



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Oregon Youth Authority

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## OYA goes above and beyond to help feed the hungry



*The Oregon Youth Authority's Kila Jager (center) accepts a certificate recognizing the agency's support for the 2014 Governor's State Employee Food Drive. Joining her are Marion-Polk Food Share President Rick Gaupo (left) and Shawn DeCarlo, community fundraising manager at the Oregon Food Bank.*

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) went above and beyond its past support for the annual Governor's State Employee Food Drive by donating nearly 55,000 pounds of food this winter to help Oregonians in need.

When the final amounts were totaled from OYA offices and facilities across the state, staff donated 2,833 pounds of food and nearly \$13,000 through fundraisers and payroll deductions. At-risk youth also pitched in by preparing food and running in marathons for facility-sponsored fundraisers. When converted to pounds of food, the monetary support combined with food donations equaled 54,797 pounds. In 2013, OYA donated a combined total of 44,303 pounds.

OYA and other agencies were recognized during a ceremony today in Salem attended by Governor John Kitzhaber and First Lady Cylvia Hayes, where it was announced that state

employees raised nearly \$779,000 for the 2014 food drive. The total represents about 3.2 million pounds of food. Oregon state employees represented the largest employer donation to local food banks to help feed the hungry in the state.

“On behalf of all Oregonians, I thank you for your public service and for inspiring your fellow employees to make this food drive a success,” said Governor Kitzhaber. “The food and funds you donated will contribute to strengthening our communities by helping those who need it the most.”

OYA Director Fariborz Pakseresht praised OYA’s response to this year’s food drive as “nothing short of overwhelming. I’m so proud of staff and youth for their enthusiastic and generous support of those in need. I’m also grateful to Kila Jager of the Professional Standards Office, who once again volunteered to lead OYA’s food-drive efforts with the help of local coordinators at facilities and field offices.”

OYA staff organized various events to benefit the food drive, held throughout February. MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility (YCF) in Woodburn hosted a 5K fun run/walk at the facility Feb. 28, and all funds collected through the \$10 admission fee were donated to the food drive. Oak Creek YCF in Albany organized a salsa-making competition Feb. 14. Hillcrest YCF in Salem held a chili cook off Feb. 26, which attracted entries from throughout OYA. Chili lovers donated \$5 or five cans of food for the privilege of sampling more than a dozen pots of chili.

All donations of food, money and time benefited the Oregon Food Bank Network, which serves communities throughout the state. Representatives from the Oregon Food Bank and Marion-Polk Food Share attended today’s ceremony to honor agency employees for their support.

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*The Oregon Youth Authority is the state's juvenile justice agency, reducing victimization and building safer communities by helping at-risk young people lead productive, crime-free lives. Learn more at [www.oregon.gov/oia](http://www.oregon.gov/oia) and follow us on Twitter @OregonYouth*