

MAY
2010



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INSIDE OYA

RiverBend youth earns a bachelor's degree

When Washington State University graduates look through the list of students who received their bachelor's degrees May 8, none will remember seeing Dustin Gomez in class. That's because Gomez, 24, completed his philosophy/pre-law degree online while living in Hillcrest and RiverBend close custody facilities.

He is among only a handful of Oregon youth offenders to earn a bachelor's degree while incarcerated, quite an accomplishment for someone who came to OYA at age 16 with no high school credits.

"I absolutely had people encouraging me across the board," he says. His lawyer gave him philosophy books. Staff at the Donald E. Long detention center in Portland encouraged him to pursue an education. Hillcrest YCF staff supported him. WSU worked with him to ensure he could get the online classes he needed to graduate. RiverBend staff took him to Eastern Oregon University in handcuffs and shackles to take the LSAT to apply to law school. And his parents visited regularly.

"That was the kind of support network I had," Gomez says. "They enabled me to be successful."

Brian Blisard, RiverBend interim superintendent, says Gomez has been good for OYA, too. At RiverBend, Blisard says, Gomez was a catalyst for expanding education and employment opportunities, and for being more flexible about school-related computer time. "I don't think Dustin realizes how much of an inspiration he is to the other young men," Blisard adds, "that no matter how harrowing or desperate your situation, there's always light at the end of the tunnel." Gomez's example prompted other youth to enroll in online classes through Chemeketa Community College.

Gomez has been accepted at Gonzaga University law school in Spokane. Because he believes long-term sentencing works in tandem with treatment and education, he says he would like to practice criminal prosecution. "I have a felony, a severe felony, and it will take a lot of doing," he says. "I have done the research to make sure those hurdles can be overcome."

As for the example he's set, he says, "I hope it encourages not only other kids to take the same path but also encourages other facilities to enable that."

OYA COIN AWARD RECIPIENTS

Peggy Asmussen

Volunteer
Eastern Oregon YCF

Scott Barnett

Group Life
Coordinator 2
Tillamook YCF

Dan Boleyn

Qualified Mental Health
Professional
Hillcrest YCF

Tamera Bowen

Group Life
Coordinator 2
North Coast YCF

Dawn Brandon

Group Life
Coordinator 2
Hillcrest YCF

Jim Buchanan

Group Life
Coordinator 2
Hillcrest YCF

Shawn Coyne

Qualified Mental Health
Professional
Oak Creek YCF

Doug Durham

Group Life
Coordinator 2
North Coast YCF

Jacho Eaton

Network Administrator
Business Services

Dan Gassman

Group Life
Coordinator 2
Hillcrest YCF

Shelley Gerlach

Executive Support
Specialist 2
Facilities Services

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Director's Outstanding Service Award goes to six staff members

Six OYA employees received the Director's Outstanding Service Award May 3 as part of Corrections Employee Week. The following excerpts from Director Colette S. Peters' presentation highlight some of their good work.

Dan Berger, Superintendent, North Coast YCF

Dan took over North Coast YCF as an interim superintendent and began a new era of integrity and professionalism. He works hard to improve staff-youth relations and maintain solid working relations with his subordinates.

Tina Crawley, Budget Analyst, and John Fox, Facilities Fiscal Analyst, Budget and Contracts (joint award)

During a period when the Budget Unit was short-staffed, Tina and John stepped up and effectively carried out the responsibilities of four budget analysts. They minimized use of vacation and sick leave in order to maintain high quality work and meet all of the stringent deadlines the budget process requires.

Richard Hendricks, JPPO, Clatsop County Parole and Probation

Richard works efficiently and effectively to help kids improve their lives and stay on track. He is easy to work with and dependable, which helps him succeed in building relationships with kids and members of the community.

Sherry Sullens, Alcohol and Drug Treatment Coordinator, MacLaren YCF

Sherry has taken a proactive leadership role in developing new alcohol and

drug programming. Her ongoing commitment, leadership and creativity has moved the AOD Program at MacLaren YCF in new directions and has brought excitement and enthusiasm to treatment staff.

Steve Schrunk, GLC 2, Oak Creek YCF

Steve does an outstanding job of coaching youth in the moment using terms and skills taught during treatment. He coaches staff and youth using ART, consistently referring them back to the skills they learned and giving them the opportunity to practice positive behaviors.

In addition to the award recipients, the following employees also were nominated:

- Charmarie Bradach
- James Buchanan
- Karen Burnett
- Shawn Coyne
- Chris Duval
- Jacho Eaton
- Shelley Gerlach
- Linda Gesler
- Jeff Hames
- Irv Hersha
- Rosa Howard-Mumford
- Denessa Martin
- Mary McBride
- Pohai Olomua
- Joan Palmateer
- Kris Scrobeck
- Greg Van Vlack
- Gary Westoby
- Tara Williams

Congratulations to the award recipients and to all who were nominated. Your outstanding work and dedication to OYA's mission are appreciated.

Special guest speaker at Newbridge High School

The English Language Development class at Newbridge High School in Rogue Valley YCF recently had a special guest speaker.

Mr. George Chaima, from the Republic of Malawi, Africa, is in the United States as the Regional Chairman of the National Governing Council of Non-Governmental Organizations, trying to find ways to strengthen his country's economy.

This fall he will be a guest speaker to the World Bank in an effort to progress his country's resources and economy. He was chosen as one of eight speakers from 138 international applicants.

Mr. Chaima originally was invited to speak about being multilingual and the opportunities that has opened up for him, but the class learned so much more.

He showed a DVD he had made about how Malawi is one of the poorest African nations with a high death rate from AIDS and malaria. The average lifespan of adults is 39 years.

Mr. Chaima also shared his experience as a member of several human rights teams sponsored by the United Nations to inspect prison conditions in Africa.

He pointed out that the United States tries to rehabilitate inmates, but in Malawi they are put in jail to be punished. Inmates sit crowded on cement floors 18 hours a day and spend six hours walking outside. They receive one small, meager meal each day.

Mr. Chaima shared with the class his goal in life: "To fight human suffering and reduce poverty."

Oak Creek art on exhibit



Above: Oak Creek youth with their artwork on display

The walls of Corvallis Arts Center were covered with youth art – including 11 pieces from artists in the Young Women's Transitional Program at Oak Creek YCF. Oak Creek artists mingled with art lovers and other young artists at a mid-April exhibit, where the Oak Creek youths' clay self-portraits, trays and fish were displayed.

"It was something I never thought I would do in my life," said one youth, "and I found I really enjoyed it." Said another, "It's fun and there's no judgment to it. It's what you make it."

The instructor was Philomath clay artist Terry Inokuma. "She was determined not to let us quit," said one youth. "Even if we weren't happy with it she would make us finish and paint it. She taught me how to let go."

Oak Creek youth were among approximately 1,200 Corvallis-area youth whose art experience was supported by grants from The Collins Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, Benton County Cultural Coalition, and Corvallis Kiwanis Club.

OYA COIN AWARD

RECIPIENTS *CONTINUED*

Randy Guisinger

*Program Director
Rogue Valley YCF*

Jeff Hames

*Group Life
Coordinator 2
Rogue Valley YCF*

RoseMarie Hausmann

*Group Life
Coordinator 2
Camp Florence*

Rick Hess

*Program Director
Hillcrest YCF*

Rosa Howard-Mumford

*Treatment Manager
Oak Creek YCF*

Gabino Jimenez

*Group Life
Coordinator 2
MacLaren YCF*

Chris Johanson

*Group Life
Coordinator 2
North Coast YCF*

April Johnson

*Nurse
North Coast YCF*

Joseph Mabonga

*Unit Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF*

Jamie McKay

*Qualified Mental Health
Professional
MacLaren YCF*

Nancy Mills

*Nurse
Hillcrest YCF*

Michelle Mintun

*Group Life
Coordinator 2
MacLaren*

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OYA COIN AWARD
RECIPIENTS CONTINUED

Jeff Pickell
Counselor
Camp Florence

Michelle Schwarzin
Nurse
Eastern Oregon YCF

Linda Snow
Office Specialist 2
Hillcrest YCF

Linda Snyder
Cook
RiverBend

Robert Spencer
Group Life
Coordinator 2
MacLaren YCF

Pam Weaver
Office Specialist 2
Marion Parole/Probation

Ron White
Group Life
Coordinator 2
Eastern Oregon YCF

Frank Wolfburg
Group Life
Coordinator 2
North Coast YCF

Kara Youngblutt
Unit Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

Managers can request
a coin from Angie
Minahan at angie.minahan@oya.state.or.us
or 503-373-7205.

Hillcrest youth learn valuable job skills



Above: Esther Puentes instructs youth

Spring is in the air, and so is an atmosphere of learning.

Eleven Hillcrest residents currently are participating in job skills development and career exploration in the OYA Latino Youth Job Training and Career Exploration Program. Esther Puentes coordinates the program, which is funded through the Enterprise for Employment and Education.

Youth meet once a week to receive training in work-related areas such as customer service, teambuilding, leadership, cultural competency, conflict resolution, financial literacy and interviewing skills. They also are guided through a career-exploration phase in which they learn about careers in health care, technology and business. "Each of these skills will help them find and keep employment," says Puentes

Strategies the youth learn include treating customers with respect, active listening, using appropriate language on the job, and hard work. Discussions around themes of self-accountability, positive anger management, integrity and personal values are applied to workplace scenarios.

Esther has been a trainer for more than 16 years. She says of the youth in

this program, "This is one of the most active, engaged and articulate groups I have met. It's a privilege to serve as instructor to this energetic group."

Originally developed for Latino youth, this program now includes participants from many diverse ethnic backgrounds. The program was brought to Hillcrest by the collaboration of the OYA Hispanic Advisory Committee, the Hillcrest management team, and Griselda Solano, multi-cultural/Hispanic coordinator at Hillcrest.

For more information, call Esther Puentes at 503-365-0088.

University of Hope fundraiser a success

Approximately 70 people showed up the first Friday in May to help raise money for the University of Hope Project, a youth-driven program based at MacLaren YCF.

University of Hope assists youth leaving OYA by connecting them to community support services

Former MacLaren youth Brian Vargo organized the evening with the assistance of Ron Weaver, OYA minority affairs coordinator.

The evening offered demonstrations of krumping, a form of dance designed to resolve conflicts peacefully, as well as readings of youths' poetry.

Money was raised through donations at the door and by a silent auction of donated art, jewelry and youth-made items.

OYA facilities hold Corrections Employee Week celebrations

"The Oregon Department of Corrections and Oregon Youth Authority are vital components of the state's criminal justice and public safety system," Governor Kulongoski said in his proclamation naming May 2 - 8 as National Corrections Employee Week in Oregon. "Corrections and Youth Authority employees carry out their agencies' missions, values and goals with enthusiasm, innovation and pride."

To celebrate the week, members of the OYA executive staff visited facilities, sharing in the festivities and recognizing employees with coin awards.

Among the many facility events were employee recognitions, barbecues, potlucks, health screenings and picnics. Staff at Oak Creek YCF also placed a wreath as a memorial to deceased correctional employees.

"I am grateful for the effective work of employees who blend genuine caring with high expectations to hold youth offenders accountable and help them find the path to productive, crime-free lives," said OYA Director Colette S. Peters.

Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week will be celebrated July 18-24.

Foster care provider recognized

May is Foster Parent Appreciation Month, and the Foster Care Unit would like to take this time to introduce one of their many wonderful foster homes.

Charlene Hall has been a foster care provider for 27 years, first through DHS and then joining OYA in 1995. She estimates she has cared for more than 250 youth, many of whom are still in contact with her today.

Charlene provides a welcoming, supportive and stable living environment for the youth transitioning into her home. In many cases, this is the first time youth get to experience a healthy home environment where they are treated as members of the family.

Youth in her home attend school, participate in sports, go fishing and camping, and participate in many other pro-social activities in the community. For older youth, she teaches independent living skills such as budgeting, grocery shopping, cooking, using public transportation and job searching.

Over the years, Charlene has become very skilled at dealing with volatile youth. She specializes in caring for youth adjudicated for sex offenses and is very knowledgeable about treatment and how the youth are progressing. Charlene works closely with JPPOs and treatment providers to help facilitate the youths' case plans.

The Foster Care Unit extends many thanks to Charlene for the stellar service she provides to OYA youth.

STAFF RECOGNITION

HILLCREST

Bevin Findley
Support Staff of the Month

Chaan Saechao
GLC of the Month

MACLAREN

Larry Kremer
Employee of the Month

NORTH COAST

Robbie Porter
Employee of the Quarter

OAK CREEK

Steve Schrunk
Employee of the Year

ROGUE VALLEY

James Buchanan
Employee of the Year

Brian Gove
Alpha Unit Employee of the Year

Karren Selthon
Bravo Unit Employee of the Year

Matt Sweeny
Volunteer of the Year

Brett Turner
Charlie Unit Employee of the Year

Lynn Tuttle
Delta Unit Employee of the Year

Tristan White
Security Staff of the Year

ANNIVERSARIES

THIRTY YEARS

Delvena Torrez

*Treatment Manager
MacLaren YCF*

TWENTY YEARS

Gene Estabrook

*Juvenile Parole and
Probation Officer
Washington Parole and
Probation*

FIFTEEN YEARS

Ed Fischer

*Group Life Coordinator
MacLaren YCF*

Rosemary Harris

*Cook
MacLaren YCF*

Lisa Sherwood

*Group Life Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF*

TEN YEARS

Mike Beebe

*Group Life Coordinator
Oak Creek YCF*

Rusty Larson

*Group Life Coordinator
Camp Tillamook*

Faith Love

*Supervisor
Multnomah Parole and
Probation*

Jason Veek

*Group Life Coordinator
Rogue Valley YCF*

FIVE YEARS

Peter Gunn

*Cook
Rogue Valley YCF*

Looking forward at the CQI process

The purpose of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is to engage staff in the process of ensuring the services we provide are effective, and the environments are safe for staff and youth. The goal is to continue what we're doing well and generate solutions to issues that surface.

So what's next for CQI?

While some work units in facilities and the field have begun using the CQI process, most are just beginning to formally embark on the improvement journey. Three main activities that will take place during the next several months are:

1. Field supervisors and facility directors will meet with their local QI teams in 2010 and establish a local QI committee charter. Larger facilities will have several committees (one for each program director); field services will have one committee per field supervisor.
2. Quality assurance (QA) specialists will be trained to help prioritize issues and solutions. After training, each QA specialist will engage their local committee members in the process of prioritizing issues and solutions.
3. The QI coordinator will attend unit meetings to assist in this process, including establishing a local charter and using CQI tools.

The goal for 2011 is for all local QI committees to write quality management plans. More information and training on this topic will be provided later this year.

If you would like to become more

involved in the CQI process, please let your supervisor know. If you have any questions or would like the QI coordinator to make a site visit, contact Sharon Pette at sharon.pette@oya.state.or.us or 503-373-7412.

RiverBend honored by City of La Grande



TREE CITY USA®

La Grande recently was named a 2009 Tree City Community by the Arbor Day Foundation.

The city in turn acknowledged RiverBend's continued assistance to the city by presenting the facility with the Tree City USA Community Partner Award.

This is the tenth year RiverBend (and formerly Camp Hilgard) has received this recognition.

OYA managers will take part in state leadership program

Three OYA managers have been accepted to participate in the Oregon Department of Administrative Services' nine-month Managers Leadership Program.

Selected to participate from OYA are:

- Cindy Wadsworth, supervising registered nurse at MacLaren YCF;
- Alicia Baus, program director at Oak Creek YCF; and
- Debbie Hansen, supervisor of the juvenile parole and probation office in Multnomah County.

The goal is to cultivate leadership skills to help both emerging and established managers deal more effectively with organizational changes and lead transformation in their agencies. The 25 participants gain skills in visioning, listening, speaking, presentation, team creation, feedback, effectively handling conflict, leading change and engaging others in change.

The program delivers a combination of six full-day classroom sessions, coaching by an individual experienced in management and leadership, and mentoring by a state government leader knowledgeable about how the state works. The program will run through December.

The sponsoring DAS State Services Division says the goal is to build a culture of respect, productivity and learning that produces excellent results by individuals, teams, programs, agencies and state government.

Rogue Valley staff get trained in fingerprinting

Rogue Valley YCF has always done fingerprinting – but now it does it a lot faster.

With only treatment manager Pete Roberts already trained in fingerprinting, security manager Louise Pizer saw a need to get training for more staff. When office specialist Jennifer Putnam started checking around, she found that Director Wayne Jeffers at the Oregon State Police forensics lab in Central Point was eager to provide free training.

Five Rogue Valley staff members received not only 30-minute classroom instruction and 90 minutes of fingerprinting training and practice, but also a CSI-worthy full tour of the lab. Putnam says the lab's lead latent print examiner, Darla Shaver, told them fingerprints are often the crucial link in solving crime.

Putnam says they learned FBI standards, techniques for getting the best prints, and heard advice about including a letter to explain challenges such as skin conditions that affect prints.

With almost three months' experience and more than a dozen persons fingerprinted, the early results are in: Not only is the process faster, but none of the prints from Rogue Valley has been rejected by state police.

NEW HIRES

EASTERN OREGON

Dwight Aarestad
Carmen Mix

HUMAN RESOURCES

Erin Culley

RIVERBEND

Brett Dunten

STAFF CHANGES

TRANSFERS

Perrin Damon
to MacLaren YCF

DEPARTURES

Maign Alexander
MacLaren YCF

Deanna Garcia
Marion P/P

Megan Harris
Rogue Valley YCF

Edward Harrison
RiverBend YCF

Tara Jones
Oak Creek YCF

Kevin Kostenborder
Rogue Valley YCF

Margaret Launer
Oak Creek YCF

Teresa McCall-Purdy
North Coast YCF

Terri Novak
Rogue Valley YCF

Karol Parks
Tillamook YCF

David Schrenk
MacLaren YCF

Roxanne Schultze
Rogue Valley YCF

Jennifer Shepherd
MacLaren YCF

William Siegrist
Oak Creek YCF

INSIDE OYA

Colette S. Peters
Director

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director

For more information,
to submit ideas or
to write an article,
please contact:

Amanda Lowe-Davies
Editor
503-378-6555
amanda.lowedavies@
oya.state.or.us

or

Ann Snyder
Communications
Manager
503-378-6023
ann.snyder@
oya.state.or.us

The deadline for each issue is the last weekday of the previous month. Send your stories for the June issue to Amanda Lowe-Davies by May 31. Articles received after that date will be held for the July newsletter.



Change to contraband policy to take place

Changes to the OYA contraband policies and form are on the way. During the past six months a workgroup has been meeting to clarify differences between contraband and prohibited items in OYA facilities.

Many items within a facility may be considered contraband if possessed by a youth. Staff must keep these items under their control and away from youth. The item only becomes contraband if it is possessed by a youth.

Form YA 4008 has been revised to reflect the upcoming changes. The form, now called "OYA Facility Offender Prohibited Items," lists items that must not be possessed by youth offenders.

Following are some of the new definitions in the upcoming policy revisions.

Contraband: Any item which an offender is prohibited by statute, rule, policy or order from obtaining, possessing or which the offender is not specifically authorized to obtain or possess, or which the offender alters without authorization.

Prohibited items: Any item that presents a significant risk to the safety and security of the facility if possessed by an offender. This includes items that are allowed in the facility but must be secured from offenders as directed by policy, procedure or a directive from the superintendent or camp director. For example, state-issued cell phones are allowed in facilities but become contraband once in the possession of an offender.

Controlled items: Any item that may present a risk to the safety and security

to the facility when issued to offenders. Controlled items must be accounted for by direct supervision or a check-out procedure. Such items include pencils, pens, glue and cleaning chemicals.

Staff are encouraged to send any comments or feedback to Ken Jerin at ken.jerin@oya.state.or.us, or to Mike Rau at mike.rau@oya.state.or.us.