



Oregon

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NEWS RELEASE

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Hillcrest youth brighten holidays with donated hats, scarves and bikes



Felipe (sitting) with Hillcrest staff (left to right) Rodney Green, Karol Rhoades and Terry Ferebee

At-risk youth at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility (YCF) in Salem are brightening the holidays for people in need with handmade hats and scarves.

The items – made with material donated by Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) employees – will be distributed to the homeless this holiday season. The hats and scarves are made by nine youth in the “Zeta Knitting Group,” named after the facility’s living unit where they reside. So far, the

youth have donated 10 items to the ARCHES Project, a Salem group that helps the homeless, and are weaving at least six more.

“We’re very pleased that the youth are learning to give back to their community through this kind of activity,” said Troy Gregg, superintendent of Hillcrest YCF. “This type of project helps teach empathy and compassion to the youth in our care. It also helps them lead productive, crime-free lives after they complete their OYA commitments.”

Felipe, 19, (hometown: Hermiston, Ore.) is a member of the Zeta Knitting Group. He said the program is “great” and commended OYA employees Terry Ferebee, Rodney Green, Karol Rhoades and Karri Robinson for encouraging him and other youth to participate.

Lana Heinen, housing education coordinator for the ARCHES Project, said the items are greatly appreciated. “The hats and scarves are very well made and will be put to good use in the homeless community, especially this time of year,” she said. “We’re grateful to the youth and staff at Hillcrest for their generosity and support of those in need.”

Hillcrest YCF is also continuing its holiday tradition of donating repaired bikes to members of the community. The bikes are rehabilitated by youth at the facility under the volunteer supervision of local bicycle mechanics Aaron Ryals and Cory Heintz. The program is a partnership with the Salem YMCA, which coordinates distribution of the rebuilt bikes at low or no cost to people who can’t afford new ones.

Service projects by youth in close-custody facilities support OYA’s mission to protect the public by holding youth offenders accountable and providing reformation in safe environments. Youth also benefit from year-round support of volunteers, who during the holidays host parties, lead religious services and ensure youth receive gifts.

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The Oregon Youth Authority is the state's juvenile justice agency, reducing victimization by helping at-risk young people lead productive, crime-free lives. Learn more at www.oregon.gov/oia and follow us on Twitter @OregonYouth. To learn more about the ARCHES Project, visit http://www.mwvcaa.org/CRP/ARCHES_project.html