

Spring 2020 Newsletter

We are Hiring!

Working at Lifeline Connections is not only a career, but it's a chance to create lasting, meaningful change for individuals in our community.

We have a generous benefits package that includes tuition reimbursement, paid time off and medical coverage.

Email employment@lifelineconnections.org with your resume and Post ID# to apply for the following positions, or visit our website for a complete list of openings:
www.lifelineconnections.org/careers

Mental Health Professional #20-017
(Vancouver, WA)

Mental Health Professional #20-070
(Bellingham, WA)

Mental Health Professional #21-056
(Aberdeen, WA)

Substance Use Professional/Trainee (SUDP/SUDPT) #21-036 (Vancouver, WA)

Peer Support Specialist #20-018 (Vancouver, WA)

Grant Reporter/Quality Assurance Specialist #21-034 (Vancouver, WA)



Crisis Triage & Stabilization is now a Designated Drop-off Location for AMR

It has been eight months since we opened the Crisis Triage & Stabilization doors in Vancouver, WA and it certainly has made an impact. Even with COVID-19 restrictions that limit our capacity, the program has helped over **500** individuals that experienced a mental health crisis. One of the most common types of mental health crisis aside from suicide ideation encountered is extreme loneliness and depression. A mental health crisis encompasses many things: Paranoia, mania, delusions, auditory and visual hallucinations and substance use induced psychosis.

We have a support team that consists of licensed substance use and mental health professionals, licensed nurses, peer support specialists, licensed prescribers and case managers.

Admission is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling (360) 205-1222. We are dedicated to our community members' recovery.

As one of our Peer Support Specialists, Reinhardt says: *"By giving compassion we are able to provide a safe place - safe space for healing. Their recovery is their story and it's worth sharing and living"*

COVID-19 & Behavioral Health: Now What?

Please join us Wednesday, May 19 from 12:00 - 1:00 pm for this community conversation about the emotional impacts of COVID-19. Speakers and panelists will include:



Ty Stober, Vancouver, Washington City Council Member



Dr. Kira Mauseth, Co-Lead Behavioral Health Strike Team, Washington State Department of Health



Brandy Branch, Vice President of Outpatient and Community Based Services, Lifeline Connections

This free webinar is for everyone, visit www.lifelineconnections.org/covid-19-behavioral-health-now-what/ to reserve your spot!

Housing & Recovery through Peer Services (HARPS) Program



Do you need help with rent or moving expenses? If you're eligible we can provide financial assistance for the following:

- Monthly rent or past due rent (while in an inpatient treatment facility)
- Move-in costs (deposits for rental home or utilities)
- Reasonable storage costs
- Lot rental fees for RVs or manufactured homes
- Much more!

Eligibility:

- You have a behavioral health disorder (either a mental health disorder, substance use disorder or both)
- Recently discharged from a mental health or substance use inpatient setting
- Experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness

We are located in Bellingham and Mount Vernon. Email us for an appointment.

housing_help@lifelineconnections.org

Employee Spotlight: Reinhardt Ryden



Meet Reinhardt; one of our Peer Support Specialists at the Crisis Wellness Center. Reinhardt grew up locally in SE Portland and spent a number of years working at US Bank. But after his position there was sent overseas he spent some time contemplating which direction to go and decided to do something that was near to his heart; helping people in their recovery journey.

After an interview to join our Sobering department he realized the hours wouldn't work for him and his family of two sons and (now) fiancé, so he began to volunteer at the Recovery Resource Center. It wasn't long after that he began to work toward the credentials needed to become a Peer Support Specialist and in April of 2020 began

working at Crisis Triage & Stabilization. Through the eyes of his brother, he saw what having a mental health condition was like and he wanted to be something different and allow people to be heard, seen and feel validated.

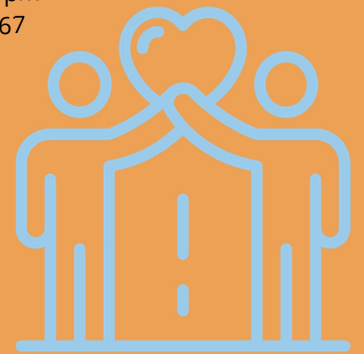
This once shy teenager, now very confident, fun-loving person with 72 piercings and 7 years of recovery does just that every day with our community members that need our compassion the most. When asked what he likes most about working at Lifeline Connections he said "I get to be me and have genuine, honest interactions with people that come through the door and the only thing I'm asked to do is to treat clients with compassionate care."

Recovery Resource Center Update

Our Recovery Resource Center (RRC) is now open five days a week! The new hours are Monday – Friday from 9:00am – 5:00pm.

The RRC have the following recovery meetings available to join:

- As Bill Sees It – **In person on Thursdays**
 - Every week day from 12:00pm – 1:00pm
 - Zoom meeting ID 215 901 767
- Recovery Anonymous
 - Fridays at 3:30pm
- DRA (Dual Recovery Anonymous)
 - Wednesdays at 2:00pm
- HA (Heroin Anonymous)
 - Mondays and Thursdays at 7:00pm
- Recovery 360
 - Wednesdays at 6:00pm
- NA (Narcotics Anonymous)
 - Sundays at 6:00pm



If you need a place to host your meeting contact Tim Ranger:
tranger@lifelineconnections.org

Christina's Journey to Overcome Substance Use, Mental Health and Keep Her Family Together



Christina's mother, Gloria, was an outpatient drug and alcohol counselor at the Clark County Council on Alcohol and Drugs (CCCAD) and in 2006, Christina walked into the office and told Mavis White, (a current Records Specialist at Lifeline Connections), that she needed to see someone other than her mother to receive help.

Gloria was a very strong woman. To Gloria, image was everything and she instilled in her children that they represented her when they were out in the community. Christina says that one of the hardest things she has ever done was to walk through those doors. The Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Treatment and Support Act (ADATSA) helped Christina get into inpatient treatment at Pioneer Center East in Spokane. By the time she got back to Vancouver in February of 2006 CCCAD was located in a new building on the VA Campus and had a new name – Lifeline Connections. Christina immediately enrolled in aftercare and continued in services for about a year.

While Christina was in Spokane her husband Benny moved dope dealers into her house. It took him a couple of months to get the message that if the dealers did not leave and he did not get on a path to recovery their relationship was over. Benny soon signed up with Lifeline's COMET team where he was in services for 3 ½ years. "The COMET team was amazing; they never gave up on him even when his behavior was not always in compliance", says Christina.

Both Benny and Christina had several relapses between 2006 and March 18, 2008 but are very proud to have obtained long term recovery for the last 13 years. Due to continued relapse they lost custody and access to their children for seven years. Losing the children was devastating and was the most difficult part of her life. The world had taken enough from her that she did not want to live. She was diagnosed with agoraphobia – a severe anxiety disorder. She did not leave her house for 6 years due to the over-stimulation. When her daughter came home at the age of 18, things began to change. She met Kay Roberson, a Peer Support Specialist, who mentored her and encouraged her to begin doing volunteer work in the community. As a result, she chose to pursue a Peer Support Specialist Certification.

When a Peer Support Specialist position opened up at the Lifeline Connections' Crisis Wellness Center in May 2020, she jumped at the chance. She now works for the same agency that her mom worked; an agency that helped her. She is proud to help build on the legacy that her mom built. "It is an honor to work for this agency".

Benny & Christina have five children total and today the extended family consists of 22 including grandkids and partners. "You would not know that we were ever separated and that there was ever an issue of drugs in the family." In spite of our downfalls as parents our kids are pretty stable. One has a master's degree in microbiology, one is a caregiver for an autistic lady, one is a restaurant manager, one delivers the newspaper for The Columbian and one delivers the mail for the US Postal Service." Christina often asks her kids: "As messed up as I was, how did you people get to be so amazing?" Their answer is: "We learned from you." Not one of the kids struggle with substance use disorder or have any kind of a criminal background. "We are very blessed." Gloria passed away in November. This has made Christina dig her heels in deeper in working at the Crisis Wellness Center. "It makes me feel closer to her. For me it is amazing to work at Crisis. I get to work with people that are taking their first baby steps into recovery and let them know that long term recovery is possible. I get to be there and share with them. I also get to share with them that I did it."

Benny and Christina will celebrate 20 years of marriage on June 1st. They have walked the path of addiction and recovery together.

Making the House a Home

Thank you to everyone who attended the Making the House a Home fundraiser! Because of you, the first sixteen men that move into the Whatcom Recovery House in a couple of months will feel like they're coming home. We have reached 2/3 of our \$15,000 goal in cash and in-kind donations for this brand new treatment center in Whatcom County! Visit www.makingthehouseahome.org/ to learn more about the house and ways to get involved.

Big thanks to the organizations, agencies and businesses that supported the event:

- Amerigroup
- PeaceHealth
- Fred Meyer/Kroger
- Costco
- Opportunity Council
- Molina
- Whatcom County Health Department
- Opsahl/Dawson CPAs
- Chuckanut Health Foundation



Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Continues to Grow in the North Sound

MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) has expanded again in the north sound region. We now have a new location open on Tuesdays in **Concrete!**

MAT is a low-barrier, easy access program used to get individuals into recovery. It reduces cravings for **opioid** or **alcohol** use through FDA-approved medications and once established can be maintained with telehealth. This program can help anyone 16 years of age and older.

Walk-in and appointments available at four locations:

Bellingham Office

Walk-in and appointments Mon – Thurs 8:30am-3:30pm
4120 Meridian St. Ste. 220
Bellingham, WA
P: (360) 922-3030

Concrete Office

Walk-in and appointments Tuesday 10:00am – 3:00pm
45705 Main St.
Concrete, WA
P: (360) 399-6900

Mount Vernon Office

Appointments only Mon – Thurs 8:30am-3:30pm
2105 Continental Pl. Ste. A
Mount Vernon, WA
P: (360) 399-6900

Oak Harbor Office

Walk-in and appointments Wednesdays 9:30am-3:30pm
1791 NE 1st Ave.
Oak Harbor, WA
P: (360) 399-6900

In addition to these updates, Lifeline Connections is now serving individuals in Skagit County drug court, recovery residences and the supportive housing program. If you or someone you know in the area is looking for meaningful employment in this field, view our current job listings: www.lifelineconnections.org/careers

How You Can Help

Lifeline is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization. Your donations make recovery possible by ensuring people get help when they need it.

Giving is easy! Visit www.lifelineconnections.org/how-you-can-help/ for easy, secure on-line giving. You can also contact us at development@lifelineconnections.org or call (360) 397-8246 ext. 30546 or 30548 to discuss how your gift can make the most impact. Thank you!

