

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 20, 2021

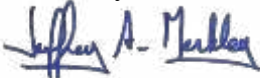
Greetings,

Thank you for inviting me to join all of you with Serenity Lane in recognition of extraordinary organizations and individuals who commit their time to helping the most vulnerable in our communities with recovery from alcohol and substance use disorders. Your incredible efforts have saved countless lives across Oregon and supported many who made the transition to a thriving life in recovery.

Drug and alcohol abuse has been an ongoing epidemic for decades, but due to the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of cases has increased substantially. Oregon in particular holds one of the highest substance abuse rates in the country. That needs to change. Resources at every level of government must address not only the individual treatment, but also the root causes of harm and trauma—including economic hardship, housing insecurity, and homelessness. All of us share the responsibility for eradicating drug and alcohol abuse and helping those impacted, and one of the most effective ways we can do that is by prioritizing quality recovery programs such as yours with an emphasis on mental health treatment.

I want to thank all of the honorees and award recipients for their hard work and dedication to serving the community and being a support system to those who need it most. Please continue to be a trusted resource to Oregonians who face drug and alcohol addiction, and to give hope to families who look for solutions for their loved ones. I will continue to address these critical issues in the U.S. Senate, and I look forward to seeing more results from the important work you do.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator