

Interchurch Center, Suite B ■ 0245 SW Bancroft Street ■ Portland, Oregon 97239
phone (503) 221-1054 ■ *fax* (503) 223-7007 ■ *Web site* www.emoregon.org

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CONTACT: Lowen Berman, (503) 460-3822
hivcenter@emoregon.org

Day Center celebrates 18 years of service to HIV/AIDS community

State Representative Chip Shields will host a reception celebrating 18 years of service to the HIV+/AIDS community in the Portland metro area by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (EMO) HIV Day Center. The anniversary event will be held on Wednesday, June 6, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the HIV Day Center, 2941 NE Ainsworth, Portland.

Speakers at the event will include the co-founders of the HIV Day Center: The Rev. Dr. Rodney Page, former EMO executive director, and Dr. Mark Loveless, leading HIV/AIDS physician. Members of the HIV Day Center community will also give presentations and meet with guests.

The HIV Day Center provides meals, counseling, computers, phones, laundry, clothing, massage, haircuts, showers and much more for low-income individuals living with HIV/AIDS. In addition to these services, the center offers a safe place where people can receive help and care. "It is refuge for people who face all kinds of stigma," said Lowen Berman, program manager of EMO's HIV Services. A client added, "I appreciate that I can utilize services without feeling embarrassed or humiliated."

"Many of our clients would have nowhere to go if the Day Center wasn't here," said Berman. Last year, the HIV Day Center had 7,340 client visits and provided 9,672 attractive and nutritious meals. Eighty-five percent the center's clients live below the Federal Poverty Level. "When I found myself homeless and without income," said another client, "the center was there for me."

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

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Church of the Brethren ■ Community of Christ ■ Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Greek Orthodox Church ■ Presbyterian Church (USA) ■ Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches