



Annual Award Recipients

Lifeline Connections has selected Vanessa Gaston to receive the 2021 Award of Excellence and Jackie Mitchell to receive the 2021 Community Partner Award. Vanessa, Director of Clark County Community Services, has spent her career helping the marginalized in our community and she has been instrumental in helping the department incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion principles and served on the committee that made decisions on how to fund COVID-19 related services for communities of color across Washington. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Washington Community Action Partnership, Washington Association of County Human Services, Community Foundation of SWWA and on Peace Health SW's Community Health Committee. She was instrumental in helping create what is now the SW Accountable Community of Health (ACH) and has served our country honorably in the U.S. Army.



The Community Partner Award is given to individuals who partner with Lifeline Connections to help the agency accomplish its mission. Jackie Mitchell, Behavioral Health Program Specialist with the Whatcom County Health Department, has been selected because of the key role she played in bringing a low-intensity residential treatment recovery house to Bellingham, WA. Her efforts to bring key stakeholders together, hold planning meetings around the project and help secure funding ensured a successful project for the citizens of Whatcom County.



Jackie Mitchell has been employed in the behavioral health field since 1986, starting with a youth substance use disorder residential agency in Colorado. In Jackie's 23 years with the Whatcom County Health Department her accomplishments include co-chairing the committee that passed the one tenth of 1% behavioral health sales tax, bringing programs together for triage and the crisis stabilization center, and community partnership work on many projects including the Recovery House.



Beacon Health Options Provides Help to Workforce

In July 2021, Beacon Health Options helped address the workforce shortages in behavioral health by providing nearly \$1.5 million to providers in the SW and North Central regions. These funds will help agencies like Lifeline Connections retain and recruit staff.

"As our communities emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for accessible and quality behavioral health treatment will grow exponentially. To meet this current and future demand we will need a trained workforce," said Jared Sanford, President and Chief Executive Officer of Lifeline Connections.

"Beacon's investment in the local behavioral health workforce couldn't have come at a better time and will allow us to make progress in meeting this demand for treatment services."

Toothpaste!

That's right, Lifeline Connections has been collecting toothpaste! In fact, as of publication we've received over 330 personal, travel-size tubes of toothpaste.

Why toothpaste? Imagine you're heading to the hospital for surgery. It's a scary time! You pack your bag, but there's a good chance you'll forget something. Now imagine living on the streets and making the decision to get treatment for your substance use. That's a scary time and you may not have much to pack. Many of our patients' first stop on their road to recovery is our sobering unit or medical detox. We want folks to feel welcome and cared for the minute they walk in the door, and handing them a fresh towel, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste helps that happen.

Many of you visited our [Amazon Wish List](#) last month when we asked for donations of travel-size toothpaste. Thank you from the bottoms of our hearts! If you missed the opportunity, don't worry—it's not too late. Follow the link and pick from the products shown. It makes such a difference:

"Thanks to my counselor for being my lifeline. I showed up and had no idea what to do or where to go and she went above and beyond getting me help and made sure I felt safe and not judged. Helped me know I was doing the right thing by going to treatment. I was lost and she helped me find my way."



Thank you!

JOBS

WE ARE HIRING!

Join our team for an opportunity 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 – PACT Program #20-088 (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)

Peer Support Specialist – PACT Program #21-089 (Vancouver, WA)

CNA/MA #19-001 (Vancouver, WA)

Supportive Housing Specialist #21-045 (Vancouver, WA)
#21-051 (Bellingham, WA)

Skagit County Updates

Lifeline Connections recently acquired a contract that allows us to take over referrals from Pioneer that handled court contract for up to 40 people and a recovery residence with 14 beds.

Stay tuned for more updates to include federal contracts with probation and pre-trial services and the need to hire more individuals in the Mount Vernon and surrounding areas!

Grant Awards for Camp Mariposa®

Camp Mariposa has received generous support in recent month, just in time for the return to in-person, weekend camps. Campers need your support, too—read on to learn how you can help!

Camp Mariposa serves kids 9-12 who are impacted by the substance use disorder of a loved one. Campers attend up to six weekend-long camps every year, and six day-long activities during alternate months, where they learn coping skills, play games, build trust in mentoring adults and each other and learn important information about their family member's disease.

No Child left Inside is a Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office two-year grant to get kids experiencing the out-of-doors. Campers will participate in trail restoration activities at Camp Wa-Ri-Ki while learning cooperation and teamwork as well as building self-confidence. <https://rco.wa.gov/grant/no-child-left-inside/>

Eluna Network, the national parent organization of Camp Mariposas, supports our day activities and a new Teen Program for Camp Mariposa graduates (ages 13-17) and other at-risk teens. Eluna also provides core operating support and national advocacy for Camp Mariposa. <https://elunanetwork.org/>

An AmeriCorp*VISTA member is joining Camp Mariposa's new Teen Program to build leadership skills training through monthly day programs and a year-end overnight camp next summer. The member will also support the Junior Counselors program at traditional Camp Mariposa. <https://americorps.gov/serve/fit-finder/amicorps-vista>

You can be part of this growth! You're invited to contribute through Clark County's Give More 24! online day of giving on September 23. Our goal is to raise \$3,555 to cover all program costs for one child for a full year. That's six fun-filled camping weekends that give kids opportunities to share their stories in a safe space and become strong, resilient youth. Your support will help change a child's life! <https://www.givemore24.org/>



Follow us on social media for more news and events!



Alex Pankey, RA Supervisor Men's Residential

Alex began work at Lifeline Connections in August 2015 as an on-call residential floor staff. After just a few months he was hired full time for the swing shift. His hard work didn't go unnoticed and in May 2020 he was promoted to his current supervisor position.

After completing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice through Charter College he found his passion at Lifeline Connections. The favorite part of his job is helping other people and helping the community. His biggest reward is seeing the transformation in people. "When individuals walk through our doors they are often at their lowest point and when they graduate you see who they really are. I like being able to listen to them."

"I have empathy and understand that things happen. You are not a bad person because of what has happened in the past." When asked how he deals with behavior issues on the unit, he replied: "I don't like to call folks out in front others; I prefer to work individually."

What do you like about LLC? I am very grateful for Lifeline Connections. When I was hired I was very depressed and really didn't know what I was supposed to be doing. When I found Lifeline Connections it gave me a purpose to help others. I am grateful for the PTO and that there is such a big emphasis on self-care.

What are some of the highlights you've seen in your 6 years with the agency? "Working with the residential team and how close the team works together; we are able to get through the rough things. Transitioning to an all-male facility was very positive for both staff and patients. COVID has strengthened the team as we learned to adapt and adjust to changing policies and procedures in order to keep everyone safe. If we can get through COVID we can get through anything. My team is really strong in COVID response."

Alex currently supervises 11 full, part time and on-call staff and is looking to hire 3-4 additional staff.

"When I get in my car in the morning I don't dread coming to work. I'm always looking forward to coming to work and being here!"



Local Summer Activities to Get Outside

Now that consistent sunny, summertime weather is here we've created a list of summer activities to enjoy. They also benefit mental, emotional and physical well-being in many ways!

Go for a Bike Ride in Bellingham

Bellingham was named a gold-level bicycle friendly community by the League of American Bicyclists. There are many bike ride options available and one that is very popular is the Interurban Trail. It is a beautiful, 13 mile path for both runners and cyclists on a flat, wide trail. It begins in Bellingham's Fairhaven District and ends at the county line at Larrabee State Park.

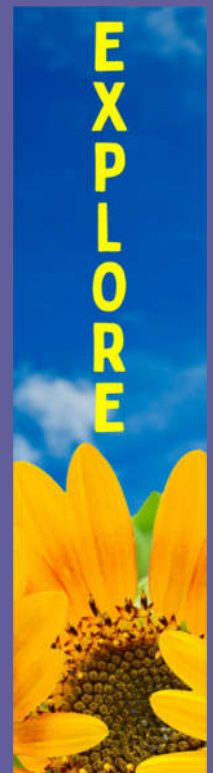
Explore Stewart Memorial Park Trail (Aberdeen, WA)

This trail is a little over one mile with a scenic river view. It's primarily used for hiking, walking, nature trips, bird watching and is accessible any time of the year.

Go Fishing Along the Columbia River

The Columbia River is home to several types of fish including salmon and steelhead. Fishing season officially opened on April 22nd, and there are many opportunities to either compete or just have a relaxing day by the river. This is the type of activity that can either include everyone, or that you can just take advantage of for yourself. On the Washington State fishing site, you can search for which types of fish populate which areas and make a bucket list of rivers and lakes to catch the different types of fish available in the Pacific Northwest.

If you or a loved one is in recovery, it's helpful to develop healthy hobbies to make healing and healthy living easier.



**An
Inspirational
Letter from a
Crisis Triage
&
Stabilization
Patient**



TO THE ANGELS OF LIFE LINE CRISIS.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR KINDNESS, GUIDANCE, AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT. WITH YOU GUYS; I HAVE REALIZED I CAN STILL LIVE LIFE ON LIFE TERMS WITH MY SILLY THOUGHTS OF MADNESS. I HAVE COME TO FIND COMFORT IN YOUR GUYS' THOUGHTS AND QUOTES THAT I AM WORTHY OF LOVE AND FRIENDS WHO CARE ABOUT MY FUTURE. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT. TO REGAIN HEALTHY THOUGHTS OF REALITY AS IT MY COME. THANKS TO ALL YOUR KINDNESS, FRIENDSHIP, CARING AND SUPPORT. I CAN'T SAY ENOUGH ABOUT ALL YOUR SMILING FACES!

" I AM GRATEFUL FOR LIFE LINE SERVICES "

**New Program for
Veterans and Active Duty
Military Personnel**



The Veterans Program provided by Lifeline Connections serves veterans and active duty personnel from all branches of the armed forces.

Case Management: Provided at no cost to those that want help accessing services in our community.

- Housing
- Employment
- Assistance accessing VA benefits
- Clothing
- Health insurance
- Assistance to appointments
- Social support
- Recovery meetings

Substance use treatment and mental health treatment will also be provided.

If you or someone you know would like to inquire or participate in these services call or email us today.

P: (360) 397-8246 ext. 30235

E: VeteransServices@lifelineconnections.org

Let us help you get out of the woods and reclaim your life.

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. 30548 to discuss how your gift can make the most impact. Thank you!

