



Director's Message

October 20, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing today to update you on the recent layoff process and to talk about some of the key activities under way within OYA. We know change can be stressful, so we hope the information in this message will help ease your concerns. As always, please feel free to send us any follow-up questions or comments.

Workforce reduction process

As you all know, our budget for 2011-13 not only reduced close-custody capacity from 900 to 750, but also required us to eliminate 120 positions. However, the position cuts directly impacted 172 people through the “bumping” process as employees in targeted positions displaced less-senior employees in other units and/or shifts, bumped into demotions, or found other positions within OYA. Bumped employees then repeated the process, which affected additional staff members. Some employees chose to retire, found employment elsewhere, or were laid off.

Beyond those 172 staff members, nearly all employees were affected as they lost or gained new co-workers. In addition, the disruption caused by the bumping process also affected youth, as the staff around them changed. All of us – staff and youth – are going through an adjustment period that has been somewhat challenging for everyone involved. Thank you for all you have done to support each other and make this painful process as smooth as possible.

One of our key goals throughout this process was to minimize the economic harm to employees. Our ultimate goal was – and remains – to help everyone who wants a job find one. So far, we are making progress. To date, we have just two dozen former staff members who remain unemployed. We continue to seek opportunities for those individuals and hope to reduce that number even more by the end of the year.

Management and measurement system rollout

Another change that will affect how we do business is the rollout of OYA's new agency-wide management system. For the past year, OYA's Cabinet and management team have been mapping this agency's core processes and establishing measures for tracking performance. These processes and measures cross organizational lines, and represent a new way of looking at the services we provide.

You can find the [chart](#) showing these processes and measures on the Director's Office page on OYA Net. The chart is meant to be a living document, so there will be changes as we receive input and ideas from all of you. You will have the opportunity to view the chart and learn more about your role in this new system during the next few months as we roll it out to all facility, field office, and central office staff. Our goal is to engage everyone in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the services we deliver.

Staff resource management

We also are in the process of looking at ways to improve staff resource management. Our goal is to better meet the agency's workload needs while improving staff and youth safety. As an initial step, a team of OYA employees has been looking at improving OYA's procedures for treating and managing youth who may self-harm. Proposed changes will affect staff scheduling, new employee and refresher training, protocols for documenting youth behavior and staff oversight, and enhancements to JJIS.

Another initiative under way to improve staff resource management is the development of an agency-wide training calendar for 2012. Our goal is to include all types of training including training offered at the Training Academy, by teams from JJIS, and by other OYA staff. The calendar is intended to help work sites better plan staff schedules to accommodate training requirements.

Budget planning

As we implement these efficiency improvements, we also expect to achieve some operational savings. This is particularly important because Oregon remains in a difficult economic situation. At the start of this biennium, the Legislature withheld 3.5 percent of every agency's budget as a buffer in case state revenues continue to decline. Unfortunately, the first revenue forecast this biennium showed a projected revenue drop of \$200 million, and indications are that the next forecast also will be down. At this point, it is unlikely the Legislature will release those funds to agencies.

In addition, to prepare for the possibility of continued revenue declines, the Legislature has asked all agencies to engage in a budget reduction exercise. Agencies have been asked to submit ideas for implementing a total of 10.5 percent in expenditure reductions – the first 3.5 percent already withheld, as well as two additional cuts in increments of 3.5 percent each. OYA's Cabinet is in the process of discussing options. We will keep you updated as those discussions unfold.

Thank you

There are many more initiatives under way within OYA as we continue to focus on improving outcomes for youth. We want you to be active participants in those efforts. Assistant Directors will share more updates in future messages.

We continue to be impressed by your demonstration of OYA's core values. Despite the stress of the layoff process and the pace of change within this organization, you regularly conduct your

work with integrity, professionalism, accountability, and respect for others. Time and again we see you display first and foremost a concern for the youth we serve and how these changes will affect them.

We commend you for your continued dedication to the mission of this agency, and we thank you for all that you do every day for the youth in our care and custody.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Colette S. Peters in black ink.

Colette S. Peters
Director

Handwritten signature of Fariborz Pakseresht in black ink.

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director

INTEGRITY * PROFESSIONALISM * ACCOUNTABILITY * RESPECT