



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Oregon Youth Authority

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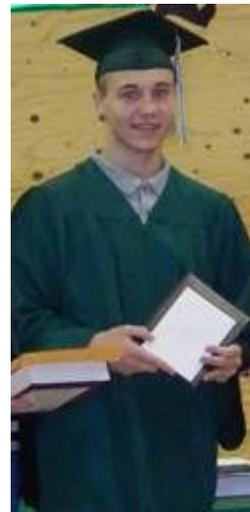
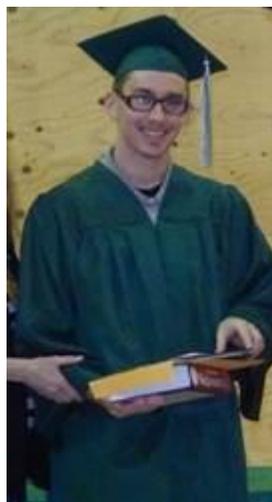


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## Two at-risk youth graduate from South Jetty High School in Warrenton



*Left: Austin, 18, hometown: Milwaukie; right: Gage, 18, hometown: Silverton*

Two at-risk youth in the care of the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) graduated with their high school diplomas May 30. Austin and Gage, both 18, are held at OYA's North Coast Youth Correctional Facility in Warrenton. They received their diplomas from South Jetty High School, operated at the facility by the Warrenton-Hammond School District.

"We're delighted that Austin and Gage persevered to continue their education while at OYA," said Jami Ayers, interim superintendent at North Coast. "Their accomplishment proves that the desire to succeed doesn't have to be hindered by incarceration. Education will prepare them to

lead productive, crime-free lives after they return to society upon completing their OYA commitments.”

Like graduates everywhere, Austin and Gage expressed gratitude to their parents and teachers for supporting them through high school.

“I’d especially like to thank my parents,” said Austin. “They have been my biggest support group. I have let them down too many times to count, yet they are always there for me. My graduation today is one of the many ways I will be paying them back.”

“My thanks go out to my mother and my three little brothers who have always been there to give me support when I needed it most,” said Gage. “When I was getting in trouble, they would push me to do what was right and not let me fail in any way.”

Besides Ayers and relatives of the youth, guests at the graduation ceremony included OYA Chief Information Officer Kyriacos Kitsis, who was also commencement speaker; Debbie Morrow, vice chair of the Warrenton-Hammond School Board; Kelly Simonsen, school board member; district Superintendent Mark Jeffery; and South Jetty High School Principal Rich Glinert.

North Coast was the first of OYA’s 10 close-custody facilities around the state to host high school graduation this year. At-risk youth are graduating from other facilities throughout June.



*A double rainbow appeared over North Coast Youth Correctional Facility during graduation May 30.*

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*The Oregon Youth Authority is the state's juvenile justice agency, reducing victimization 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 OYA on Twitter @OregonYouth*