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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Council on Aging of Central Oregon Receives \$20,000 from the Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation to Support Meals on Wheels**

June 19, 2023 – Bend OR – The Council on Aging of Central Oregon (CoA) is pleased to report that it is the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation based out of Portland, Oregon. The grant will go directly to support CoA's Meals on Wheels program, which provides meal deliveries to homebound seniors in Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, and North Klamath Counties.

The rising cost of living in Central Oregon and the loss of federal support for the emergency SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) funding in March have had an outsized impact on our senior population living on fixed incomes. As reported by the [Source Weekly](#), the cost of living in Bend rose 22.5% from the years 2010 to 2020. Meals on Wheels America estimated that the loss of SNAP benefits will result in an average of \$138 less per month for an individual 60+. CoA itself has also seen an 18% increase in food costs and a loss of stimulus funding, which makes this grant essential.

Cassie Regimbal, Executive Director for the Council on Aging says, "Meals on Wheels is more than delivering a nutritious meal. It's also a safety check and much-needed human connection to homebound seniors. We are extremely grateful for this grant from the Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation, which will help us continue to have almost 450 of these interactions daily to support the physical, mental, and emotional health of our older adults."

The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that are strengthening, protecting, and transforming our communities and our planet. Dr. Naito practiced medicine for 40 years, and after receiving a cancer diagnosis, he began teaching the importance of presence and communication at Oregon Health and Sciences

University's Center for Ethics in Healthcare. In addition to working with students, he also expanded his philanthropic practice, building upon a lifetime of care for others by committing his entire estate to this foundation. Kris Anderson, the Executive Director for the Foundation notes, "The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation is excited to support the Council on Aging of Central Oregon. As a gerontologist, our founder Dr. Ron Naito knew firsthand how remarkable Oregon's elders are, and how overlooked they are for social services. We applaud the Council on Aging of Central Oregon for centering this important population, and for laying the groundwork for a healthier future for all of us."

CoA delivered 90,195 Meals on Wheels across Central Oregon between July 2022 and June 2023. The program provides home-delivered nutritious meals, personal contact, and related services for persons 60 and over who are homebound because of illness, incapacity, disability, and lack of family support. The program is not dependent on income level. To find out more, contact the Council on Aging of Central Oregon at (541) 678-5483 or visit [our website](#) for more information.

### **About the Council on Aging of Central Oregon**

Since 1975, the Council on Aging of Central Oregon (CoA) has served as the designated Area Agency on Aging for Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, and North Klamath Counties, offering adults aged 60 and older and their loved ones a range of support services. CoA advocates for, empowers, and guides older adults and their loved ones to live with independence and well-being.

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