



TIP of Portland, ME

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Leslie Skillin, CTM

The Trauma Intervention Programs of Portland, ME was founded in 2004 by the Community Counseling Center and the Junior League of Portland, ME. Their first training for TIP volunteers was in 2005

There are currently 24 volunteers serving the greater Portland, ME area, responding to approximately 20 calls per month.

Leslie began her career with TIP in the very first training class TIP of Portland, ME held. Leslie was a TIP Volunteer for 5 and a half years before becoming the Crisis Team Manager almost 3 years ago.

Leslie, CCC staff and TIP volunteers are currently busy preparing for their 8th annual Heroes with Heart event this April. This event is being held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland. At this event, they will be honoring the Junior League of Portland with a "Heart of Gold" award for the major role they played in bringing TIP to Portland, Maine.

Leslie says, "Thus far we have collected close to 100 auction items for this year's silent auction and will be creating fantastic packages for our attendees to bid on!" "We will be using Auctions by Cellular, so be sure to check out what is available and bid on your favorite items."

"Shannon Moss, a local news broadcast celebrity will be hosting our event for the 8Th year in a row. Shannon is married to a Portland Maine Police Officer and understands TIP and why it is a very important piece of a communities ability to respond in a way that honors the emotional experience for victims and families when tragedy strikes."



Leslie, can you explain to us how TIP of Portland, ME was started and how it is just a little different than the typical TIP affiliate?

"Community Counseling Center (CCC) worked in collaboration with the Junior League of Portland to bring the TIP program to the greater Portland area nine years ago. As CCC is a well respected community mental health provider in the footprint of TIP Portland's service area, having the direct association with the agency has lent a hand in our affiliate's ability to establish solid working relationships with

Portland area first responder and hospital communities. This direct link to CCC also means those clients served by TIP volunteers can be offered one or two free counseling sessions with a CCC clinician to assist them in processing their recent traumatic event. The TIP volunteer's themselves also have access to one or two free sessions at CCC if they are having trouble moving past a difficult scene they were called out to provide EFA services on. When CCC became part of a larger healthcare providing system (Maine Mental Health Partners), the opportunities to spread the word about TIP and its amazing services grew. Of course as we all know getting the word out about TIP and our work is always a big part of what a CTM does each and every day, being associated with a highly respected and thriving mental health agency has elevated awareness in the minds of many in the healthcare community."

Leslie, you were a volunteer first, what brought you to TIP in the first place?

"I was going to school full time at University of Southern Maine in Portland and saw a flyer hanging on the bulletin board in the psychology department. For most of my life, I have been the person that has tried to "be there" for people if I can and TIP's mission resonated with me."

What are some of your favorite things about working with TIP?

"I love how our EFA skills bring with them the ability to change the trajectory of how a person will look back on the "worst day" of their lives. As Kate Braestrup (best selling author and Maine Warden Chaplain) has said, "We cannot take the pain away, but we can put love in." I have felt that about the work always, but she summed it up for me in one simple sentence."

What do you do when you are not working TIP?

"I love to take long walks with my beagle Penny all year long; winters bring my nephews hockey games, spending time with family and friends and the summertime is spent camping, hiking and most of all in or on the shores of Casco Bay as much

as possible!"

Okay, now for some quirky questions....

If you won the lottery, what is one thing you would do for sure?

"Make much needed repairs to the homes of loved ones and pay off a good chunk of my kid's college debt."

What era would you go to if you had a time machine?

"Decades prior to settler's expansion into the West, I would like to have lived on the Great Plains, part of a native community to experience the raw beauty of nature, live off from the land and see wild buffalo and horses run."

Tell us what you miss about being a kid?

"I really miss spending the day just moving from one event to the next with no agenda or concern about time. Hanging out in the shade of a tree and staring up at the clouds yelling out what animal you saw, playing "kick the can" under a street light until you heard your mom yelling to come in or riding your bicycle tirelessly around town stopping to get a Popsicle at the local drug store. Watch the movie [The Sandlot](#), that brings those of us in our 50's back."

Thanks Leslie, we enjoyed getting to know you better. We are looking forward to seeing your beautiful city in October at the TIP National Convention.