



Director's Message

May 3, 2012

Each year the nation sets aside the first full week in May to honor the individuals who work in adult and juvenile correctional facilities. As part of that recognition, Governor Kitzhaber has proclaimed next week as Correctional Employees Week in Oregon. You can see his proclamation at www.oregon.gov/OYA/newsroom/2012CWProclamation.pdf.

This is a well-deserved honor for the important contributions you make to youth reformation and public safety. Your work helps our youth build positive futures for themselves and their families, and directly reduces future crimes and future victimization. Oregon's relatively low rate of recidivism for juvenile offenders, now below 30 percent, is testimony to the good work you do.

I know that your jobs can be frustrating and dangerous at times, but what you do is meaningful and important. When our youth begin to engage in treatment and school, and start to mature into healthy and positive young adults, we see the rewards of our work. Their progress is not always a straight line forward, but we help keep them on track.

I also know from my visits with our youth that most of them really do appreciate the opportunities we provide at OYA. Many of them have told me that this is their first exposure to positive adult role-models who offer encouragement, set expectations, and hold them accountable for their actions. One of our youth, who came to us with almost no high school credits, and now is taking on-line college courses, told me no one had ever expected him to go to school before. Our expectations had made all the difference.

We offer treatment, teach accountability, and provide opportunities for classroom education and job training. We balance holding youth accountable for their crimes with teaching them new ways of thinking and acting, so they can become positive role-models for others. And we see the results in the many youth who go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.

I add my thanks and congratulations to the Governor's for the important role you play in making Oregon a better and safer place to live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fariborz Pakseresht".

Fariborz Pakseresht
Director