

June 2008

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Dear Friend of WINGS,

Welcome to the first WINGS Newsletter. We are very excited about all of our good news and hope you will take a minute to see how your kindness and support has helped get this far. We could not have done it without you! If you know someone who would enjoy learning more about our program I hope you will pass this on! Have a wonderful summer!

Allyson Pate

A Home . . . At Last



At an event last week, Allyson Pate and the WINGS Board of Directors announced that the purchase of a home for WINGS is complete! The Hood River three-bedroom, two-bath manufactured home on three acres is at the end of a quiet street with a large backyard and 1½ acres of pasture. WINGS Founder and Executive Director, Allyson Pate, and her husband James have purchased the property, which is located on Rockford Road. They plan to lease to WINGS once the organization has finalized its first phase of funding - hopefully by late summer of this year.

Being Good Neighbors

When WINGS announced its intention to operate in a residential Hood River neighborhood, a few neighbors voiced concerns. The Board of Directors and Executive Director met several times with locals and the County Commission in order to calm fears, dispel rumors and present the need for WINGS.

In late May, nearby neighbors received a letter that outlined the WINGS plan. Prior to opening, the WINGS board will finalize its Neighborhood Agreement. Copies of the Agreement and of WINGS' Policy & Procedure Manual will be distributed to neighbors. Additionally, WINGS will:

- Host quarterly meetings to see how things are going
- Schedule a neighbor meeting prior to June 1, 2009, to approve the 2009-10 plan
- Invite neighbors to join the selection committee and WINGS board
- Provide phone numbers of staff and board

"Part of what makes Hood River so great is that we are a community; we help take care of each other," said Shannon Perry in a recent Hood River News article about the idea. "It really does take a whole village."

What WINGS Will Offer



When WINGS opens it will offer four young men, called "the Crew," a comprehensive package of support. These men are the victims of circumstance: local, homeless, former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 23. In Phase One of this voluntary program, the men will live at The Farm with a house parent 24/7. They will work under the supervision of a "Crew Leader," off-site, at least four days per week. The "work" component of WINGS will provide a variety of skills, which will enable these young men to feel a sense of success while learning valuable job and trade skills. Having skills will give them a means of creating their futures. WINGS holds their earnings in trust for them until they complete the program.

Education is another key to success; each young man will study two nights per week. What they work on will depend on where they are in their educational development: they may be completing a high school education or GED, or working towards an associate's degree or vocational training certificate.

The young men will also learn life skills by working three nights per week on "Life Puzzle," a self-responsibility, choice-driven program designed by Hood River resident Ann Kramer that is a practical, tangible learning tool. The young men will also acquire skills for every day living - everything from laundry to cooking to budgeting.

During Phase One, the young men will be exposed to a variety of work experiences and visit a number of businesses in the area. On the weekends, volunteers will work with the young men on projects that will expose them to everything from welding to electrical work to gardening. The work done during Phase One builds confidence and skills in the Crew members, and builds relationships with potential employers. Phase Two of WINGS involves full-time employment with a "Mentoring Employer" from the area, as well as moving to an apartment, where each man will be mentored and monitored by a Life Coach.

Upon graduation from both phases of WINGS, the young men will have approximately \$3,800 in savings they can use to jump-start their future, i.e., to secure permanent housing and a vehicle.

Thank You, Community Partners!



Gorge Nursery

Steve Richter of Gorge Nursery has graciously volunteered to work with WINGS. Although the details have not been finalized, Steve will teach the young men how to grow nursery stock and a vegetable garden. He has also agreed to loan equipment to clear the pasture and plant the vegetable garden. Steve has an ingenious technique for growing nursery

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stock, which is called tub-in-tub. In exchange for Steve teaching these techniques, the WINGS Crew will grow plants for Gorge Nursery. A great win-win!



Columbia River Bank

Craig Bowder, commercial loan officer at Columbia River Bank, has gone above and beyond the role of a mortgage lender. Not only did he expedite the purchase of The Farm to satisfy a June 1 deadline, he came up with a number of ways that Columbia River Bank proves its heart is in the Gorge! CRB is offering Crew members the following:

- Free checking and savings accounts;
- Free Internet banking and debit cards;
- A bank representative to attend all WINGS events;
- A 10-part financial training seminar,

And, best of all, CRB agreed to match the closing costs on The Farm - \$3,400 - and put it into a savings account for the young men to use at graduation!

Oregon Youth Conservation Corp

Oregon Youth Conservation Corp has awarded WINGS a \$1,000 Planning Grant. The OYCC was founded in 1987 as a program to enhance the environment, reduce the dropout rate and teach youth work skills. It combines community stewardship work projects with the classroom. OYCC will provide staff training, on-going support and back-end management. WINGS will be a proud and grateful member.

Women Who Have Made a Difference!

A big thanks from WINGS to **Marjorie Byrne, CPA, Deborah Phillips, Attorney-at-Law, and Elaine Vincent of Amerititle**. All three have donated services or fees to WINGS - thanks so much for all of the assistance and the donations! You women ROCK!

Men Help WINGS Take Flight



Daren

You might see him zipping around Rosauers, helping folks out to their cars with their groceries or wrestling huge bags of cans from the recycling center, but he is no ordinary young man. To those of us at WINGS, he is a superhero! Daren, or Vid, as his nametag reads, grew up the hard way - through the foster care system. "I had more than 20 placements," Daren said during a recent neighborhood meeting. "Can you imagine living in 20 places in half as many years?" Daren's presence at both the neighborhood and Hood River County Commission meetings made a huge difference for WINGS. He spoke so eloquently about foster care and the need for WINGS that people could not help but agree that it's an unserved need in our community. Thanks so much, Daren!!

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Jesse White

WINGS welcomes Jesse White, who will spend the summer as a contract project coordinator. He will be responsible for identifying community partners for WINGS, and seeking work- and recreation-related volunteers. He will also contact companies and look for work opportunities for the Crew. Companies, organizations and individuals can hire the Crew and their Crew Leader, by the day, for everything from demolishing a kitchen to deconstructing an old barn to building fences - you name it, they'll do it!

How You Can Help:

WINGS needs your help to get up and running this year. Please check out the Donation/Volunteer page on our website - www.getwings.net/donation. If you can help with a one-time donation or better yet, a monthly pledge, your money will be directly spent to provide services to former foster kids.

We understand that not everyone can make a monetary donation - but WINGS could use your help in so many other ways! If you have a skill or a passion or a favorite sport, and could spare an afternoon, please let us know. If you have excess furniture or equipment, please check out our Needs List and make a donation. If you have work for the Crew for a day or longer, please let us know. When the young men are ready, together we will give them "WINGS."

Thanks to all of you who have helped WINGS get this far; your help has made all the difference!

Give Them Wings, Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation doing business as WINGS. WINGS is a two-phase program which is designed to provide housing, work, education and wrap-around services for at-risk 18- to 23-year-old young men in Hood River and Wasco Counties.

Sincerely,
Allyson Pate
WINGS

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