



MARCH 2025





(Left) Class trainer and behavior consultant Jerri Harqis, interacts with attendees during the introductory class in January. (Right) Greg Earl, a direct support professional, helps an attendee complete a relationship map at the class in February.

New classes aim to create meaningful connections through safe and healthy relationships

Shangri-La is now offering a series of classes, 'Relationship Status,' focused on helping individuals served to build healthy relationships and receive sex education in a safe and supportive environment. The introductory class, held in January, had excellent attendance. February's class saw many repeat faces and helped attendees learn about types of relationships and types of touch.

The classes result from input from individuals served, gathered through Shangri-La's annual Project Impact survey, which illustrated that individuals served wanted more support around building relationships.

"Our overall goal for the classes is to provide educational opportunities for people receiving services with a focus on building trust, setting expectations, and laying a solid foundation for boundaries and relationships,' explained Ruth Walton, a behavior consultant at Shangri-La who has been leading the workgroup to develop this training over the past few years. During this time, she became a certified Sexual Health and

Relationships Education instructor.

The workgroup developing and leading the classes is a cross-department collaboration between behavior consultants and members from Shangri-La's day services, employment, and residential programs.

The workgroup prioritized ensuring the classes used

clear, accessible language and activities to help attendees engage with the content. As such, the training includes many visual and interactive components, and each person is supported by a direct support professional who can offer personalized help in the moment.

"We are so happy to have gotten 'Relationship Status' up and going," said Tiffani Olsen, director of the IDD residential program. "[The classes] will help individuals develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to create and maintain meaningful relationships while also understanding boundaries, safety, and consent."

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> Ruth Walton Behavior Consultant

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Developmental disabilities are disorders that occur during developmental years (before age 22) and result in cognitive and/or physical impairments. Developmental disabilities can include autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, learning disabilities, ADHD, and hearing loss.



Trivia night collaboration tests community's disability awareness

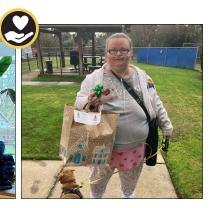
Aligned with the start of Developmental Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, Shangri-La held its first trivia night collaboration with **Shades of Brew** in Salem on March 4.

"We provided them with 10 questions that they then inserted into their regularly scheduled trivia night," said Ashley Erb, director of community engagement. The questions covered topics related to disability history, culture, statistics, diagnosis, and pride.

"These are big and complex topics. Our goal with the trivia nights is to start conversations about disability. Hopefully, inching our community towards greater disability awareness and inclusive action," explained Erb.

Want to collaborate with us on a trivia night? Connect with us at: community@shangrila-or.org







Watch how this year's project came together from start to finish!



11 years later Holiday Wishes Project continues to spread joy, meet needs

200 gift wishes, submitted by individuals and families served by Shangri-La, were fulfilled in December through the generous support of donors and community partners -- including 31 new gift-givers.

Above and beyond previous years, practical gifts were the most wished-for items, signaling that these gifts not only spread joy but also met the needs of individuals and families. For example, nearly 30 air fryers and crockpots were gifted. Other gifts included pet food and supplies, clothing, and personal wellness items.

Many thanks to our Holiday Wishes Project Tree Partners

Aldrich CPA and Advisor's, Security Monster, Coho Realty, Marsh McLennan Agency, and the Oregon Association of Disability Examiners



Grant funding brings problem solving technique to Shangri-La employees

In December, nearly 100 Shangri-La employees attended a two-day Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Essential Foundations training.

CPS is a technique that can help people experiencing challenging behaviors gain skills, find solutions, and meet shared expectations through a collaborative process with a trusted partner, like a direct support professional.

"The course was very insightful and will help me in both personal and work environments," noted one attendee in the course evaluation.

This training was made possible by grant funding from the **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**.

CPS is an approach developed by the Think: Kids Program.

bettertogether

Thank you to these donors and volunteers whose contributions helped people with disabilities and families with disadvantages thrive at home, at work, and in our community. We truly are, better together.

Better Together Giving Community Members

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This list represents contributions made between Nov. 1, 2024 - Feb. 28, 2025.



YELLOW NAPKIN PROJECT **RETURNS JULY 2025**

Shangri-La's Yellow Napkin Project aims to increase our community's disability allyship through education and awareness that leads to actions which promote a more accessible and inclusive community.

The napkins printed with disability awareness messages (provided at no-cost to partners) are distributed by food service establishments who share the napkins with their customers in July.

Become a Partnerl **RESERVE YOUR NAPKINS TODAY**

at www.shangrilaoregon.org/ yellownapkinproject



VOLUNTEER GROUPS WANTED

We have 20,000 napkins to sort and prepare for distribution to community partners. We are looking for volunteer groups to help with this project in May and June.

> Let us bring the project to you! Project is suitable for most ages.

> Interested in helping? Email: community@shangrila-or.org

missionmoments





Swept off our Feet

Love, fun, friendship, and line dancing were in the air at the Valentine's Day dance.



Cups of Cheer

Social Club met up to create custom works of art on mugs just before Christmas. -- perfect timing for hot cocoa!



Thankful for Friends

Friends connected over pie and mashed potatoes at a Friendsgiving potluck in November.



Winter Walkabouts

LEAPsters took advantage of a stretch of sunny winter days with a short hike at Silver Falls State Park.



Soup Season

Jeanne made meatball soup with homemade meatballs and lots of veggies.



History Lesson

Jack explored the Thompson's Mills state heritage site near Corvallis. It is the last waterpowered mill in the state.



Santa Stops

Santa and Mrs. Claus made several stops at programs to spread cheer during the holiday season.



Golden Nuggets

LEAPsters practiced several different cooking skills while making homemade chicken nuggets.

At Our Core

Mission: Serve individuals with disabilities or disadvantages so they may recognize and achieve their full potential.

Vision: Communities where all people are accepted for their abilities and celebrated for their successes.

Become Better Together

Visit Shangri-La's website to learn more, donate, volunteer or see current job openings.

www.ShangrilaOregon.org

If you no longer wish to receive the Shangri-La quarterly newsletter or have questions about this publication, email: community@shangrila-or.org or call 503-581-1732, x328.

Executive Team

- Janet Yousey, CEO
- Andre Veillet, Director of Finance
- Jean McCormick, Director of Human Resources
- Ashley Erb, Director of Community Engagement
- James Lindekugel, Director of Employment and Day Services
- Tiffani Olsen, Director of IDD Residential Services
- Robin Winkle, Director of Operations and Homeless Services
- Bradley Leland, Director of Behavioral Health Services

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