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INSIDE OYA

Oak Creek culinary class serves taste of a career

The teenage girl looked up from preparing bread for holiday dinner stuffing. "I had a passion to be a pastry chef," she said, "but I lost my passion for it, got into drugs and got locked up."

She is one of six youth enrolled in a culinary arts class taught by Oak Creek YCF supervising cook Jason Atkinson, who worked for 20 years in the restaurant industry before joining Oak Creek's staff. The class yields five Linn-Benton Community College credits over two terms, which will help this youth toward her goal of an associate's degree.

The stuffing she was making was part of a holiday dinner Atkinson showed the youth how to prepare – Cornish game hen, dressing, mashed potatoes, and apple pie.

"I try to teach the basics, to move past pop tarts and boxed pasta," Atkinson said. "I want to give them the ability to take care of themselves and cook for a family."

The fundamentals range from the right way to peel a potato to how to prepare a bird for the oven. Atkinson said he likes to subtly include the science of food. And sometimes he will introduce a mistake to show his students what can happen – and why.

One youth said she is in the class because she would like to work part time in food service while going to college. Another said she has her own method of cooking, but would like to learn "the way you're supposed to do it."

Atkinson teaches about the food pyramid, correct cooking and holding temperatures, the five basic sauces, allergy-producing foods, banquet traffic patterns, and what to do with left-over pastry dough.

The youths' criminal histories aside, he said, youth who complete the course are qualified to work at a mid-range family-style restaurant. "It's a skill they can take with them wherever they go. There's restaurant work everywhere."



ANNIVERSARIES

The anniversaries listed are for the month of November.

30

THIRTY YEARS

Rick White

Parole and Probation Officer
Yamhill County

20

TWENTY YEARS

Kenneth Ramsay

Group Life Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

Richard Ross

Assistant Director
Camp Florence

15

FIFTEEN YEARS

Barry Diggs

Parole and Probation Officer
Multnomah Branch

Chaun Saechao

Group Life Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

continued on P3

Director's Column



Dear Colleagues,

The year has gotten off to a busy start here in Salem.

I was privileged to be able to attend the inauguration of

Governor John Kitzhaber, MD, at the Capitol, and to hear his speech. He acknowledged the many challenges ahead, but held out hope that these challenges offer our state an opportunity to build a better future.

This is a historic time in Oregon. Our new Governor is the first Oregon Governor to serve three terms, and he will be working with a closely balanced Legislature that includes the first-ever even party split in the House. This also marks the start of Oregon's first annual Legislative Session.

And all of this is taking place at a time when Oregon must find a way to address a \$3.5 billion revenue shortfall for 2011-2013. Governor Kitzhaber will release his recommended budget February 1, and the Legislature will begin reviewing his recommendations as it hears testimony on bills and prepares the final budget.

Already, 1,600 bills have been submitted. OYA, like every other agency, must review each of those bills to determine if there is an impact to this agency, and then assign staff to monitor bills that affect OYA. As you can see, this is shaping up to be a busy few months.

But, like Governor Kitzhaber said in his speech, we can turn the challenges facing Oregon into opportunities. We

can find ways to build a better future for OYA, just as we work with youth to build on their strengths so they can create better futures for themselves.

As you read this issue of Inside OYA, you will see many examples of how we are helping youth learn the behavioral and vocational skills that will help them succeed in life. From teaching culinary arts to sound engineering and wastewater maintenance skills, we make it possible for youth who leave OYA to find work, continue their education, and live productive, crime-free lives.

Thank you for your part in that important achievement.

Sincerely,

Colette S. Peters
Director

Volunteers putting youth on the 'Good Red Road'

Volunteers give their time and talents to OYA youth for many reasons, including guiding Native American youth to the Good Red Road of balance and right living.

Two Native American volunteers at Oak Creek YCF – who led youth in building the new sweat lodge and conduct monthly sweats, smudges and talking circles there – tell what motivates them.

"Native Americans are disproportionately represented in correctional institutions," said Jan Smith of Roseburg. "Many of us have connections to the corrections system as a victim or

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offender, or have had a family member incarcerated. Oppression, forced assimilation and intergenerational trauma and poverty have taken a toll on Native families.”

Smith, who is Kiowa, Cherokee and Creek, said traditional ceremonies promote family and community bonding as “tools for breaking the cycle of substance abuse and domestic violence that plague Native people.”

Growing up, Sinopah Bouvia-Emeott said, “I had a pretty good chance of becoming a statistic myself, but I ended up having a different kind of life for a couple of reasons.”

She said elders who cared about her taught her traditional behavior and spirituality, which she complemented with her determination to create a better life. Bouvia-Emeott lives in Corvallis and is affiliated with the Lakotah tribe.

“I want to give something back,” she said. “If one girl decides she can choose a life away from whatever got her locked up, then I will consider any effort I have made well worth it. I believe that participating in the sweat lodge is a transforming experience that can bring people back to the Red Road.”

“I believe these ceremonies will help the youth to create and maintain a vision of a happy, healthy life – committed to the Good Red Road with the tools to correctly channel anger, stress, and disappointment,” Smith said.

“There is a beautiful world out there. It is my utmost wish that these young women are able to experience it so that their grandchildren’s grandchildren will prosper.”

Youth gain varied training from OYA staff



Brian Blisard believes it’s one of the best work programs OYA offers.

“A young man can leave here with a license to work in the industry and make a very good living,” RiverBend’s acting superintendent said.

RiverBend has its own three-lagoon wastewater treatment plant, where a youth can work as an apprentice leading to a DEQ provisional license, take an online university course and then sit for an exam leading to a DEQ level-1 operator’s license.

Wastewater treatment is among the work programs in which OYA maintenance staff mentor youth at several facilities. “We simply could not keep up with maintenance without our youth work crews,” said OYA facilities manager Rex Emery.

“They do everything – plumbing, electrical, heating and air-conditioning, carpentry, mechanics, lawn and yard maintenance,” said RiverBend facilities operations specialist Scott Robarge.

A RiverBend youth who sat for his exam last fall missed passing by two points, but did pass the wastewater-collection portion and will retake the operator’s exam in March. A former RiverBend youth is pursuing certifications in Washington state.

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ANNIVERSARIES

CONTINUED

10

TEN YEARS

Laura Bailey

*Unit Coordinator
Rogue Valley YCF*

Rosemarie Hausmann

*Group Life Coordinator
Camp Florence*

Jessie Hopkins

*Office Specialist
Hillcrest YCF*

Mark Rhodes

*Unit Coordinator
Rogue Valley YCF*

Andy Wyatt

*Qualified Mental Health
Provider
North Coast YCF*

5

FIVE YEARS

Eric Gunderson

*Qualified Mental Health
Provider*

MacLaren YCF

Melissa McNabb

*Office Specialist
Minority Services*

Willie Rhodes

*Research Analyst
Director’s Office*

NEW HIRES

CAMP TILLAMOOK

Daniel Burke

CENTRAL OFFICE

Robert Booth

Michaelene Larson

HILLCREST

Katie Regan

MARION COUNTY

Sanya Kite

TILLAMOOK YCF

Justin Mark

Tyler Rogers

STAFF RECOGNITION

HILLCREST

Gary Cross

GLC of the Month

Stephanie Miller

*Support Staff of the
Month*

MACLAREN

Rachel McWilliams

Employee of the Month

At Oak Creek, facility operations specialist Angela Tehson said youth assist with landscaping and drywall repair, use hand and power tools, and perform floor care. Youth can earn a floor-care certificate from a national company that sells floor coverings. "One youth who hadn't accomplished very much in her life cried when she received her certificate," Tehson said.

Work inside Oak Creek also prepares transitional youth to succeed on work crews in the community, she said. "They're getting skills that will make them employable."

At Tillamook, Marty Boge supervised youth who built a 108-foot by 22-foot shell intended for vocational programs, but which couldn't be completed after funding was lost. Last year the shell was incorporated into the new Trask River High School building, saving approximately \$500,000.

Boge also supervised youth who built Camp Tillamook offices, for example, which involved framing, installing doors and windows, and doing the trim and painting.

"They're gaining practical experience," he said. "They're learning how to swing a hammer, read a tape measure, do plumbing and make electrical repairs. They get a bit of whatever we're doing that day. Even if they don't go into a trade, they'll know how to fix things when they're out in the community."

"I was a general contractor, and one of the main reasons I took this job was to work with youth and teach them these things," Boge said.

Regardless of the facility, maintenance staff say youth usually are eager to learn, respectful of others, and successful on the job. "They love it,"

RiverBend's Robarge said. "We have 50 youth and I probably have 48 of them bug me every day to go to work."

Earlier stories: MacLaren, November 2010. Hillcrest, December 2010.

Denny's helps Tillamook offenders



Here's more evidence that OYA employees and volunteers make a difference in getting attention for the needs of youth offenders.

During the holidays, Denny's restaurant decorated a tree of giving for Tillamook YCF and Camp Tillamook youth. "We have a number of people who come in who are employees there," said marketing manager Donna Kyle. "Our general manager Keith Cassel has a friend volunteering out there."

Guests who purchased a gift or made a donation received a coupon for their next Denny's visit.

OYA is the most recent of several youth programs that have received Denny's support. "We knew when we opened in 2008 that we wanted to be a part of the Tillamook community and also that our focus would be the children in our communities," Cassel said.

Rogue Valley YCF youth say they would 'like fries with that'



For 14 consecutive years, Rogue Valley YCF youth have been given a choice of a traditional Christmas eve dinner – or McDonald's burgers and fries.

For equally as many years, youth – who know a drive-through is not an option – have chosen the burgers.

"The support we get from our volunteers is just incredible," said RYVYCF acting program director Noel Hoback. "There's a core group of people who have dedicated large portions of their lives to coming in and being here for the youth."

To support Christmas activities, two local churches raise money. McDonald's brings in extra staff and gives the volunteers a discount. For Christmas celebrations earlier in the week, two local businesses donated pizzas and holiday pies.

"We want to bless and encourage these guys, tell them they're not forgotten, and give them something different that blesses and encourages them," said volunteer Gary Russell. "We want to show them the love of God in a tangible way."

"I've heard spontaneous applause when we walk onto the unit and bring them these burgers and fries."

But food is not the only support provided by local volunteers. A quilting circle at one of the churches made quilts for the youth.

"We're not trying to push a big Christmas message," added Matt Sweeney of Rogue Valley Youth for Christ. "We're trying to push the message, 'you matter.' The connections we make with the youth now help open them up to a broader message of transformation."

Juvenile referrals decline since 2000

Delinquency referrals of youth to county juvenile departments continued a nearly decade-long decline in 2009, accounting for a total decrease exceeding 35 percent since 2000.

The 2009 referrals of 34,407 youth compared with 53,324 in 2000. The number of Oregon youth ages 10-17 remained relatively stable during that period at approximately 390,000.

These are among the data in the newly published "Total Referrals – Charts and Trends (2009)," which can be found at http://www.oregon.gov/OYA/reports/jjis/2009/2009_referrals_trendscharts.pdf.

The only increase in referrals during the decade was recorded in 2006, when the number of referrals increased slightly more than 1 percent over the 2005 level.

The data track referrals in three categories: criminal, non-criminal (punishable by a fine but not imprisonment), and dependency status (runaways constitute the largest share of these).

Of these categories, criminal referrals were the largest, accounting for 59 per-

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STAFF CHANGES

RETIREMENTS

Jan Buddress

14 years

Rosemary Harris

15 years

Dennis Martin

35 years

Larry McKinstry

1 year

Thomas Spalding

13 years

DEPARTURES

Blaine Nix

Hillcrest YCF

Jan Smith

Marion County

**KEN JERIN NEW
SUPERINTENDENT
AT ROGUE VALLEY
YCF**



Ken Jerin, an OYA employee since 1996, is the newly named superintendent at Rogue Valley YCF. He succeeds Larry McKinstry, who retired.

Jerin was most recently chief of operations responsible for day-to-day security, staffing and operations in OYA facilities. He was RYVYCF's program director from 1998 to 2009, and served as acting superintendent there for two years ending in April 2007. He worked for DOC for eight years before joining OYA.

He holds a graduate degree in management and an undergraduate degree in criminal justice, both from Southern Oregon University.

cent in both 2000 and 2009. Decreases from 2000 to 2009 were virtually identical in all three categories. (Although the percentage decrease was the same, criminal referrals had the largest numbers and therefore the largest numerical decrease.)

Property crimes accounted for more than half of 2009 criminal referrals and a third of all referrals.

Cherie Lingelbach, JJIS Policy and Standards Coordinator, said the decline in Oregon referrals tracks a national trend of decreased youth crime. Although no research has been done to explain Oregon's decline, she said, it might be attributable in part to the Oregon juvenile justice system's various efforts to implement Principles of Effective Intervention (www.oregon.gov/OYA/sb267_effective_intervention.shtml) that assess offender risks and needs and matches evidence-based treatment and interventions to specific offender risks and needs.

Biennial survey outlines challenges faced by youth

An increasing share of youth offenders in the care and custody of the Oregon Youth Authority have lower IQs, nearly two-thirds experience mental and emotional disorders, and females in close-custody facilities appear to be an especially troubled population.

These are among the findings in a new report based on a biennial survey of OYA youth offenders. OYA uses the data to track trends and identify unmet needs for services.

"These data underscore how much support these youth need to put them on a path to crime-free lives," said OYA

Director Colette S. Peters. "By responding to these youths' treatment and education needs now, we improve our chances of successfully protecting the public, reducing crime and reaching these youths' potential to be productive, crime-free citizens."

Nineteen percent of OYA youth had IQs below 80, putting them in the bottom quintile, a significant increase from 11 percent in 2004. Sixty-four percent of youth had diagnosed mental health conditions, while 61 percent were diagnosed as abusing or dependent on alcohol or other drugs. Twenty percent had experienced sexual abuse, and a quarter had experienced physical or emotional abuse.

Among females in close-custody facilities, 52 percent had histories of sexual abuse compared with 17 percent for males. Thirty percent of females in close custody had attempted suicide at least once, 42 percent had an IQ below 80, 59 percent were diagnosed with a conduct disorder, 63 percent were taking psychotropic medications, and 85 percent were diagnosed with abuse or dependence on alcohol or other drugs.

Overall, one in four youth offenders had a biological parent with a psychiatric history. A majority of youth had a biological parent with a history of alcohol or other drug abuse. And one in eight already was the parent of a child.

The full report can be found at www.oregon.gov/OYA/docs/2010_Mental-HealthGap.pdf.

Camp Florence youth gain new work opportunities



"This was the best day of my life in the past five years."

Comments like that are welcome at Camp Florence, which in the past year has significantly beefed up its vocational offerings for work crews and individual youth. This youth was reacting to a day that took him to the 500-seat Florence Events Center to help set up for a concert, gave him an hour-long sound-engineering class with an opportunity to get his questions answered, and ended with a conversation over pizza to discuss what he had learned.

"It's been amazing, the community has embraced us," said Vocational Contractor Marc Barnum. "I think the rewards for the youth have been fantastic."

Youth have shadowed veterinarians at a local animal clinic. One youth is interning at Florence's semi-weekly newspaper. Others had on-air internships at the radio station. Youth set up at the events center, whose sound and recording engineer has come out to Camp Florence to teach youth. A volunteer offered an AV class, and youth have shot videos. At Sandpines golf course, youth work as greenskeepers or take care of mowers and carts in the shop.

"They just raved about the last youth

who worked in the shop," Barnum said of Sandpines. "They said there wasn't a job they could throw at him that he couldn't do, and when there was nothing to do in the shop the youth cleaned. They were thrilled." Barnum said that kind of experience leads not only to a good recommendation for the youth, but also to more placement opportunities.

"I've never been able to get that kind of experience of job shadowing before," said a 22-year-old youth incarcerated for 5-1/2 years.

A local contractor helped a Native American youth who wanted to build drums, for which the local Elks lodge donated hides. In the seven-computer lab, new in the past year, youth have taken online classes from nine colleges. In December, one youth learned how to locate a motel online and book a room for family members who were coming to visit him for the holidays.

The community work-experience opportunities are available to OYA youth, and Barnum is working to open them up to DOC youth.

When youth come to Camp Florence, Barnum assesses their aptitudes and interests before trying to find a placement for them. "I go out in the community a couple of times a week and try to open doors," he said. "I've been in the community for 56 years so I was able to reach out and tap quite a few people."

MACLAREN CLINIC REACCREDITED

The clinic at MacLaren YCF, which has maintained continuous national accreditation since August 1995, has been reaccruited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

The new accreditation resulted from an on-site peer review that looked at the full range of health care affecting MacLaren youth, said MacLaren physician E. Gary Edwards, M.D.

NCCHC evaluates corrections clinics on nine factors such as governance and administration, safety, personnel and training, health care services, health records, and medical-legal issues.

As a result of using published NCCHC standards, Edwards said, "MYCF has improved the health care of the youth we serve, increased our efficiency of health care services delivery, and reduced the risk of adverse legal judgments." He values external reviewers' fresh perspective as well as the continuing self-evaluation that results.

OYA Medical Director Marcia Adams, M.D., said one of Health Services' goals is to seek NCCHC accreditation for other OYA clinics.

INSIDE OYA

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Director

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director

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Send your stories for
the February issue to
Amanda Lowe-Davies
by January 31. Articles
received after that date
will be held for the
March newsletter.



Youth find tree they cut won't quite fit in house



You've seen the "PLAN AHEAD" cards with the "D" dropped below the line for lack of space. Two youth in Donna and Arnie Brubaker's Linn County foster home might take a lesson from that.

In mid-December, the two went out for a walk on the property for what Donna thought was an unusually long time. She went looking for them and was about to phone her husband to come help when she saw a large tree moving through the woods.

Turns out the two lads wanted to surprise everyone with a family Christmas tree, and they carried it a half-mile on their shoulders. One problem: When Arnie measured, the tree exceeded 16 feet.

"Donna's not sure whose house they thought they were putting it in," said Colynn Elder, Foster Care Certifier in Linn County. "This time," Donna Brubaker said, "it was truly the thought that counted."

The youths' consequence? Having their picture taken with the tree.

Audit: Placement of youth found to be appropriate

A new state audit of how counties place youth offenders found decisions appeared consistent with the youths' criminal activity and risk level.

Auditors reviewed the 36 counties' placements of 3,300 youth during 2008. They found 84 percent of placements appropriate based on four factors – severity of offense, youth's history of offenses, youth's risk to re-offend, and existence of a probation violation. For the balance of cases, auditors said case file analysis identified factors suggesting the placements were appropriate.

"Oregon's juvenile justice system is extremely complex and highly decentralized," said Secretary of State Kate Brown, who heads the state Audits Division. "We were pleased to find that, despite its complexity, the system results in consistent and reasonable placement decisions for our youth."

After a youth is taken into custody, a local juvenile justice team recommends appropriate sanctions ranging from the youth's participation in a county-level diversion program to placement in an OYA youth correctional facility. The team typically comprises representatives of the county juvenile department, OYA, and the state Department of Human Services, and forwards its recommendation to a county judge who makes the final decision.

The full audit report is available on the Oregon Secretary of State's Web site at www.sos.state.or.us/audits.