

make it better

 PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS

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GREG ODEN & OREGON MENTORS RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FOR "TEAM ODEN"

*Trail Blazer to raise mentoring awareness, host
local events*

PORTLAND, Ore. - Portland Trail Blazers rookie center Greg Oden today joined Oregon Mentors, a non-profit organization unifying youth mentoring programs throughout the state, to announce a statewide mentoring awareness initiative.

The formation of "Team ODEN" is aimed at helping Oregon Mentors reach its goal to connect 40,000 youth with caring adult mentors by 2010.

"Every kid should have someone in their life that can support and encourage them," Oden said. "Without strong mentors, I wouldn't be here today."

As part of his partnership with Oregon Mentors, Oden has purchased a block of 30 tickets to each Trail Blazers home game for mentors and mentees. Throughout the year, Oden will also host events that will allow him to spend time with Team ODEN mentors and the youth they support.

"We are excited to be working with the Trail Blazers, and with Greg Oden in particular," said Carolyn Becic, executive director for Oregon Mentors. "Greg personally knows the impact a mentor can have on a young man's life. Having Greg be part of our organization will not only raise awareness about the need for mentors in our state, but will also reward those who have shown their dedication to mentoring youth."

Anyone interested in becoming a mentor can sign up for Team ODEEN at www.oregonmentors.org, or learn about more than 100 affiliated mentoring programs throughout the state of Oregon.

ABOUT OREGON MENTORS

Oregon Mentors works to connect every child in Oregon with a mentor by supporting the work of Oregon's more than 100 unique youth mentoring programs. The organization focuses on increasing the public's awareness about the benefits to youth who are mentored; connecting new volunteers to quality mentoring programs, providing training resources to program staff and volunteers, and removing barriers to mentoring programs' growth. To learn more about how youth mentoring or to volunteer to be a mentor in your community contact Oregon Mentors at 866-450-4040 or online at: www.oregonmentors.org.



ABOUT THE PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS

The Portland Trail Blazers, members of the National Basketball Association (NBA), were founded in 1970, and purchased by Paul G. Allen in 1988. The team's rich heritage includes 26 playoff appearances, an NBA championship in 1977 and a commitment to community service. With a corporate mission to "Make It Better," the Trail Blazers strive to help children and their families throughout Oregon and southwest Washington learn, play, grow, get involved and live healthier lives. The Trail Blazers are the first and only pro sports franchise to receive the prestigious National Points of Light Award for excellence in corporate community service. A long-time partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of Portland led to the establishment of the Blazers Boys & Girls Club, the first team-sponsored club of its kind, and has resulted in contributions of more than \$1 million. The Albina Head Start McCormack-Matthews Center, which provides education and health services to preschoolers and their families, was established in 2004 with nearly \$1 million in contributions from Allen, the team, and former Trail Blazers star - and Portland native - Damon Stoudamire. For more information on the trailblazers visit www.trailblazers.com.

