

The Oregon Community Foundation & Oregon Entrepreneurs Network

For Immediate Release: October 14, 2011

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Oregon Entrepreneurs Network receives a \$75,000 grant from The Oregon Community Foundation to launch Accelerator Boot Camps throughout Oregon

Portland, OR – The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) announces today they will award the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN) a \$75,000 grant for the creation of a series of Accelerator Boot Camps.

Entrepreneurs throughout Oregon have great ideas, but they often lack the business experience needed to launch a successful company. That is where OEN comes in. Volunteers and staff at the OEN have the expertise and passion needed to provide mentoring. However, it's always been offered in an informal way until now.

The Oregon Community Foundation understands the important role entrepreneurs play in Oregon's economy and learned about the important services OEN provides as part of the Foundation's effort to improve the economy and increase jobs in Oregon.

For the first time, the OEN will now have the capital that's needed to have key volunteers trained in the best practices models and bring that knowledge to Central, Southern and Eastern Oregon over the next two years.

"Helping entrepreneurs get access to the mentorship, education and the opportunity to access investment capital is a critical priority for Oregon Entrepreneurs Network," said OEN President and Executive Director Linda Weston, "We are delighted to get this opportunity to be able to support rural Oregon entrepreneurs in this way."

The first Boot Camp will be offered through a curriculum being implemented by VentureBox, the Bend based accelerator being launched at the Bend Venture Conference on October 14. Once established in Central Oregon, the concept will be rolled out in both Southern and Eastern Oregon.

VentureBox is a model derived from best practices used by the leading startup accelerators to aid early stage enterprises in connecting to the resources they need to grow and add jobs. Volunteer mentors and project coordinators will lead a program to deliver a structured process for entrepreneurs around the state. Participants will develop their business skills and improve their efforts to attract investors and secure capital.

OCF is providing the initial grant to launch the program. OEN will be seeking additional funding to support it.

Speakers are available to talk to organizations about the work OCF is doing to improve jobs and the economy. Please contact Melissa Durham for more information, 503.227.6846; mdurham@oregoncf.org.

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About the Oregon Community Foundation

The mission of The Oregon Community Foundation is to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. OCF works with individuals, families, businesses and organizations to create charitable funds to support the community causes they care about. Through these funds OCF awards more than \$60 million annually in grants and scholarships.

About Oregon Entrepreneurs Network

Founded in 1991, celebrating 20 years of service to entrepreneurs, the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN) is a 501c3 non-profit corporation and the largest entrepreneur assistance organization in Oregon and Southwest Washington. OEN fosters the flow of entrepreneurial ideas, services, and capital to entrepreneurs and helps connect emerging Northwest businesses to growth-stimulating expertise and valuable resources.

OEN is a people-oriented network that helps cultivate, nurture and develop emerging businesses and entrepreneurs. Our network of members and breadth of services, offers business education, access to capital networks, support and contacts who can mentor and nurture startup companies' growth and development. OEN also helps small and midsized companies develop and implement strategies for community involvement that jointly meet the goals of the company, the passions of the employees and the needs of the community via its program, EFNW. For more information on OEN and its programs visit <http://www.oen.org>.