

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
Year Ending December 2007

ACTIVITIES AND INTERACTIONS DURING 2007

As in previous years, the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) had contacts with several of Oregon's tribes and tribal members during 2007. Agency Director, Max Williams continued to designate Bobbi Burton, the agency's Community Development Program Manager, as the agency's Tribal Liaison. Ms. Burton represented the agency at the 2007 Tribal Information Day at the Capital, along with Tom O'Connor, DOC Religious Services Administrator. Ms. Burton also represented the agency at the 2007 Government-to-Government Annual Summit meeting held at the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

The DOC continued to participate in the Government-to-Government Public Safety Cluster group, and tribal liaison Bobbi Burton attending several cluster meetings during the year. This participation provided the DOC with current public safety concerns and information from the various tribes, as well as from other state agencies. Participation in the cluster has also continued to provide an avenue for building on-going relationships with tribal representatives. These contacts have been critical for the DOC as we implement internal training on tribal relations, develop policies, and recruit for correctional staff.

Once again this year, the DOC provided a wide range of Native American services at all 14 state prisons located throughout the state. The DOC's Religious Services Division continued to develop the Native American spirituality and healing programs for incarcerated men and women in DOC custody who choose these practices. The DOC estimates that once again this year, over 1,000 incarcerated men and women attended a Native American ceremony at least once during the year. Most attended ceremonies many times. Every person in the department has access to sweat lodge and other ceremonies.

The DOC relies on many Native American volunteers who enable us to conduct Native American ceremonies in the prisons. These ceremonies include sweat lodges, drumming circles, pow-wows, talking circles, spirit runs, smudging, pipe ceremonies, language development, other cultural and spiritual development, and counseling. An extensive series of educational videos and seminars are given during the year to help people understand and heal from historical trauma, and to further develop healthy self and tribal identities. Volunteers around the state helped to bring these services and programs into Oregon's correctional facilities. Several of the department's institutions continued to maintain contact with tribal representatives to promote inmate participation in cultural affiliations, and to recruit additional volunteers. The DOC needs additional volunteers to assist in providing appropriate Native American services to inmates. In

the coming year, the DOC expects to increase discussions and volunteer recruiting efforts with Oregon's tribes.

The vibrant Native American program for women at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville continued this past year, with many volunteers helping to conduct services and ceremonies specifically for women inmates. This year the women had a Spring Celebration Feast, similar to the "roots feast" celebrations that were held in the prior two years.

As a result of tribal input received in late 2006, the DOC this past year reviewed the way in which the department determines the ethnicity of native peoples who come into the custody of the DOC. Staff have collected on how the DOC measures ethnicity and found that there are some discrepancies between self-reported information on ethnicity and the ethnicity information that comes to the department from other sources, such as police reports. Historically, the DOC has used entered this information into our computer records data base. The DOC continues to examine that data in an effort to resolve any discrepancies and improve our system. Staff have also spoken with our Native American volunteers and some inmates about collecting this data in an effort to improve the accuracy of our system. It is difficult to insure accuracy in the data because disclosure of ethnicity or tribal affiliation is voluntary for incarcerated adults, and occasionally inmates will ask to change their ethnic designations.

The agency has also worked on creating new links between tribally enrolled inmates and their tribes or other state and federal programs through the work of re-entry counselors and Native American volunteers

In 2007, agency Director, Max Williams and Tom O'Connor, Religious Services Administrator meet with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla during that tribe's Government Relations Meeting on September 5, 2007. The discussion at the meeting centered around the work the DOC is doing on behalf of Native Americans who are incarcerated in Oregon. The meeting covered a number of topics related to the Native American programs within Oregon's prisons. Armand Minthorn, and others from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, requested that DOC consider adopting a policy that would bring greater consistency and clarity to the various Native American programs in our prisons. The DOC committed to developing such a policy.

During the early part of 2007 chaplain Tyler Barlowe resigned his position with the department to work in a tribal mental health center in California. Obviously, because of Tyler's experience and standing with the nine tribes and Native Americans who are incarcerated, his resignation has been a significant loss to the department. However, there is a chance that Tyler might return to a chaplain position with the department in the next couple of years if he completes his work in California.

Before his departure chaplain Barlowe, along with chaplain Karuna Thompson, did extensive work writing a draft Native American policy for the DOC. The effort to develop the policy is continuing, and will help capture years of work and consultation efforts with

various Oregon tribes. The policy is expected to help make Native American practices more standardized within the department. Both chaplain Barlowe and chaplain Thompson had extensive consultations with Native American volunteers, interested parties, and tribes around the state as they developed the draft policy.

Using the early draft policy work, Tom O'Connor, Religious Services Administrator, met with institution chaplains, security staff, and superintendents to refine and further advance the policy. Armand Minthorn of the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation honored the department by reviewing the policy and providing feedback on improving the policy. He also provided advice on how to proceed with the policy, and recommended that the DOC take the draft policy to Commission on Indian Services for a formal review by the nine tribes. The agency is scheduled to present the policy to the Commission at their March 2008 meeting.

The DOC will also involve our Native American volunteers who conduct ceremonies in the prisons to get their practical and experienced feedback on the policy. The DOC will also ask that the volunteers seek feedback directly from the inmates that they work with in the prisons. Tyler Barlowe has continued to be involved with each iteration of the policy, as has Trish Jordan, our lead Native American volunteer at the women's prison. Our goal for 2008 is to establish a formal policy for the whole department that will improve consistency and clarity around the Native American program in our prisons. We also hope that the collaborative process to develop the policy will help us further develop good working relationships between the nine tribes and the department, especially in the area of people returning from prison to their communities. Our hope is that this policy will be the result of a joint process of consultation and collaboration that will advance the mission of the department and the goals of the sovereign nations with regard to their spiritual practices and their people.

The department's Correctional Treatment Services Program continued to maintain contracts with various tribal representatives regarding provision of alcohol and drug treatment programs to Native Americans while incarcerated in DOC facilities.

Construction on the DOC facility in Madras, Deer Ridge Correctional Institution, continued throughout 2007. In preparation for hiring staff for the facility, the DOC Recruitment section, lead by Pan Nass and Gary Kilmer, and DRCI Community Development Coordinator Parrish Van Wert made special invitations to the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation to attend all DOC recruitment fairs held in the Madras community. Many tribal members attended those sessions. In addition, Pam Nass and Gary Kilmer had several coordination meetings with tribal human resources staff to develop specific recruitment sessions for tribal members. As a result, the DOC held a number of well-attended recruiting sessions at the reservation for tribal members. Those sessions included a basic introduction to the DOC, the application process, and interviewing techniques. Marcia Soliz, with the tribe's Human Resources section, received special recognition from the department and was presented a DOC award for her assistance in recruiting efforts targeted to tribal members.

Members of the new DRCI operations management team, including Assistant Superintendent Kevin Hormann, Scott Marrs, and Nancy Heck also met with the tribe's Human Resource section on March 7, 2007, to introduce themselves and discuss recruitment efforts and other potential partnerships. The tribe was also invited to the DRCI Open House/Job Fair held on June 13, 2007, and several tribal members attended.

The formal dedication ceremony for DRCI was held on November 30, 2007. The ceremony was not to celebrate the need to open a new state prison, but rather to dedicate the facility and acknowledge the collaborative spirit between the DOC and the local community. Many local officials attended the ceremony. The ceremony included an opening prayer by Jack Newald, a member of the DRCI Prison Advisory Committee. The DOC was honored to have tribal elder Daisy Mae Ike, of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, offer a brief sermon and blessing for the dedication. She was accompanied in the blessing by tribal members Flossie Wolfe and Lucy Wolfe. We were also honored by the presence of the Chief Executive Officer of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Charles Jody Calica, who also offered some words about the facility and dedication, and was accompanied on stage by his wife, Tribal Judge the Honorable Marie Calica.

The department plans to continue working with various tribal representatives throughout the state to maintain the cooperative relationships that have been built; and to continue to seek out opportunities to involve the Native American community in rehabilitative programs, policy development that effects tribal members, and the transition of inmates to communities.

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