



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Cascadia Health celebrating 45 years with annual “Culture of Caring” gala**

*Event will honor founding CEO Leslie Ford, build momentum for critical services*

*Portland, Ore.* – The 9<sup>th</sup> annual Culture of Caring gala—an event benefitting Cascadia Health’s Whole Health services—is coming **April 9, 2026**. Cascadia invites community members to [register](#) and join this night of celebration, inspiration, and giving.

For the last 45 years, Cascadia has built a foundation of hope, housing, and healing for thousands in our community. But its work is far from finished. The theme of this year’s event is “momentum,” reflecting how community support is integral to Cascadia’s enduring success.

Cascadia serves more than 20,000 individuals and families yearly, providing trusted health, housing, and recovery services for all, regardless of ability to pay.

“Cascadia’s strength comes from its deliberate investment in serving people with the highest needs in our community,” said James Schroeder, President and CEO of Cascadia Health. “But we can’t do it alone. Our annual gala emphasizes the importance of local partnerships and connection in achieving our mission. Together, we can create lasting change and build on the momentum at the center of Cascadia’s work—not only today but for decades to come.”

The gala will feature exciting performances, as well as the stories and voices of clients and staff, demonstrating the impact of Cascadia’s life-saving services.

- **2026 Honoree:** Founding CEO Leslie Ford will be recognized for her legacy of healthcare leadership and innovation in Oregon. Ford is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who received her MSW from the University of Washington in 1979. She has held leadership roles in behavioral health provider agencies in Virginia, Washington, and Oregon. One of the driving principles throughout her tenure has been her focus on the development of integrated services.
- **Special Performance:** The night’s featured performer will be Jessica Lind, an American ballet dancer best known for her career with Oregon Ballet Theatre, where she rose to the rank of

Principal Dancer after joining the company in 2011. Known for her strength and expressive artistry, Jessica brings rich experience and heart to her captivating performances.

The event will run from 5:30-9 p.m. at The Redd on Salmon, 831 SE Salmon St, Portland, OR 97214. All funds raised are critical to Cascadia's continued ability to meet the growing needs of the region.

This celebration will include:

- A three-course dinner brought by Art of Catering
- Stories about the impacts of our work
- Art & entertainment
- Live raffle

For more information and to register, visit [www.cascadiahealth.org/gala2026](http://www.cascadiahealth.org/gala2026).

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## **About Cascadia Health**

### **Our mission**

[Cascadia Health](http://CascadiaHealth) delivers whole health – integrated mental health, addiction services, primary care, and housing – to promote hope and support the wellbeing of the communities we serve.

### **Our vision**

We envision a community where everyone benefits from whole health, experiences wellbeing, and has a self-directed, connected life.