

8-25-17

To: Employment First stakeholders

Note: A photo slideshow of the Lincoln County School District celebration is [online](#).

Lincoln County School District celebrates Summer Work Program



Lincoln County Summer Work Employment Experience Training program graduates with their parents and family members at a recent event celebrating the completion of their 7-week paid work experience.

A group of 15 students recently celebrated completion of a seven week paid work experience program in Lincoln County School District.

The students ranged in age from 16 to 21, and all finished seven weeks of paid work in an individual community job through Lincoln County Schools' "Summer Work Employment Experience Training," or SWEET.

On August 10, the students came together with their parents, family members and school district staff to celebrate their success. For some students, it was their first paid community job. For others, it was one of several work experiences building a bridge to paid community employment after finishing school.

Angel Jacob (A.J.) Aguilar, a student at Waldport High School, worked at C&K Market in Yachats. He stocked shelves and helped keep the store clean.

"I liked everything about it," A.J. said, smiling. "I've put in an application to work there as a regular employee."

A.J.'s mother, Dana Hendrix, said the experience of working in a job transformed her son.

“This was his first job and he just blossomed after a few weeks on the job,” Dana said.



Baymart Deli & Café in Waldport employed two students during the summer. Left to right: Bob Spurgeon and his son, student Joey Spurgeon, Baymart owner Paul Williams, and student Dustin Peters.

Cyndi Henry, Special Education Administrator for Lincoln County, said this is the second year the district has conducted the summer work program for students with disabilities. In collaboration with the Youth Transition Program (YTP) and DD Services, with support from the Oregon Department of Education, the Lincoln County Special Education summer

employment program grew from 10 to 16 participants from the Newport, Lincoln City, Yachats and Waldport areas.

Ten community businesses employed the students. Student jobs ranged from a visitor center interpreter at Hatfield Marine Sciences Center to a classroom assistant at Coastal Kids Daycare. Phyllis Janssen’s son Nic Slater was the youngest participant – he turned 16 just before he started his first paid job at Pick of the Litter Thrift Store.

“It was great for him to work on social skills, learning to talk to people he doesn’t know,” Phyllis said. “He still has time to figure out what he wants to do but the important part is that he is out there in the community, working and building those skills.”

Phyllis said she has advocated for her son his entire life. She said the support of his service coordinator, Sandy Hyduchak, to help her son become more independent has been essential.

“I believe anything is possible for these kids, regardless of what their disability is,” Phyllis said. “Find out what they love and use that to teach them and help them find their path in life.”

The Lincoln County Summer Work Employment Experience Training program is a model of how districts can help students gain useful, individual paid employment experiences.

If your community or school district is interested in starting a summer work program similar to the Lincoln County program, please consider applying for the Department of Human Services and Oregon Department of Education’s Request for Applications (RFA) **No. 4448** for Summer Work Experiences at: <http://orpin.oregon.gov>. If you have questions about RFA 4448, please contact Brenda Pearson, Office of Contracts & Procurement, (503) 945-6273; brenda.l.pearson@state.or.us.