



Oregon

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NEWS RELEASE

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Marion-Polk: OYA parole and probation officers recognized for exemplary service

Two Oregon Youth Authority parole and probation officer serving Marion and Polk counties have been recognized for exemplary service to the agency and the youth it serves.

Danny Hernandez and Carolyn Lemhouse each received a Coin Award, silver dollar-size medal bearing the state seal, from OYA Director Colette S. Peters and Philip Cox, assistant director for community services. The awards, given to employees for excellence in reflecting agency values, were presented as part of Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week observances.

Field supervisors praised the two employees:

- Hernandez was recognized for his hard work and dedication to the youth and families he serves, ensuring family members stay involved with youth regardless of the geographic distance. Mike Runyon, field supervisor for Marion County, said Hernandez maintains a flexible work schedule to ensure families can participate in multi-disciplinary team meetings and family counseling after hours and on weekends. Hernandez is a member of OYA's Hispanic Advisory Committee, the Salem-Keizer Gang Task Force, and a Marion County group working on disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system. "He has been a leader in our agency in recognizing the cultural and bilingual needs of the families he works with," Runyon said.

- Lemhouse was recognized for her conscientiousness, skill and integrity in managing OYA's one-person office in Polk County. Steve Harder, field supervisor for Polk and four other counties, said Lemhouse has built positive relationships with the community, represents OYA as a resource expert, attends weekly community staffing meetings and demonstrates excellent communications skills. "Her quick wit, dry humor, strong skills of discernment and heart of a teacher make her both a successful screener and wonderful partner," Harder said.

"Danny Hernandez, Carolyn Lemhouse and other OYA professionals protect public safety and help former offenders become productive, crime-free citizens by offering support and compassion, demanding accountability and being consistent role models," said Peters. "They give youth consistency throughout their time with OYA, and play a critical role in minimizing the number of OYA youth who reoffend."

Hernandez and Lemhouse are among 72 OYA parole and probation officers. Among the tasks they perform are developing agreements with youth, determining special needs and services for youth, conducting monthly reviews with youth, arranging vocational services, administering urinalyses, preparing for and testifying at hearings, and participating in quarterly meetings of team members who support each youth's progress. A juvenile parole and probation officer is assigned when a youth is committed to OYA and provides continuity regardless of whether the youth is in a close-custody facility or being supervised in the community.

Effective community supervision by juvenile parole and probation officers helps the agency fulfill its mission to protect the public and reduce crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.

OYA supervises approximately 1,100 youth on parole and probation in communities across Oregon, and has custody of approximately 800 youth offenders ages 12-24 in correctional and transitional facilities in Albany, Burns, Florence, Grants Pass, La Grande, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn.

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