**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Connecting During the Holidays**

Bend, OR – October 26, 2015 – Every year, ConnectW—a non-profit organization founded to encourage and support self-directed business women—throws a holiday gala to celebrate the season, its members and the community. In addition to connecting over great appetizers, a festive sit-down dinner, beverages and serious dancing fun, the women’s networking group selects a local non-profit as the beneficiary of its holiday fundraising and festivities.

Since 2011, ConnectW’s holiday galas have raised more than $35,000 for Central Oregon non-profit organizations including Oregon Adaptive Sports, a chapter of Disabled Sports USA which provides safe and affordable recreation to people with disabilities, and Beulah’s Place, which helps protect homeless teens from sexual exploitation by criminals and predators.

This year’s event—held at St. Charles on Friday, December 11th at 6 p.m.—will raise money for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon. Through this non-profit organization’s efforts, every child in Central Oregon who needs a mentor is matched with one, leading to higher aspirations, improved academic success and healthy life choices. But making that happen takes volunteers and it takes funding.

How much will ConnectW raise for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon? That’s up to you. Over the years ConnectW’s loyal community partners—along with caring local businesses and individuals—have stepped up to be event sponsors and to donate products and services to the gala’s raffle. ConnectW’s 2015 Holiday Gala Paramount sponsor is [First Community Credit Union](https://www.myfirstccu.org/).

As always, this year’s sponsorships and donations will allow ConnectW to give 100% of the event proceeds directly to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central and to maximize that contribution.

Let’s help more and more Big Brothers and Big Sisters (affectionately known as Bigs) turn small moments in a child’s life into big magic.

If you plan to attend the ConnectW holiday gala, buy your tickets early because the party has sold out two years in a row. Tickets (just $35 per person) are available at <https://connectw.org/whats-happening/holiday-gala/>. If you’re interested in being an event sponsor or donating to the holiday gala raffle, or for more information, please contact ConnectW Business Promotions Chair Sheila Lofton at businesspromo@connectw.org or 541-508-4547.

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