



# Oregon

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## Oregon Youth Authority

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Oregon Youth Authority hires clinical psychologist as treatment director**

A licensed psychologist with experience working with youth offenders in the Oregon Youth Authority's two largest close-custody facilities has been hired as the agency's behavioral services treatment director.

Whitney Vail, Psy.D., will be responsible for directing mental health services for youth including ensuring the agency uses treatment practices most effective in reducing recidivism. First day on the job for Vail, who lives in Clackamas County, is Sept. 12.

“Dr. Whitney Vail is a highly regarded professional who already works collaboratively with OYA treatment professionals to deliver the mental health treatment youth need to become productive, crime-free citizens,” said OYA Director Colette S. Peters. “She is familiar with Oregon's juvenile justice system, she brings an outsider's fresh perspective to our work, and she has shown she can provide leadership to help youth overcome mental health disorders.”

Sixty-four percent of offenders in OYA's care and custody are diagnosed with mental health and emotional disorders.

Vail has worked on contract as a psychologist for the Hillcrest and MacLaren facilities in Salem and Woodburn, respectively, since November 2009. Before that she worked in various capacities for Trillium Family Services' Parry Center for Children, Waverly Children's Home and Children's Farm Home, including associate clinical director, clinical manager and clinical supervisor.

“My goals in this position will be to improve the fidelity and effectiveness of evidence-based practices, and to look at how we can integrate other interventions to improve the ability of youth to do well in custody and then take those skills and use them in a positive way in the community,” said Vail. “The end goal is to improve quality of life and reduce recidivism, working toward a better future for our youth and communities across Oregon.”

Vail holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from Pacific University in Forest Grove; a master’s degree in clinical psychology from Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif; and an undergraduate degree in psychology from Oregon State University in Corvallis.

She has volunteered for nearly a decade with Guide Dogs for the Blind Inc. in Boring, serving as liaison with volunteer puppy raisers, overseeing the health care and training of puppies that will serve as guide dogs, raising and training puppies herself and doing public speaking on behalf of the organization.

OYA has custody of approximately 800 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.

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