes Rd. Bend 97701 OR Owner: Three Sisters Holdings, LLC Builder: Empire Construction & Development, LLC 541-389-0070 Permit # PRRE202604250 |
| $150,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 128 sf. at 61284 S Hwy 97 Ste. 150 Bend 97702 OR Owner: University Plaza, LLC Builder: Dickerhoof Construction, LLC 541-231-5977 Permit # PRRE202601954 |
| $85,500.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) at 1458 NW College Way Ste. 22 Bend 97703 OR Owner: College Way, LLC Builder: Behm Builders Group, LLC 541-633-7389 Permit # PRRE202603999 |
| $45,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 2,359 sf. at 550 SW Industrial Way Ste. 190 Bend 97702 OR Owner: Multiple Builder: Kellcon, Inc. 541-312-4034 Permit # PRRE202604045 |
| $28,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) at 2550 NE Butler Market Rd. Bend 97701 OR Owner: Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church 541-382-1832 Permit # PRRE202604353 |
| $20,927.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 929 sf. at 1135 NW Ochoa Dr. Ste. 100 Bend 97703 OR Owner: Twenty Keys, LLC Builder: Branch Brothers Construction 541-948-0801 Permit # PRRE202604361 |
| $593,634.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 12,185 sf. at 63820 Clausen Dr. Bend 97701 OR Builder: Pro Concept Construction, LLC 971-352-0528 |
| $351,500.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 2,501 sf. at 796 SW Bradbury Way Bend 97702 OR Owner: Patrick Casey Rental, LLC Builder: Sunwest Builders 541-548-7341 Permit # PRRE202604308 |
| $50,000.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 820 sf. at 63055 N Hwy 97 Bend 97703 OR Builder: ODOT - Electrical 503-986-3587 Permit # PRRE202605121 |
| $50,000.00 | - | Commercial (New) 320 sf. at 1125 NE Watt Way Bend 97701 OR Owner: Touchmark at Pilot Butte, LLC Builder: CS Construction 541-617-9190 Permit # PRNC202601444 |
| $25,422.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 596 sf. at 1777 SW Chandler Ave. Ste. 155 Bend 97702 OR Owner: Chandler Center, LLC Builder: Kellcon, Inc. 541-312-4034 Permit # PRRE202604821 |
| $25,422.00 | - | Commercial (Alteration) 596 sf. at 1777 SW Chandler Ave. Bend 97702 OR Owner: Chandler Center, LLC Builder: Kellcon, Inc. 541-312-4034 Permit # PRRE202604821 |

***CITY OF REDMOND 9.15.26***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| $771,629.00 | - | Commercial (Addition) 1,135,800 sf. at 1250 NE Greenwood Ave. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Hap Taylor & Sons, Inc. 32260 Old Hwy 34 Tangent, OR 97389 Builder: Knife River Corporation Northwest 541-918-5100 Permit # 711-26-000487 |
| $23,000.00 | - | Commercial (Tenant Improvement) at 1204 SW Lake Rd. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Oregon Beverage Recycling Corp 17300 SE 120th Ave. Clackamas, OR 97015 Builder: Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative 503-222-2266 Permit # 711-26-001832 |
| $1,841,070.00 | - | Commercial (New) 9,140 sf. at 815 NW Canal Blvd Redmond 97756 OR Owner: BH-OR RE Redmond, LLC PO Box 12269 Portland, OR 97212 Builder: Veridis Construction, Inc. 503-839-4030 Permit # 711-26-001309 |
| $500,000.00 | - | Commercial (Tenant Improvement) 3,416 sf. at 3500 SW 21st Pl. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: BASX, Inc. 3500 SW 21st Pl. Redmond, OR 97756 Builder: PW Berry Company, Inc. 503-784-6218 Permit # 711-26-001707 |

## COCC

*Continued from page 3*

College's impact extends well beyond its campuses, as students and alumni contribute to the workforce, businesses benefit from a more skilled talent pool, and taxpayers and communities realize long-term economic and social benefits.

Among the study's key findings:

• $349.2 million in annual economic impact: COCC's operations, students, alumni and other activities generate an economic impact equivalent to approximately 2% of the regional economy.

• 4,136 jobs supported: COCC's economic activity supports approximately one in every 41 jobs in the region.

• $257.8 million in alumni impact: Former COCC students working in the region represent the largest component of the College's economic impact through their added earnings and increased business productivity.

• $4.40 returned to students: For every $1 students invest in their COCC education, they receive an estimated $4.40 in higher future earnings.

• $9,000 more in annual earnings: On average, a COCC associate degree graduate earns approximately $9,000 more each year than someone whose highest level of education is a high school diploma.

• $2 returned to taxpayers: For every $1 of public money invested in COCC, taxpayers receive approximately $2 in added tax revenue and public-sector savings.

• $5.90 in societal benefits: For every $1 invested in COCC, society receives an estimated $5.90 through increased earnings, economic growth and social savings.

"These numbers reinforce something we see every day at COCC: When we create opportunities for students, the benefits ripple throughout Central Oregon," said COCC President Greg Pereira. "Our graduates become nurses, teachers, business owners, skilled tradespeople and community leaders. Their success strengthens our workforce, our businesses and the communities we serve."

The largest component of COCC's economic impact comes from its alumni. Lightcast estimates that the added earnings of former students currently working in the region, along with the increased productivity those skills provide to employers, generate $257.8 million in added regional income annually.

The study also demonstrates the financial value of education for individual students. In addition to the $4.40 in higher future earnings generated for every dollar students invest, Lightcast estimates an annual rate of return of 17.9% on students' educational investment.

"COCC's impact isn't limited to what happens in our classrooms or on our campuses," Pereira said. "It continues every time a graduate brings new skills to an employer, advances in a career, starts a business or puts their education to work in their community."

The study was conducted by Lightcast, a global provider of labor market analytics that has completed more than 3,000 economic impact studies for higher education institutions. The analysis considers College operations, student spending, construction and the long-term impact of alumni, while also evaluating the return on investment for students, taxpayers and society.

For more information about the College's economic and workforce impact, visit cocc.edu/about/economic-impact.

*cocc.edu*

## Bend Chamber

*Continued from page 3*

follows Providence Health Plan's decision to discontinue most of its health insurance operations, including employer group and commercial plans. Providence has stated that current coverage will continue through 2026 as it transitions out of these lines of business.

The Chamber's partnership with Moda is especially important for Central Oregon employers following recent news that Moda will no longer offer individual health insurance plans in Deschutes County in 2027. That change applies to the individual insurance market and is separate from the employer-sponsored group coverage available through the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan. Moda will continue offering group coverage through the Chamber plan to eligible Oregon employers, including businesses in Central Oregon.

"We recognize that recent changes in Oregon's health insurance market have created uncertainty for employers and employees alike," said Sara Odendahl, CEO of the Bend Chamber of Commerce. "We want businesses to understand that the recent headlines regarding Moda's individual plans do not mean Moda is unavailable through the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan. Our partnership with Moda provides employers with a strong group health insurance option and represents an important investment in the long-term stability of this program."

The transition to Moda follows a comprehensive and competitive review process led by the Bend Chamber Board of Directors, Chamber staff and the Health Insurance Task Force, working closely with benefits partner Alliant/Johnson Benefit Planning. The goal throughout the process was to identify a carrier capable of preserving the value, stability and affordability of the Association Health Plan while providing a sustainable long-term solution for Oregon employers.

**Continuity for Participating Employers**

Employers currently enrolled in the Bend Chamber Association Health Plan through Providence will transition to Moda based on their existing renewal dates. Groups with October 1, November 1, or December 1, 2026 renewal dates will transition to Moda on those respective dates. Groups with renewal dates from January 1 through September 1, 2027, will transition January 1, 2027.

Groups transitioning to Moda before January 1, 2027, will receive credit for eligible deductible and out-of-pocket maximum amounts accumulated during 2026, helping minimize disruption for employees during the carrier change. Rates will also be guaranteed for 12 months.

"The ability to offer competitive health benefits has a direct impact on an employer's ability to recruit and retain employees," Odendahl said. "Maintaining access to a strong Association Health Plan is one of the practical ways the Chamber can help Oregon businesses manage costs, support their workforce and remain competitive."

**Expanded Employer Health Plan Options**

In addition to Moda Health, Kaiser Permanente will be available as another medical option for eligible employers within its service area. Employers with 51 or more employees may be able to offer Moda and Kaiser together through a dual-carrier arrangement, while eligible groups with fewer than 51 employees may select either Moda or Kaiser as their medical carrier.

The Bend Chamber Association Health Plan is available to eligible Oregon employers that maintain an active Bend Chamber membership. Employers located outside of Bend may also be members of their local chamber of commerce; however, Bend Chamber membership is required for participation in the plan. The plan currently serves more than 800 employer groups and covers more than 14,000 lives. Eligibility, carrier availability and plan requirements vary based on group size, location and other underwriting requirements.

Employers currently participating in the Association Health Plan will receive additional information from the Bend Chamber and their insurance agent regarding transition timing and available plan options. Businesses interested in joining the plan are encouraged to contact their insurance agent to determine eligibility and compare available coverage.

Celebrating 100 years in 2026, the mission of the Bend Chamber is to create an environment where businesses, their employees and our community excel together through collaboration, advocacy, resources and leadership to meet Bend's business challenges.

*bendchamber.org*

## Olde Towne

*Continued from page 3*

honoring the foundational recipes that locals love. Even though ownership has changed, the original staff remains the same, and new team members have joined to provide excellent customer service and great food.

"We are incredibly honored and excited to step into the big shoes left behind by the original owner, Terry Parker," said Werner. "Pizza brings people together, and our goal is to build on this restaurant's legacy by serving the highest-quality pizzas in an atmosphere where every family and neighbor feels welcome. We're keeping the classic crust and fresh toppings everyone craves, as well as improving on the Market Fresh Salad Station and introducing some exciting new menu innovations in the near future."

While the core menu will continue to showcase fan-favorite traditional whole pizzas like the Stromboli, and the lunch special (slice, salad breadstick and drink), the team is introducing several enhancements:

• **Fresh made salads:** Adding fresh in-house salads made daily to the self-serve salad station to complement the pizza offerings.

• **Expanded Menu Options:** New additions including monthly specialty pizzas like Taco Pizza Tuesday, Non-Alcoholic local beer, wings and more.

• **Community-First Dining:** Plans for supporting local youth athletic programs, local school fundraisers, extended hours for Sunday sports and adding dinner hours on Mondays, remodeled inside space and re-built patio next spring for outdoor dining.

• **Delivery and Takeout Options:** While takeout ordering is not new, our delivery option allows customers to order online and have hot pizza delivered fresh to their door.

The pizza restaurant, located at 118 NW Greenwood Ave., is currently open Tuesday through Sunday. Guests are invited to stop by, meet the new owners, and taste the updated menu offerings and enjoy the Olde Towne favorites.

**About Olde Towne Pizza Company:**

Founded in 2001, Olde Towne Pizza is a neighborhood pizza restaurant dedicated to serving exceptional pizza to the Bend community. Known for its plentiful toppings, Market Fresh Salad Station, hand-tossed homemade crust and friendly atmosphere, the pizzeria continues to be a go-to gathering place under its new leadership. Follow on social media at @oldetownepizza or upcoming specialty pizzas, events or to book your next family/team/school/work celebration.

*oldetownepizzabend.com*

## Innovation Week

*Continued from page 3*

organizations from across Central Oregon, bringing together events that reflect the different ways people are building businesses and pursuing new ideas in the region. Programming spans natural products, outdoor recreation, technology, bioscience, and climate innovation, giving attendees a chance to learn about local companies, hear directly from founders and meet others working across Central Oregon's entrepreneurial community.

The week kicks off October 13 at The Haven, where Cultivate Bend will host an evening for Central Oregon's natural Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) founders, makers, investors, retailers, and industry leaders focused on the future of the region's growing natural products industry.

On October 14, Bend Outdoor Worx will host its annual outdoor-focused pitch event at Volcanic Theatre Pub, highlighting innovation in one of Central Oregon's signature industries and giving entrepreneurs an opportunity to put their businesses in front of the outdoor industry community.

The week culminates with the Bend Venture Conference (BVC), hosted by Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO), on October 15 and 16. Central Oregon's premier investor showcase features seminars, founder pitches and networking across three competition tracks. Early Stage features Oregon startups that are pre-revenue or in the early stages of revenue. Growth Tech Stage is for companies with proven traction and technology at the core of their differentiation, while Growth Industries Stage features companies with proven traction and differentiation through brand, physical products, science, or engineering. Finalists in each track will compete live for funding and prizes.

High Desert Innovation Week reflects the range of entrepreneurial activity happening in Central Oregon and the organizations working to support it. By bringing these events together during one week, the celebration gives the region an opportunity to put its founders, businesses and ideas in the spotlight.

*hdinnovationweek.com*

## Varsity Real Estate

*Continued from page 3*

relocation to Kiln's 43,000-square-foot facility positions the brokerage in a professional, design-forward space that supports both operational excellence and collaborative client service.

Kiln Bend, which opened in May 2026, offers state-of-the-art conference rooms, private offices, wellness amenities, and community spaces designed to foster connection and performance. Located in the geographic and cultural heart of Bend's Old Mill District, the facility provides easy access to dining, entertainment, and outdoor recreation — creating an environment where Varsity's agents and clients can work with clarity and confidence.

We're excited to join the Kiln community and contribute to the professional ecosystem taking shape in the Old Mill District," said Sam DeLay, Varsity co-founder. "This space reflects our commitment to our agents, staff and clients. But also our deep investment in Central Oregon's market and community."

The central location provided by the Old Mill District also offers practical advantages for client meetings and events, positioning Varsity at the intersection of Bend's business, dining, and lifestyle destinations.

**About Varsity Real Estate:**

Varsity Real Estate is a full-service real estate brokerage based in Bend, specializing in residential and commercial properties across Central Oregon. Known for its integrity-driven approach and expert market guidance, Varsity combines deep local expertise with a client-first philosophy.

*varsityoregon.com varsityoregon.com*

## Fall Fuel Reduction Grant

*Continued from page 3*

communities or neighborhoods working toward or already recognized as Firewise USA sites. Proposed projects should align with a community's Firewise action plan and assessment.

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Equipment rental
- Supplies for community work parties
- Contractor fees for roadside chipping, fuel reduction, or defensible-space work
- Debris disposal fees

**FireFree Results**

The fall grant program builds on the county's ongoing efforts to prevent wildfires. Deschutes County Natural Resources and the Deschutes County Solid Waste Department host an annual FireFree collection event that encourages residents to create defensible space around their homes. During the event, residents are allowed to drop off yard debris free of charge at participating solid waste facilities.

In 2026, FireFree participants removed and disposed of 43,711 cubic yards of leaves, pine needles, branches and other flammable yard debris, enough to cover a football field about 20 feet deep. "By continuing to work together, residents and local government can reduce wildfire risk," said Deschutes County Community Wildfire Protection Supervisor Lauren Street.

**Grant applications due by September 30**

Applications for a Fall Fuel Reduction Grant must be submitted by Sept. 30, 2026. All applicants must provide a tax identification number. Communities without one are required to have a fiscal sponsor with a tax identification number.

Applicants will be notified in November whether they have been awarded a grant.

For more information or to apply for a Fall Fuel Reduction Grant, visit the Deschutes County Natural Resources website at deschutescounty.gov/716/2026-Fall-Fuel-Reduction-Grant-Program.

*deschutescounty.gov*

Town & Country

# AMAZON Grand Opening




Associates gathered to celebrate the official grand opening of Amazon's new "DUG2" facility in Redmond. Photos courtesy of Amazon.



(L-R) Steve Curley, Mary Knight and Jessica Nicewonger.
Photo by Timothy Park



Will Pon, DUG2 Station manager, Amazon and
Ellie Booth, senior manager of Public Policy in Oregon, Amazon.



Katie Thomson, co-founder and CEO of Square Baby, showcasing Square Baby products to attendants.



(L-R) Oregon State Senator Anthony Broadman, Oregon State Representative Emerson levy, Oregon State Representative Vikki Breese-Iverson and Deschutes County Commissioner Tony DeBone with Katie Thomson in the foreground.

THEAGENCY

# New hardwood flooring, fresh paint, *and room to take flight.*



We'll find the home, you'll write the stories.
*Wherever you're going, we can take you there.*

THEAGENCYBEND.COM

## A Few of Our *Favorite* Addresses.



**18975 Pinehurst Road**
$2,995,000
3 BED | 3.5 BA | 4,065 SF | 40 ACRES
Listed by Patty Dempsey, Principal Broker
541.480.5432



**3431 NW Jackwood Place**
$1,679,000
4 BED | 2.5 BA | 2,816 SF
Listed by Tab Howard, Broker
310.346.3500



**3454 NW Bryce Canyon Lane**
$1,499,999
4 BED | 3 BA | 3,254 SF
Listed by Kate Ewen, Broker
541.419.9159



**1181 NW Knoxville Boulevard**
$1,125,000
3 BED | 2.5 BA | 2,166 SF | ADU: 1 BED, 1 BA, 572 SF
Listed by Christin J Hunter, Principal Broker
541.306.0479



**20501 Aberdeen Drive**
$789,000
3 BED | 2.5 BA | 2,408 SF
Listed by Nick Wilhite & JP Faherty, Principal Broker & Broker
541.588.2711



**61390 Merriewood Court**
$486,000
3 BED | 2.5 BA | 1,899 SF
Listed by Brett Voss, Broker
503.457.5992

THE AGENCY BEND | 541.508.7430 | THEAGENCYBEND.COM