



**healthmatters**<sup>SM</sup>  
of Central Oregon

*Many voices. One vision for health.*



THE OREGON  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

*Here for Oregon. Here for Good.*

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - March 3, 2009**

## **Central Oregon Residents to Benefit From Newly Formed and Expanded Health Services**

BEND, OR — Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson county residents will benefit from newly developed health care initiatives and the expansion of current health care programs, thanks to the support from The Shirley V. Ray Fund and The Oregon Fund, both of The Oregon Community Foundation.

With the economy in crisis and health care costs skyrocketing, a growing number of Central Oregonians are at risk due to lack of access to timely, coordinated and effective health care. HealthMatters of Central Oregon (HMCO) aims to ease that pressure by implementing strategic initiatives that will improve the health of Central Oregonians through a variety of programs and services. With the support from The Shirley V. Ray Fund and The Oregon Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation, HMCO will now hire a part-time development professional to create and implement a long-term funding strategy for its health care initiatives that directly benefit the residents of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties.

*“Central Oregon can really be seen as the canary in the coal mine with the types of health care problems we face. We currently have the highest uninsured rate in Oregon, the fastest growing Medicare population, and areas with the fewest primary care physicians – factors that have placed our region in a very vulnerable position. On the positive side, HealthMatters’ proactive, collaborative efforts are based on the belief that change needs to occur locally and that our community is ultimately responsible for developing sustainable strategies through dialogue, cooperation and action. Central Oregon is quickly becoming a laboratory for action that will lead to successful healthcare reform.” Alisha Hopper, executive director.*

HMCO aims to be a centralized hub that assists in reorganizing and better coordinating the delivery of health and human services. HMCO works in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders to improve care coordination, to eliminate duplication within the entire health and human services system and to empower individuals to take responsibility for their health.

### ***About HealthMatters of Central Oregon***

HealthMatters of Central Oregon, a 501(c) (3) not for profit community health collaborative, established in 2007, is developing initiatives intended to improve access to effective, efficient and sustainable health care services that assure better health for more people at less cost.

### *About The Oregon Community Foundation*

The mission of The Oregon Community Foundation is to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. The Oregon Community Foundation works with individuals, families, businesses and organizations to create charitable funds to support the community causes they care about. Through these funds, The Oregon Community Foundation awards more than \$55 million annually in grants and scholarships. The focus of OCF is: Effective stewardship, Strong leadership, and Strategic partnerships.

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