



Supporting the rights and  
needs of Oregon's tribal  
youth

The mission of the  
Oregon Youth Authority  
is to protect the public  
and reduce crime by  
holding youth offenders  
accountable and  
providing opportunities  
for reformation  
in safe environments.

# Oregon Youth Authority

## Government-to-Government Report on Tribal Relations

2015

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December 15, 2015

Provided to the  
Legislative Commission on Indian Services

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## Oregon's Federally Recognized Tribes

This annual "Government-to-Government Report on Tribal Relations" describes the ways in which the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) and the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon worked together during 2015 to improve outcomes for American Indian/Alaska Native youth in the juvenile justice system.

The nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon are the:

- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon
- Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon
- Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
- Coquille Tribe of Oregon
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon
- Klamath Tribes



## Highlights from 2015

OYA made many significant strides in 2015, including:

- Partnering with tribes to develop Native American services protocols for close-custody facilities;
- Holding Pow wow's at the following close-custody facilities, MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility (Woodburn), Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility (Salem), Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility (Albany, female), Camp Tillamook and Tillamook Youth Correctional Facility (Tillamook), and Rouge Valley Youth Correctional Facility (Grants Pass).
- Holding four Native American Advisory Committee meetings;
- Issuing a Letter of support to NARA's work on youth suicide prevention SPIRIT Project
- Supporting Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility's Native American signing and drum group "*Rising from the Brick Walls.*" Oak Creek's Native American signing and drum group hosted Nick Sixkiller. Mr. Sixkiller recorded the group and featured them on Indian Time (KRVM 91.9 FM Eugene);
- Continued contracting with the Southern Oregon Indian Center and Dusty Mackay to provide Native American services in close-custody facilities; and
- Continued working with volunteers to provide services for American Indian/Alaska Native youth.



## **Oregon Youth Authority**

### **Serving Oregon's most at-risk youth**

OYA's mission is to protect the public and reduce crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.

OYA does this by exercising legal and physical custody of offenders adjudicated to OYA by juvenile courts, and physical custody of young offenders sentenced by adult courts. The agency serves the state's most delinquent youth ages 12 through 24 who commit crimes before their 18th birthday.

OYA currently manages approximately 1,478 youth. Approximately 877 youth are in communities on probation or parole. The remainder – approximately 601 youth – live in secure close-custody facilities.

Research shows that the most effective way to encourage youth to lead crime-free lives is by providing the appropriate combination of culturally specific treatment and education. To that end, OYA engages tribal governments in five significant ways:

- Individually, through government-to-government relationships, as established in a memorandum of understanding with each tribe;
- Collectively, through the OYA Native American Advisory Committee;
- Collaboratively, through implementing and coordinating culturally relevant treatment services for American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA custody;
- Through participation in Public Safety Cluster meetings; and
- By providing direct services and support to tribal youth in OYA custody.

### **Leadership additions**

OYA Director Fariborz Pakseresht, Deputy Director Joe O'Leary, and Assistant Director of OYA's Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations Maria Chavez-Haroldson continue to be highly committed to our partnerships with the Oregon Tribes and developing new creative ways to improve outcomes for American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA custody.

Bryant Campbell joins OYA's Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR) as an

Operations Analyst. Bryant will help evaluate and operationalize statewide OIIR programs, policies, and services by applying research to practice. He also will help OIIR increase its effectiveness and the delivery of services to youth, leading to more inclusive and equitable service outcomes.

### **American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA**

Approximately 4.6 percent of youth in OYA's custody are American Indian/Alaska Native. This figure rises to 10.1 percent when youth identify their mixed ethnicities.

OYA has legal and/or physical custody of approximately 1,478 youth, of whom approximately 146 self-identify as being enrolled in an American Indian/Alaska Native tribe or of tribal descent. Of those, 114 are juvenile commitments and 32 are adult commitments sentenced under Measure 11 or waived to adult court.

Relative to Oregon's population, American Indian/Alaska Native youth are over-represented in the juvenile justice system and in OYA. American Indian/Alaska Natives make up approximately 1.8 percent of Oregonians, however 10.1 percent of youth committed to OYA.

### **The Youth Reformation System**

Oregon maintains nearly 20 years of data about youth who have touched the state's juvenile justice system at any level. By using this information and incorporating new research on juvenile brain development and effective treatment methods, OYA is creating more effective approaches to working with youth. This data-driven approach is known as the Youth Reformation System (YRS). YRS enables OYA to ensure the right youth receive the right services in the right location for the right about of time. This results in improved outcomes for youth, their families, and their communities. OYA's ultimate goal is to reduce future victimization and create safer communities.

### **Positive Human Development**

The Oregon Youth Authority culture change initiative continues with our Positive Human Development (PHD) initiative. Following PHD's precepts, staff work to ensure safety and security, provide and model supportive relationships, set high expectations in opportunity-rich settings, offer youth meaningful participation in decisions that affect them, and help youth build positive community connections.

PHD unites positive youth development with positive staff development. PHD occurs when everyone – staff, community partners, youth, and OYA's organizational structure – works collaboratively to 1) foster supporting relationships; 2) offer meaning full participation; and 3) set high expectations where engagement, learning and growth can occur.

OYA is committed to infusing a culture of PHD throughout the agency. Introducing PHD involves creating new approaches to staff training, updating policies and practices, and engaging staff in ongoing conversations and education about better ways to work with youth.

## **OYA's Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations**

OYA seeks to ensure youth from all demographic groups receive equitable access to services while in our care and custody. OYA was the first – and for many years, the only – juvenile justice agency in the nation to have an office that represents the needs of diverse youth.

The Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR) provides leadership, advocacy, and guiding principles to assist the Oregon Youth Authority in its ongoing efforts to become a culturally responsive organization and address the complex issues of a culturally and ethnically diverse agency.

The OIIR recognizes diversity that exists both within OYA's youth population and within the employees of the organization. Staff of the office provide leadership and services to both youth and staff. Evidence-based best practices are incorporated into the treatment delivery in both facilities and community settings.

### **Tribal Liaison**

Katie Staton is OYA's Tribal Liaison. Katie is of Tsimshian (Alaskan Native) descent, a member of the Wolf (*Lax Gibuu*) Clan and has had diverse experience with Native American and tribal issues. She is a member of the Sitka Tribes of Alaska, Shee Atiká, and Sealaska.

Katie received her undergraduate degree from Gonzaga University, and juris doctorate and master's degree in conflict resolution from the University of Oregon, where she also was president of the Native American Law Student Association.

### **Native American Services Coordinator change**

Steve Llanes, OYA's Native American Services Coordinator, retired in September 2014. OYA was honored to benefit from Steve's service for many years. He did an outstanding job connecting with and supporting our tribal youth in close custody, during transition, and in the community. He was known affectionately as "grandpa" by many youth and staff. His efforts made a significant and positive difference for hundreds of American Indian/Alaska Native youth in Oregon. OYA is working to find a qualified replacement to fill this vacancy.

### **Native American Cultural Support Specialist hire**

Aaron Weldon-Pineda was hired as OYA's Native American Cultural Support Specialist, providing direct services to youth in close-custody. When youth leave OYA care and custody, our hope for them is that they develop into productive, crime-free citizens who can help make our communities better places. It is not uncommon for our youth to want to work in social service or juvenile justice roles, to help guide other troubled youth toward better lives. We honor this interest and do what we can to help these youth find and keep good jobs.

One of the ways OYA helps is to occasionally offer paid internships as well as temporary or permanent jobs to former OYA youth. We carefully screen these youth and work closely with them once they are on board. Our goal is to help provide them opportunities to gain experience and become more employable. Over the years we have seen several former OYA youth become excellent employees, both here and at other organizations.

Our latest former OYA youth, who has been hired by OYA as a member of the OIIR team, is Aaron Weldon-Pineda. Aaron is of Kickapoo and Mexican-American descent. He is active in various community events and ceremonies such as Sweat lodge, Tipi meetings, Sundance, and Aztec Danza. Aaron believes that through culture you find your true self, which is the key to being successful at anything in life.

Aaron will be serving as our Native American Cultural Support Specialist. In this role, he will use his life experiences as a tool to relate with young men and women in close-custody facilities.





## **OYA's Tribal Relations**

### **Communication liaisons**

The government-to-government relationships between tribes and OYA support the agency's mission of public safety, accountability, and reformation for youth in OYA custody. These relationships also enhance community safety by increasing the opportunities for successful reintegration of tribal youth returning to their communities.

OYA is represented in these relationships by the tribal liaison. Each of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes also has identified a key contact to be the first link in communications between OYA and the tribes. Each key contact is a vital liaison who provides opportunities to identify mutual concerns, resources for youth, and activities in OYA and communities. These individuals are instrumental in enhancing communications between OYA and the respective tribes, and also serve on OYA's Native American Advisory Committee.

### **Key tribal contacts**

- Currently vacant, Burns Paiute Tribe
- Doug Barrett, Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon
- Dana Ainam and Lisa Leno, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon
- Loraine Butler, Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation
- Ryan Sams, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Cecelia Collins and Berni Jackson, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
- Laura Angulo, Coquille Tribe of Oregon
- Andrea Davis, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon
- Torina Case, Klamath Tribes

### **Memoranda of understanding**

To establish formal relationships with Oregon's tribal governments, OYA has entered into or is in the process of negotiating memoranda of understanding (MOU) with each tribe pursuant to state law. While MOUs are tailored to meet the individual needs and concerns of each tribe, the agreements generally identify areas of mutual concern, including services to American Indian/Alaska Native youth, mutually agreed upon roles and responsibilities, and methods for

promoting effective communications and positive relationships.

Each MOU generally includes assurances that tribal youth are identified when they enter OYA custody. Other assurances include that tribal and American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA's care receive culturally appropriate services, and that tribes have opportunities to participate in planning the reformation and transition services for their youth as they change placements or leave the agency's custody.

OYA currently has MOUs with seven Oregon tribal governments:

- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon
- Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation
- Coquille Tribe of Oregon
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon
- Klamath Tribes

Although OYA has yet to finalize MOUs with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the agency continues to pursue agreements with these tribes. In addition, OYA continues to conduct its relationship with these tribes as if an agreement exists. This ensures consistent support for all nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon. OYA remains hopeful an agreement with the Grand Ronde and Warm Springs tribes will be reached in the future.

### **Public Safety Cluster**

The Public Safety Cluster (PSC) convenes meetings with state public safety agencies and tribal officials to discuss and address tribal-specific public safety issues and issues of mutual concern. OYA's tribal liaison serves as a member of the PSC. The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) Diversity and Inclusion administrator serves as chair of the PSC.

All PSC meetings in 2015 were hosted by the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). These meetings brought together state and tribal public safety agencies, departments, commissions, and judicial systems. We are grateful to DOC and DPSST for their continued support and collaboration with the government-to-government meetings.

PSC meetings provide a forum for identifying issues affecting public safety in tribal and Oregon communities. These meetings enable participants to share ideas, information, and strategies to promote safer communities throughout Oregon. In addition, these meetings enhance government-to-government relationships among state agencies and tribal public safety partners.

### **Native American Advisory Committee**

OYA's Native American Advisory Committee (NAAC) helps the agency identify matters of mutual concern between the agency and the tribes. The committee includes representatives from Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes, Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, Inc. (NARA), and tribal community representatives throughout the state.

NAAC's primary functions are to:

- Establish community links between OYA and the Native American community;
- Consult on the cultural responsiveness of programs, services, and policies regarding American Indian/Alaska Native youth within OYA;
- Consult regarding transition and aftercare services for American Indian/Alaska Native youth;
- Recruit volunteers to support services offered by OYA for American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA close-custody facilities;
- Develop staff training on American Indian/Alaska Native cultures and tribal structures;
- Recruit and retain American Indian/Alaska Native staff within OYA to sustain an employee workforce that reflects the diversity of youth; and
- Establish resources for out-of-home placements.

Topics of advisory committee meetings have included:

- Priorities of the tribes;
- Review of American Indian/Alaska Native youth in OYA custody;
- Culturally responsive services for American Indian/Alaska Native youth;
- Developing support and resources for our American Indian/Alaska Native youth;
- Developing transition supports and exploring tribal foster care;
- Conducting Pow wows and Native American services in close-custody facilities, and
- Developing protocols for Native American services offered in close-custody facilities and community placements.

OYA partners with the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Addictions and Mental Health Services to hold NAAC meetings in conjunction with the Nine Tribes Quarterly Prevention meetings, resulting in increased collaboration and attendance.

### **Statewide Advisory Committee**

The Statewide Advisory Committee includes juvenile justice partners and stakeholders to provide input and information on issues and events affecting juvenile justice, as well as to advise OYA on its policies and practices. The NAAC co-chair, David Fullerton (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde) has represented tribal concerns on the committee and shares tribal issues that need to be addressed by all of the agency's stakeholders.

### **Ongoing support**

OYA's Tribal Liaison and administration attended the Legislative Commission on Indian Services Tribal Government Legislative Day, the Legislative Commission on Indian Services 40th Anniversary, and will attend the State and Tribal Annual Summit hosted by Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon. Among those attending are Deputy Director Joe O'Leary, OIIR Director Maria Chavez-Haroldson, Tribal Liaison Katie Staton, and Native American Cultural Support Specialist Aaron Weldon-Pineda.

OYA's leadership remains committed to maintaining ongoing, open communications with the tribes in Oregon, and to developing ways to ensure better outcomes for American Indian/Alaska Native youth in our care and custody.



## **OYA and Individual Tribes**

### **Klamath Tribes**

To continue to build relationships, provide better communication, and provide additional support for Klamath Tribal youth in OYA custody, the tribal liaison met with the tribal court, tribal officials, and tribal health (prevention team) several times in 2015. Additionally, the tribal liaison regularly communicates with Klamath Tribal Health and Family Services to provide support for tribal youth in OYA's care. OYA is very grateful for the support and dedication of Certified Prevention Specialist Monica Yellow Owl and the Klamath Tribes, OYA looks forward to continuing these partnerships in the future.

### **Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation**

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) tribal members have provided ceremonial sweat lodge services to Riverbend Youth Transition Facility. OYA is very grateful for the support and dedication of CTUIR and looks forward to continuing these partnerships in the future.

### **Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation**

OYA has worked extensively with previous Siletz Certified Prevention Specialist Rusty Butler. Mr. Butler has been instrumental in supporting Siletz tribal youth and all tribal youth in OYA's care. He has provided direct mentorship support for struggling youth, ceremonial sweat lodges, and prevention groups in several close-custody facilities. He also has supported youth participation in multi-disciplinary team meetings. Over 2015, Mr. Butler and the tribal liaison regularly discussed case management and support. He has provided guidance and support for agency protocols, ceremonies, and events. Mr. Butler has provided Culture is Prevention presentations at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility, MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, and Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility. OYA is immensely grateful for the support and dedication Mr. Butler has provided to tribal youth in the agency's care.

### **Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon**

OYA has frequently worked with Grand Ronde Tribal Social Services Department Manager

David Fullerton and Tribal Youth Prevention Supervisor Lisa Leno. Mr. Fullerton and Ms. Leno strongly support Grand Ronde youth and all tribal youth in OYA's care. The tribal liaison regularly discusses case management and support with Mr. Fullerton and Ms. Leno.

Mr. Fullerton and Ms. Leno have provided guidance and support for agency protocols, ceremonies, and events. OYA is very grateful for the support and dedication Mr. Fullerton and Ms. Leno have provided to tribal youth in the agency's care, and looks forward to continuing these partnerships in the future.

**Burns Paiute Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon, Coquille Tribe of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon**

To continue to build relationships, provide better communication, and provide additional support for Oregon Tribal youth in our custody, the tribal liaison regularly met with Tribal Prevention Specialists and tribal partners. OYA looks forward to continuing these and building additional partnerships in the future.



## **A Shared Commitment**

### **Collaborating on facility programs**

OYA has 10 close-custody facilities throughout Oregon. It takes OYA staff, contractors, and volunteers working together to meet the objective of incorporating and maintaining services for Native American youth in these facilities.

OYA's close-custody facilities are:

- Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility (Salem)
- MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility (Woodburn)
- Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility (Albany) (female facility)
- North Coast Youth Correctional Facility (Warrenton)
- Tillamook Youth Correctional Facility (Tillamook)
- Eastern Oregon Youth Correctional Facility (Burns)
- Rogue Valley Youth Correctional Facility (Grants Pass)

OYA's transitional camp/facilities are:

- Camp Tillamook Youth Transition Facility (Tillamook)
- Camp Florence Youth Transition Facility (Florence)
- Riverbend Youth Transition Facility (La Grande)

Each facility offers a range of events from sweat lodge ceremonies to pow wows and other opportunities to honor and celebrate Native American cultures. Support for these events is provided through a network of tribal staff, contractors, and volunteers.

### **Reconnecting Native American youth with cultural traditions**

Services provided to Native American youth in OYA's care promote personal responsibility, accountability, community safety, and reintegration into family and community. Services include transitional assistance, culturally relevant treatment and interventions, culturally relevant social and spiritual activities, and tribal support resources.

Many of the American Indian/Alaska Native youth who enter OYA have not had contact with their tribes and cultural or spiritual traditions prior to entering the juvenile justice system. While these youth will receive treatment programs offered by OYA, the exposure to and practice of

Native American values and traditions provide a unique opportunity for many youth to become acquainted with their culture and heritage for the first time. OYA views these services as crucial to the treatment and reformation needs of tribal youth.

OYA encourages tribes to engage with their youth while the youth are in close-custody facilities or in community placements. Tribes are welcome and encouraged to conduct ceremonies and rituals specific to their tribal traditions in these facilities.

### **Coordinating treatment services**

OYA's juvenile probation and parole officers (JPPOs) working out of OYA field offices are responsible for both the direct supervision of youth in OYA custody who are in the community and for case management of youth in close-custody facilities. JPPOs coordinate multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings for youth to develop and monitor treatment plans.

In coordinating treatment services for youth in OYA custody, JPPOs have direct contact with tribes. OYA's tribal notification policy directs JPPOs to provide notification when a youth in the agency's custody is identified as a tribal youth. OYA's Tribal Liaison provides contact information, resources, and supports the process. Oregon tribes are included as MDT core members for their tribal youth, enabling them to participate in planning of treatment and services.

### **Providing culturally relevant services**

OYA recognizes that treatment and reformation efforts are more effective when provided in the context of each youth's culture. OIIR coordinates a variety of cultural events, provides culturally specific support groups and provides staff training and education.

OIIR provides Native American youth with opportunities to participate in sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies, talking circles, pow wows, culturally relevant support groups, and individual meetings with staff, contracted providers, and volunteers. In addition, OYA welcomes and encourages tribal participation if tribes wish to conduct a ceremony for their tribal youth. These Native American services provide youth with positive identity development, strengthen resistance to negative peer associations, offer increased options for positive thinking and behavior, and generally support and enhancement other treatment opportunities in OYA.

### **Supporting minority youth transition**

OIIR has four full-time youth services coordinators, Johnny Demus, Reneé Hernandez, Dawn Leon, and a vacant position. Mr. Demus, Ms. Hernandez, and Ms. Leon coordinate treatment and aftercare for youth returning to their communities from close-custody facilities. American Indian/Alaska Native youth eligible for these transition services including enrolled youth from Oregon's tribes and also youth from tribes are outside Oregon.





## **Looking Ahead**

### **Training opportunities for OYA staff**

All new OYA staff receive an orientation on tribal governments and state law governing the legal relationship between tribes and the state. Training on tribal governments during new employee orientation ensures OYA staff have a basic awareness of tribal issues and the agency's notification policy.

Cultural responsiveness training is required for all OYA staff working with youth in OYA custody. All new staff are expected to have a basic awareness of Native American cultural values, beliefs, and customs. This training begins laying the foundation for new employees to work with tribal youth and emphasizes the need for culturally relevant services.

### **Resources**

The tribal liaison will continue to work with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to develop educational materials and to provide information and guidance to all OYA staff on American Indian/Alaska Native cultures, traditions, and ceremonies.

### **Recruitment**

With the retirement of Steve Llanes, OYA's Native American services provider, the agency will actively recruit for a qualified replacement and refill this position. The agency views this position as a critical member of the OIIR team and OYA. The tribes are aware of this change and have played a key role in the recruiting and the interview process.

### **Ongoing relationship building**

OYA continues to be actively committed to building, maintaining, and supporting strong government-to-government relations with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes. The tribal liaison continues to build relationships, share resources and information, coordinate services for tribal youth, and maintain communication with tribal partners.





## **Additional Resources**

For more information, please contact:

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