



# Friends of Public Health

JUNE 2020



Editor: Stephanie Polizzi

*Promoting the health of Coos County through enhancement of local public health services*

## President's Message

So much has changed in our world in the past few months! I applaud our public health workers who have met the challenges of COVID-19 to keep our community safe by obtaining and distributing supplies, contact tracing, case management, communicating and educating, and preparing for a worst-case scenario.



CCFoPH members have volunteered their help sewing masks, screening temperatures of people entering the Coos Health & Wellness building, and helping with the recent testing event for the fishery workers. I also acknowledge the efforts of everyone in our community who followed the guidance to prevent infection. For some, this was at great personal sacrifice.

Now that we are in Phase 2 and adjusting to a new normal with more freedom to interact in the community, I pray that we can all continue to practice the guidance for distancing, hand washing, and use of masks, so that we will not have a resurgence and have to reinstate the previous restrictions.

Stay safe.

Frances Smith  
CCFoPH President

welcome

## Join us!

CCFoPH Board meets virtually  
on the 3rd Tue of the month, 4:00 to 5:30 pm  
at Coos Health & Wellness conference room

## Contact Us!

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## Coquille Tribal Community Fund Grant

A \$5,000 grant was awarded by the Coquille Tribal Community Fund to CCFoPH on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The funds are being used to provide preventive health services to community members in need through the Coos Health & Wellness Public Health Clinic.

The public health clinic serves a wide range of ages, from infants to senior adults, and some of the services provided include immunizations; women's annual breast and pelvic exams; and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. The Tribe's generosity in providing this grant is especially appreciated at a time when many people are newly unemployed and have lost health insurance.



Receiving the award from Brenda Meade, Chairperson of the Coquille Indian Tribe, who is on the left, and Melissa Cribbins, Coos County Commissioner and Community Fund Board Chair, who is on the right, are Lisa Hermann and Lena Hawtin, employees at Coos Health & Wellness, and Frances Smith, President of CCFoPH.

Founded in 2001 by the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Tribal Community Fund has distributed more than 800 grants totaling more than \$6.7 million to support projects in the areas of education, health, public safety, arts and culture, problem gaming treatment and historic preservation, in a five-county region of Southwestern Oregon. This year the Fund awarded 77 grants totaling \$366,126.49.

Supported by a percentage of revenue from The Mill Casino, the fund is managed and distributed by a board of community leaders and Tribal representatives, and reflects the commitment of the Coquille Indian Tribe to take a proactive, positive role in the community's wellbeing.

## Grant Awarded from United Way of Southwestern Oregon



In February, CCFoPH was awarded a \$1,000 grant from United Way of Southwestern Oregon for the *Nutrition Counseling for Children* Project. This project assures that “high risk” infants and children enrolled in the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program will be able to receive an evaluation and professional guidance from a registered dietitian.

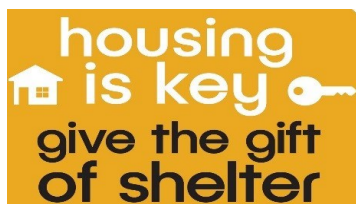
Many low-income families with infants and young children are very grateful for WIC services, which include free foods to improve nutrition, and health screening to identify high-risk health problems such as infant weight loss, and low hemoglobin. The infants and children identified as high-risk are referred for an evaluation to WIC’s registered dietitian, at no cost to the family. During a virtual appointment, the dietitian works with the participants and their families on improving and maintaining their nutritional status and general health.

The long-term goal of the project is improved health in infants and children who are vulnerable due to poverty, lack of nutritious food, and their innate health characteristics. Because the WIC funding from federal resources is insufficient to provide local services, the Friends are especially grateful to United Way of Southwestern Oregon for its contribution!

## The Emergency Fund for the Homeless

At the end of March, CCFoPH issued a request for donations to a very special project, the *Emergency Fund for the Homeless*. In Coos County, at least 1200 individuals are experiencing some kind of insecure housing situation, and about 600 people are estimated to live outside.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, we are all encouraged to keep clean and wash our hands frequently to avoid spreading this contagious virus. Keeping clean can be especially challenging for those in our community who do not have ready access to a restroom and shower.



To all who responded with your on-line donation and checks,  
**THANK YOU!**

To date, **\$586.00** from your donations have purchased 108 hygiene kits (which include toiletries for showering and grooming) plus towels and washcloths. These items have been provided to the Devereux Center, where showering facilities are available for those who have no other place to bathe.

The donation site is still open on our website: [www.ccfoph.org](http://www.ccfoph.org) for those who would like to contribute.

## Why Wear a Mask or Face Covering?



The Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads from person to person mainly through respiratory droplets an infected person makes when they cough, sneeze or talk. Droplets can land in mouths or noses of people who are nearby, within about six feet.

COVID-19 may spread from people who do not show symptoms. Cloth face coverings provide an extra layer to help prevent the respiratory droplets from traveling in the air and onto other people.

The N-95 masks and respirators worn by health professionals provide very good protection when they are “fit tested” to assure that there is a tight seal between the mask and the person’s face. Fit-testing takes into consideration whether a person may have a medical condition that could make it difficult to breathe through the N-95 mask.

A cloth face covering, a procedure mask, or KN-95 mask does provide some protection to the person wearing it. Wearing a mask, however, is really to protect the other person from you.

**Wearing a mask says,**  
“I respect you, and I’m doing my part to help protect you.”  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

### Leave one or take one

Coos Health & Wellness has started a program to encourage the public to wear face masks. This entails both donation and distribution of masks. People who would like to make and donate reusable cloth face masks can find sewing instructions on the internet. Mask donations may be placed in the identified container at each City Hall building within Coos County. Anyone in need of a mask can pick one up from the same donation bucket. For more information on the CHW cloth mask program, contact Pam Lewis at [pam.lewis@chw.coos.or.us](mailto:pam.lewis@chw.coos.or.us).

## Changes to the 2020 CCFoPH Board

Changes have come to CCFoPH recently, with the loss of two of our board members. Anita Hale, our membership chair for 3 years, moved to Texas. We will miss her cheerful personality, and her careful management of our membership records.

Florence Pourtal-Stevens, who held the ex officio position on our board as public health administrator, has left employment with Coos Health & Wellness. Her energy and delightful French accent contributed to her charm and her commitment to public health was significant.



Florence's achievements included breastfeeding promotion with families and workplaces; community engagement for assessment of our county's health needs; and a comprehensive application to become a Blue Zones community.

Most noteworthy was her tireless effort that achieved national accreditation for our county health department, a process that took several years of dedication.

Our board sends Florence and Anita our best wishes for their future. We now have a vacant membership chair position to fill! Anyone interested in this opportunity to serve on our board, please contact Frances Smith at [ccfoph@gmail.com](mailto:ccfoph@gmail.com).

### ***New Board Member: Secretary Alissa Pruess***

Alissa Pruess moved to the Coos Bay area in 2010 with her husband and infant son. Prior to moving to Coos County, Alissa earned a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin. Choosing to stay home with her son until he was school aged, Alissa spent countless hours volunteering locally and built a small social media marketing business. Over time her business evolved into research and consulting.



Most recently, Alissa has worked with Coos Health and Wellness (CHW) developing a website to educate youth and young adults about sexual and reproductive health. She also partnered with CHW to complete a study analyzing the maternal and child health needs of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Alissa is an avid skier, former ultra-marathon runner, mountain climber and surfer. She enjoys traveling domestically and internationally. As a Peace Corps volunteer, she lived in Bolivia for 2-years. There she worked with schools and women's groups to create community and family gardens, a passion she retains to this day. While living and traveling in South America, she and her husband shared many adventures including, climbing a 20,000+ ft mountain on the Bolivian and Chilean border, trekking the Inca Trail in Peru, and surfing off the coast of Uruguay.

Alissa continues to be an active volunteer in many local organizations: she is a former board member of the local chapter of Surfrider, and a current board member of Zonta, The Coos Bay Public Library, The Coos History Museum, and is now the new Secretary for the Friends of Public Health.



### ***New Board Member: Interim Ex Officio Kathy Cooley, RN, MPH, IMH-E***

Kathy Cooley began her role as the interim public health director in April, 2020,, and was appointed to the ex officio position on the CCFoPH board in May. Kathy has been a key employee with our local health department (Coos Health & Wellness) for many years, and most recently has been managing the home visiting program, which serves families with infants and young children.



Kathy's preparation for a career in public health included an internship on a Zuni Indian reservation, and volunteer work for the Peace Corp in Bolivia--where she met her husband, Peter. After the Peace Corp, she moved to Alabama to earn her Master's degree in public health, with a focus on health promotion and disease prevention.

She and Peter then moved to Coos Bay, where Kathy earned her nursing license through SWOCC, and began her public health career in the *Parents as Teachers/Babies First!* home visiting program at Coos County Public Health. She admits that having two children of her own enhanced her ability to give advice to new moms. She also did post graduate work in infant and toddler mental health at Portland State University, and incorporated those lessons in her work with parents.

Kathy says that she has thrived as the Home Visiting Program Manager, and expects to return to that position. For now, she is up to the challenge of being in charge of the public health division at Coos Health & Wellness during a global pandemic. Thank you, Kathy, for providing leadership and stability during these uncertain times.

## Weekly Virtual Town Halls on YouTube

Coos Health & Wellness is conducting virtual town halls via YouTube live on our [YouTube channel](#). The virtual town halls are scheduled for **every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month** from **5:30– 6:30 pm**. Go to Coos Health & Wellness website: [www.cooshealthandwellness.org](http://www.cooshealthandwellness.org) and click on the coronavirus information link.

### For more information on COVID-19:

Oregon Health Authority – Coronavirus Information website:  
<https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>

Coos Health & Wellness – Coronavirus website:  
<https://cooshealthandwellness.org/public-health/novel-coronavirus-2019-covid-19/>

## Coming this Summer

**CCFoPH**

*Virtual  
Recognition  
Luncheon*

**Stay tuned for more information!**

## Need a Boost?

Here are a few inspirational quotes to lift your spirits during these trying times.

**Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain.**

*Vivian Greene, author*

**Worry is like a rocking chair: It gives you something to do but never gets you anywhere.**

*Erma Bombeck, humorist*

**Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.**

*Marie Curie, physicist*

**WHEN WRITTEN IN CHINESE, THE WORD 'CRISIS' IS COMPOSED OF TWO CHARACTERS – ONE REPRESENTS DANGER, THE OTHER REPRESENTS OPPORTUNITY.**

*John F. Kennedy, US President*



**Have you *LIKED* CCFoPH Facebook Page Yet?**

Just search *Coos County Friends of Public Health*. Click like and follow!

**Please take a moment to renew your membership!**

We invite you to join CCFoPH! We want to keep our numbers strong to support Public Health services in our community. If you have questions or want more information about membership, contact the CCFoPH email at [ccfoph@gmail.com](mailto:ccfoph@gmail.com) or visit [www.ccfoph.org](http://www.ccfoph.org). Fill out the form and send payment to PO Box 203, Coos Bay, OR 97420.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

The best way to reach me is: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues for:    \$20/yr Individual                      \$30/yr Family                      \$50/yr Business

I wish to donate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of CCFoPH.    \_\_\_\_\_ I wish my donation to remain anonymous.

*CCFoPH is a Non-Profit 501c3 and your membership dues and donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.*

***We appreciate your support!***

