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**THE CENTER FOUNDATION LAUNCHES “TRAIN YOUR BRAIN” INJURY PREVENTION CAMPAIGN AT 24
CENTRAL OREGON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

*Over 1,200 helmets to be distributed to third-graders with help from First Interstate Bank, Summit
Medical Group Oregon, and BendBroadband*

BEND, Ore. (April 2, 2019) — Over 2,000 local elementary students in the Bend-La Pine, Sisters, Crook County, Culver, and Jefferson School Districts will be equipped to enjoy summer activities more safely thanks to a regional community partnership between [The Center Foundation](#), [First Interstate Bank](#), [Summit Medical Group Oregon](#), and [BendBroadband](#). These local organizations have teamed up with the school districts to expand The Center Foundation’s *Train Your Brain* program, a two month-long initiative to educate every third grader in our region about brain injury prevention and the importance of helmet safety.

Starting April 10, representatives from The Center Foundation, Summit Medical Group Oregon, BendBroadband, and First Interstate Bank will be presenting bike helmet safety demonstrations and giving away free helmets to third graders at each of the district’s 30 elementary schools. At least 1,200 students who are in need of a helmet will receive one. These helmets are free to the students, high-quality, and just in time for popular summer activities, such as bike riding and skateboarding.

Media is invited to attend the kick-off demonstration held at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, April 15 at Buckingham Elementary school, in Bend.

“It’s well documented that brain injury among youth is recently on the rise,” said Sonja Donohue, Executive Director for The Center Foundation. “To help reverse this trend locally, The Center Foundation started [Train Your Brain](#) to educate and equip students in a fun, engaging program. We are grateful to the school districts for incorporating this important safety initiative across all local elementary schools, as well as First Interstate Bank, Summit Medical Group Oregon, and BendBroadband for helping us reach our goal to provide free helmets to every local third grader who needs one.”

“First Interstate Bank prioritizes support for organizations that strengthen schools and promote student well-being,” said Bill Kuhn, Bend Market President for First Interstate Bank. “The Center Foundation has been doing excellent preventative work related to concussions and other head and spinal cord injuries among children. We are proud to partner with them, Summit Medical Group Oregon, and BendBroadband to raise awareness of these important issues in an effort to help reduce the number of preventable brain injuries in our community.”

Each year, about 400,000 children under the age of 15 are treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms for bicycle-related injuries. An additional 300 children are killed. Bicyclists ages 5 through 14 have

among the highest injury rates of all riders. Helmets provide the best protection against injury, whether a child is riding a bike, scooter, skateboard, or using skates, and can reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by up to 88 percent.

“Brain injuries can be life-threatening and often preventable,” says Dr. Booker, a pediatrician at Summit Medical Group Oregon. “The *Train Your Brain* program is an excellent resource in preventing such injuries by relaying important safety information and supplying properly fitted helmets to kids. Together, we can prioritize our children’s safety while promoting healthy, active lifestyles.”

Over the past two years, Summit Medical Group Oregon has proudly served as a Co-Title Sponsor in this public safety campaign by helping to underwrite the helmets and educate the community and through the participation of its providers.

According to The Center Foundation, helmet use is highly recommended for all wheeled sports activities, regardless of the participant’s age. Proper helmet fit is also critical to minimize risk in an accident. For children, The Center Foundation advises purchasing a helmet only after the child has tried it on. Multi-sport helmets are also recommended if a child participates in numerous wheeled sports. During *Train Your Brain* events, students bring their current helmets to school for a safety evaluation and fitting by an expert.

“The Center Foundation is a vital and trusted organization in our community,” said Courtney Underhill, Field Market Manager for BendBroadband. “Not only do the athletic trainers at The Center Foundation serve as an amazing support system for our young athletes who get injured, but they also teach injury prevention to our students in Central Oregon.”

About The Center Foundation

Formed in 2001 by physicians at The Center Orthopedic & Neurosurgical Care & Research in Bend, Oregon, we believe that keeping kids active and involved in sports is important to their overall physical, social, and educational development. The Center Foundation is Central Oregon’s only non-profit solely dedicated to providing sports medicine as a means to ensure youth are safe, healthy, and protected in an active lifestyle. To learn more visit www.centerfoundation.org.

About First Interstate Bank

First Interstate Bank is a community banking organization, operating more than 120 banking offices, along with online and mobile banking services, throughout Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. First Interstate is driven by strong family and corporate values, as well as a commitment to exemplary customer service, exceeding customer expectations through products and services, and supporting the communities it serves with leadership and resources. Learn more at firstinterstate.com.

About Summit Medical Group Oregon

Formed in 2018 through a strategic partnership between Bend Memorial Clinic (BMC) and Summit Health Management, Summit Medical Group Oregon’s comprehensive care model includes Summit Medical Group Oregon – Bend Memorial Clinic, the largest physician-owned multi-specialty group in Central Oregon, and Summit Medical Group Oregon – Bend Urology Associates. For more information, please visit www.smgoregon.com.

About BendBroadband

BendBroadband, a part of TDS Broadband Service LLC, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Telephone and Data Systems, Inc., operates in Central Oregon. The company began offering local cable TV service in 1955. Today, BendBroadband offers broadband, fiber connectivity, cable television, and telephone services for commercial and residential customers. For more information, please visit BendBroadband.com.

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