



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Oregon Youth Authority

Office of the Director

530 Center Street NE, Suite 200

Salem, OR 97301-3765

Voice: 503-373-7205

Fax: 503-373-7622

www.oregon.gov/OYA

February 27, 2012

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jim Sellers, OYA Communications Office, 503-373-7425,

jim.sellers@oya.state.or.us



Grant to Albany high school supports goal of a student literacy center

A Laura Bush Foundation grant to purchase more library books for Albany's Three Lakes High School is supporting school officials' desire to develop a literacy center to encourage reading at the school.

The \$5,000 grant is being used to purchase a variety of titles for the high school, located in the 60-bed Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility in southeast Albany. Principal Kevin Hunking said students at the all-female facility have requested mysteries, fantasies and other young-adult titles as well as books on managing money and supporting drug and alcohol treatment.

"Reading and literacy are a high priority," Hunking said. "The majority of students in our program are lacking literacy skills because they are behind in school. Our goal is to get them reading things they're interested in." He said the school is using a proven reading program that in one instance took an Oak Creek youth from a second-grade reading level to sixth grade in six months.

Hunking said the school wants to raise funds to develop a literacy center as a relaxing place where students can enjoy reading, similar to what the Pacific Northwest College of Art helped develop at Portland's Donald E. Long Detention Center with new art and comfortable seating.

The Three Lakes school library, previously displayed on bookshelves against the walls of a classroom, now is housed in a larger, partitioned area of the career-

technical education room. “It’s about twice the size now and we hope to continue growing it,” Hunking said.

The school is staffed by the Multnomah Education Service District through a contract with the Oregon Department of Education.

The school’s part-time librarian, Barb Daniels, applied for the Laura Bush Foundation grant. The grant to Three Lakes High School was one of four awarded to Oregon schools and one of 241 nationally. The foundation has awarded more than \$8.4 million in grants of \$5,000 or less for library expansion, updating and diversification since its founding in 2002.

Hunking said the library also welcomes donated books from the community, which it reviews for appropriateness for incarcerated youth, and hopes to raise funds for a literacy center. “There’s not a lot of money in school budgets anymore for libraries and books,” he said.

Oak Creek Superintendent Lory Humbert confirmed the hard work of librarian Barb Daniels, who she said has worked the past several years to grow the library and reading program with minimal funds. “We created drop boxes for books in our lobby to collect donations since we have very little funding to keep the library fresh and interesting for the youth,” Humbert said. “This grant has helped tremendously, but we are a long ways from the dream of a literacy center with an atmosphere that will inspire our youth. The fundraising efforts of Kevin Hunking and his staff will be essential.”

OYA has custody of approximately 750 youth offenders ages 12 to 24 in correctional and transitional facilities in Albany, Burns, Florence, Grants Pass, La Grande, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn. OYA juvenile parole and probation officers supervise an additional 1,050 youth offenders on parole and probation in communities throughout Oregon.

#

