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HOME Foundation Story

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Culinary event to raise money for affordable housing

Creating opportunities for home ownership and affordable housing inspired a new annual culinary event coming to the Willamette Valley this spring. "A Taste of Portland" will be held in June as a charity fundraiser to benefit the Oregon Association of REALTORS® non-profit HOME Foundation.

OAR, which is headquartered in Salem, created the foundation in 2004 to provide financial resources to create, expand and encourage home ownership opportunities for Oregonians at or below local median income. The foundation also promotes awareness of affordable housing issues by educating Oregonians and their government representatives about the barriers to home ownership and the resources needed to increase housing affordability.

As the local real estate market has experienced substantial growth in the past several years, the price of the average home grew beyond the means of many Oregon residents.

Last year the HOME Foundation distributed \$50,000 in grants throughout Oregon from funds raised by REALTORS®, providing financial support to partnering organizations dedicated to the development, maintenance, or repair of affordable housing in Oregon. Past grant recipients include Bend Habitat for Humanity, Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation, Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Service, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, and Southern Oregon Coast Housing Opportunities Provider, just to name a few.

To raise funds for its foundation's grants, OAR conducts various fund-raising efforts throughout the year. The forthcoming "A Taste of Portland" event is the newest addition to this roster.

More than 30 Oregon restaurants and caterers are expected to provide tastes of their cuisine at the event, which will be held June 12 at the Oregon Golf Club, 25700 S.W. Petes Mountain Road, West Linn. Tax deductible tickets are \$40 and can be purchased by calling 1-800-252-9115; a limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

Another of OAR's fund-raising efforts for the foundation involves getting banks to contribute interest accrued from brokerage client trust accounts. Title companies, banks and brokerage firms are invited to join and can download enrollment forms at the Oregon Association of REALTORS® website (www.OregonRealtors.org).

Other ways to help the HOME Foundation include:

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*Making an annual pledge of continued support. Contact OAR at 503-362-3645 for more information.

*Sending a one-time tax deductible contribution to: OAR HOME Foundation, P.O. Box 351, Salem, Oregon 97308.

*Establishing an interest-bearing account with automatic contributions from any interest earned. Participating banks include: Sterling Savings Bank, People's Bank and Northwest Bank. Visit www.oregonrealtors.org for locations.

*Purchasing "A Taste of Portland" sponsorship. Current sponsors include Parr Lumber, Umpqua Bank, Regional Multiple Listing Service and Fastsigns. Call the Oregon Association of REALTORS® for sponsor opportunities: 503/362-3645.

For applications and more information about a 2008 HOME Foundation grant, visit www.OregonRealtors.org.

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