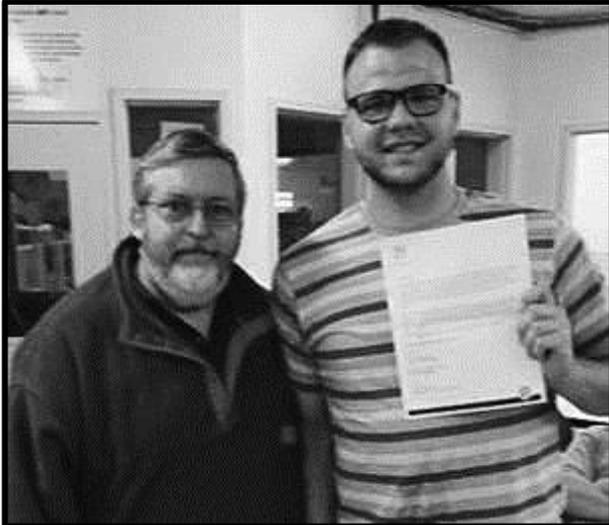




Tillamook youth is finalist in national talent contest



Tillamook YCF staff member and PbS State Coordinator Gary Westoby (left) with Edward, who is holding his finalist notification letter.

By C. J. Drake, OYA Communications
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Edward has talent.

That’s the judgment of [Performance-based Standards](#) (PbS), which notified Edward – who is at Tillamook YCF – that he’s a finalist in the PbS “Kids Got Talent” contest. Edward, 19, sang a rendition of “One Wish” by rhythm and blues artist Ray J.

The PbS model uses research and data to support the mission of juvenile justice agencies across the nation, including OYA. In an April 30 letter to Edward, Kim Godfrey, executive director of the [PbS Learning Institute](#), wrote:

“Congratulations! You have been chosen as a finalist in the PbS Kids Got Talent contest for your video performance of One Wish. You rocked! We received more than 55 entries from across the country showing kids performing a wide range of talents from singing and dancing to sports tricks

and poetry. Yours was selected one of the 11 finalists because it was exceptionally entertaining, you showed creativity and presence as a performer and your talent was awesome.”

Next, a panel of six judges will review the finalists’ entries and select a winner, who will be notified in June.

“I chose the song ‘One Wish’ because it was made by one of my favorite R&B artists and I could really relate to it,” said Edward. “It feels great to be a finalist. It’s a great opportunity and it really shows me I’m blessed to be here. I’m very grateful to the staff and teachers here at Tillamook for helping me express my creativity.”

The contest was open to youth in all PbS-affiliated juvenile justice facilities, of which there are nearly 200 across the country. Youth could submit any video or audio demonstration of their talent. The deadline for submissions was March 31.

“We’re delighted that Edward is a finalist in this contest that showcases the creativity of at-risk youth,” said Tillamook YCF Superintendent Denessa Martin. “We’re keeping our fingers crossed for him in the next phase of the judging, but regardless of the outcome, Edward already has proven himself to be a winner.”

Watch Edward sing “One Wish” here:

<http://1drv.ms/1FOHUn2>