



# COQUILLE INDIAN TRIBE

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## CIT and Bay Area First Step hit home run

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2025

NORTH BEND – The Coquille Indian Tribe and Bay Area First Step recently formed a community partnership to take a swing at a challenging issue on the south coast, and they expect to bring the results of that partnership home this May. Literally.

In 2023, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) awarded the Coquille Indian Tribe a \$1.2 million grant. \$735,000 of that grant award could be passed through to Bay Area First Step under the Tribal Residential and Housing Service Element Program. By the end of 2023, CIT and Bay Area First Step reached a Memorandum of Agreement that has now led, in January of this year, to the closing on some property in North Bend. That property will serve as transitional housing for those in mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Transitional Housing provides a safe and supportive environment for people in recovery to live, work, and heal. Steve Sanden, Executive Director of Bay Area First step says this new transitional housing unit will go a long way to help his group fully support their clients.

“This project represents what’s possible when organizations come together with a common goal,” Sanden said. “NARR-accredited recovery housing fills a critical gap in our recovery ecosystem, and this partnership brings hope and stability to people working hard to change their lives. As a peer-run organization, we know that recovery happens best in supportive environments created by people who’ve been there. This new home aligns perfectly with our model — offering not just shelter, but a community rooted in empathy, structure, and real hope.”

Lisa Mielke, Community Services Director for the Coquille Tribe, says this is a win-win for the Tribe and the community. In partnering like this, they have been able to expand mental health and recovery services in the area while providing tribal members with a service closer to home.

“This is a great example of how the tribe continues to support our community,” said Coquille Tribal Chair Brenda Meade. “One of the Coquille Tribe’s core values is promoting the health and well-being of tribal members and our community, and we believe this exemplifies how we live that value.”

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