

# Lane County Opportunity Conference

Dear Community Member,

On May 8th, United Way is sponsoring a first-time event in Lane County. The "Opportunity Conference" is a day-long event for and by people committed to moving out of poverty. The day will provide skills and resources for people who are motivated to work towards financial stability and self-sufficiency ("Captains").

A key component of the Opportunity Conference is to match Captains with trained community members who will share their experience, insights, and advice in a 3-to-6 month mentor-like relationship ("Navigators"). As seen in examples from other cities, such relationships can be meaningful and worthwhile for both the middle class "Navigators" and the "Captains" who are working to improve their current circumstances.

We are sending you this letter because you are connected to people who would make great Navigators or because a member of our committee believes that you would make an excellent Navigator yourself.

Navigators will be a part of a program that is making real change in the way people perceive poverty, in particular the way Captains and their families see themselves and their place in society. They will be a part of a national effort, under a renowned model, which empowers people to change their self-perceptions and their lives in order to reach a new level of independence.

Potential Navigators will attend a 90-minute orientation session to get a clear understanding of the program as well as their responsibilities and expectations. Then, on Friday, May 7th, the Navigators will attend a 4-hour training session with Dr. Donna Beegle. As the creator of the Opportunity Conference, Dr. Beegle will share her own inspirational story of moving out of generational poverty. She is the author of the book, *See Poverty.... Be the Difference*. She will explain why relationships across class lines are critically important to helping people leave poverty and she'll discuss the challenges of these relationships and how to make them work.

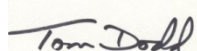
On the afternoon of Saturday, May 8th, all the Navigators will participate in the conference where they will meet the Captains and begin the process of determining the best Captain/Navigator matches. The adventure begins after the Conference as Navigators and Captains get to know and trust one another. Navigators will have ongoing support as they learn how to help Captains transcend "poverty consciousness" on the road to a better future.

You are being invited to have a most rewarding experience – to watch as someone commits to transforming their life. If you have any questions about this program, please feel free to contact us or better yet, sign up to participate in one of the orientation sessions to determine if this is a volunteer opportunity that is right for you.

Yours in teamwork for a stronger community,



Ed Durkee  
Goodwill Industries



Pastor Tom Dodd  
United Lutheran Church

*Contact information is on the back*

## LANE COUNTY OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE CALENDAR

### Orientation dates (select one to attend):

- March 4, 6:00pm at Grace Community Fellowship, 990 Country Club Road, Eugene
- March 8, 6pm at Springfield Library, 225 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Springfield
- March 10, 6:30pm at Creswell Community Center, 735 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Creswell
- March 13, 9:30am at Cottage Grove Hospital, 1515 Village Drive, Cottage Grove
- March 13, 10am at 5th Street Public Market Community Room, Eugene
- March 13, noon at 5th Street Public Market Community Room, Eugene
- March 20, 9am at United Way, 3171 Gateway Loop, Springfield
- March 20, 11am at EWEB Community Room, 500 East 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Eugene

### Conference and training dates for Navigators

- May 7 afternoon training session with Dr. Beegle
- May 8 Conference – Eugene Faith Center

### LANE COUNTY OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE CONTACT INFORMATION

- Kellie DeVore, United Way staff, 541.741.6000 x131; kdevore@unitedwaylane.org
- Gienia Baines, United Way intern, 541.741.6000 x161; gbaines@unitedwaylane.org

### LANE COUNTY OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE RESOURCES

- <http://www.povertybridge.org/>
- See Poverty...Be The Difference by Dr. Donna M. Beegle
- Lane County Community Assessment  
[http://www.unitedwaylane.org/images/ul/2009\\_community\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.unitedwaylane.org/images/ul/2009_community_assessment.pdf)