



OYA Staff, youth, partners celebrate diversity at Hillcrest



OIR Director Maria Chavez-Haroldson dances with Native American Services Coordinator Steve Llanes.

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Facility employees, the team from the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR), field staff and community partners all contributed to making the August 21 Multicultural Celebration at Hillcrest YCF a huge success. Close collaboration between facilities and the field were key to a safe and successful celebration.

Hillcrest Superintendent Troy Gregg and facility staff worked closely with the OIIR team. Special thanks go to the skill development coordinators and staff in the Hillcrest Records Department, Maintenance, Nutrition Services, Recreation, Campus Security, living units, cafeteria and Robert Farrell High School.

Employees who helped with supervision also ensured the safety of the participants. Camp Florence and MacLaren staff assisted with transportation and supervision to allow their youth to attend and participate. They helped make sure that the guests and families had the

best experience possible while watching their youth participate in such a meaningful cultural celebration.

Family Engagement Coordinator Faith Love and JPPOs Daniel Sifuentez and Marisela Gonzalez greeted the families of youth upon arrival at the facility and made them feel welcome.

Various food and snack vendors, as well as staff and youth from the Hillcrest café, made sure plenty of refreshments were available as participants danced and socialized under warm, sunny skies. Musicians, entertainers, a dancing horse and Mexican Chinelos dancers from Portland all served to enliven the celebration.

Finally, I offer a huge “gracias” to Multicultural Services Coordinator Griselda Solano Salinas, whose organization of the Hillcrest event will serve as a model for OIIR to duplicate at facilities around the state.

Cultural events are an important aspect of positive human development. Including friends and family in cultural celebrations is a critical element of culturally specific best practices and is proven to support youth reformation.



Dancing horse and rider perform at the Multicultural Celebration.

Mexican Chinelos dancers from Portland volunteered their talents at the Multicultural Celebration. They received certificates of appreciation from OIIR Director Maria Chavez-Haroldson (standing third from left) and Griselda Solano Salinas (standing fourth from left).

