



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Oregon Youth Authority

Office of the Director

530 Center Street NE, Suite 200

Salem, OR 97301-3765

Voice: 503-373-7205

Fax: 503-373-7622

www.oregon.gov/OYA

July 22, 2011

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Ann Snyder, OYA Communications Office, 503-378-6023,

ann.snyder@state.or.us



Malheur: OYA parole and probation officer recognized for exemplary service

An Oregon Youth Authority parole and probation officer serving Malheur County has been recognized for exemplary service to the agency and the youth it serves.

Alex Contreras received a Coin Award, a silver dollar-size medal bearing the state seal, from OYA Director Colette S. Peters and Philip Cox, assistant director for community services. The award, given to employees for excellence in reflecting agency values, was presented as part of Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week observances.

“Alex has been a strong advocate his entire juvenile justice career for improving services for minority youth,” said Ed Pierson, field supervisor for Malheur and seven other Eastern Oregon counties. He noted that Contreras recently completed service on the Governor’s Task Force on Disproportionality in Child Welfare, which found that children of color were up to five times more likely to be placed in foster care than white children. Forty-one percent of youth in OYA’s care and custody are minority youth. “Alex has been dedicated to the service of all youth but particularly minority youth,” Pierson said.

Contreras is one of 72 OYA parole and probation officers.

“Alex Contreras and other OYA professionals protect public safety and help former offenders become productive, crime-free citizens by offering support and compassion, demanding accountability and being consistent role models,” said Peters. “They give youth consistency throughout their time with OYA, and play a critical role in minimizing the number of OYA youth who reoffend.”

Among the tasks they perform are developing agreements with youth, determining special needs and services for youth, conducting monthly reviews with youth, arranging vocational services, administering urinalyses, preparing for and testifying at hearings, and participating in quarterly meetings of team members who support each youth's progress. A juvenile parole and probation officer is assigned when a youth is committed to OYA and provides continuity regardless of whether the youth is in a close-custody facility or being supervised in the community.

Effective community supervision by juvenile parole and probation officers helps the agency fulfill its mission to protect the public and reduce crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.

OYA supervises approximately 1,100 youth on parole and probation in communities across Oregon, and has custody of approximately 800 youth offenders ages 12-24 in correctional and transitional facilities in Albany, Burns, Florence, Grants Pass, La Grande, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn.

#