

NIKE FUNDS DE PAUL TREATMENT CENTERS YOUTH FITNESS PROJECT

Exercise Program Will Help Teens Recover from Drug and Alcohol Addiction

(Portland, OR – March 9, 2011) The Nike Employee Grant Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation awarded \$20,000 to De Paul Treatment Centers to help create a health and fitness program aimed at providing recovering youth a healthy life free from drugs and alcohol, improved self esteem, and a sense of community.

Sheila North, Executive Director of De Paul Treatment Centers said, “We’re very grateful to Nike for this grant. It will go toward renovating and equipping an exercise facility at our Youth and Family Treatment Center campus on NE Killingsworth Street in Portland. Our goal is to give our residential youth increased access to exercise, fitness and health. Research has shown that physical fitness activities have a positive effect on their cognitive abilities, increases their academic performance and improves confidence – all of which helps them to resist peer pressure to use drugs and alcohol. Most of all, they realize that they can have a great time being sober.”

Nike employees participated in the review of the De Paul grant application and will also be directly contributing to the success of the De Paul Youth Fitness Program by volunteering their time and expertise as coaches, fitness instructors and mentors. “Volunteerism has always been an important part of our culture at De Paul from board members to alumni of our programs. The Nike employee volunteers will fit right into our existing volunteer program, which provides many important services for our organization,” said Ms. North.

Spearheading the De Paul Youth Fitness Program is De Paul volunteer, Dr. Robert Farentinos, health/fitness industry professional and sports/exercise author. Dr. Farentinos is working with De Paul management and staff on designing and equipping the youth fitness facility, formulating key elements of the fitness program and helping to develop research protocols for tracking exercise/treatment outcomes.

Carleen Lessard, certified personal trainer and De Paul Milieu Counselor, will lead the fitness training at the new facility. An advocate of structured fitness for addicted youth, she began offering “boot camps” for De Paul girls and boys and later running and cross fit exercise. “A lot of the kids, especially the girls, have never had any introduction to exercise,” said Carleen, adding that they are motivated by their increased energy, positive feelings and the physical toning derived from exercise. Brian, 18, a client, says “After working out, I feel great. I’m ready to take on the whole day. It helps to do things we can do outside of treatment.”

De Paul Treatment Centers has been providing alcohol and drug treatment for over 30 years, helping adults, youth and families create freedom from addiction. De Paul alumni include successful corporate executives, counselors, realtors, trade union officials, and De Paul employees. Treating over 2,000 residential and outpatient clients annually at three locations in the Portland Metro area, De Paul views addiction as a complex, treatable disease and applies comprehensive, evidence-based practices to address the needs of the whole person, family, and community.

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