

# Corrections Briefings

January 1999

Volume 2, Issue 1

## Eastern Oregon Accepts First Female Inmates

On December 9, 1998, Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution (EOCI) in Pendleton became the first Oregon prison east of the Cascades to house female inmates. The temporary move was precipitated by the delay in building a new women's prison and the challenges and costs of managing a female population out-of-state.

In anticipation of the new use, the prison's H Unit was modified during the fall for its new occupants. The unit is attached to the male Disciplinary Segregation Unit, but the building itself is physically separated from the prison's main housing units. Except for visiting and health care, female inmates will remain in H unit and its adjoining day rooms and yard.

The previously all-male institution is accommodating women in phases. The first group in December included inmates from Oregon Women's Correctional Center (OWCC) in Salem. An additional transport of inmates arrived from rental beds in Gallup, New Mexico on December 11, 1998. Twenty-five inmates from OWCC and Columbia River Correctional Institution brought the early January total to 57. A January 11 transport from Gallup added 51, for a total female population at EOCI of 108. The unit's capacity is 160.

Programs for the women inmates started January 11, 1999, including educational classes, parenting workshops, cognitive classes, alcohol and drug workshops/groups, AA/NA meetings, and religious activities. H-Unit has two large, open day rooms to use for programs as well as dining, indoor recreation, TV-viewing, general and law library services, barbering services, and laundry.

For the first time since September 1995, the DOC is not renting any beds outside Oregon.

## Lakeview Open House Answers Community Questions

During the last year, Regina Troupe, community development coordinator, met on a regular basis with members of the Lake County Prison Advisory Committee (PAC). The committee serves as a vital link between the department and members of the local community. Additionally, last fall local residents were provided an opportunity to share their concerns and ideas regarding the upcoming construction of the minimum security work camp in Lakeview.

During a subsequent PAC meeting, members asked the department to provide answers to 63 questions generated during the discussion with local residents and present those answers to the community. The result: an open house hosted by several department staff on Wednesday, November 18 at the Senior Center in Lakeview. Members of the community met one-on-one with ODOC "experts" regarding the siting process, infrastructure needs, inmate work programs, operations and security, as well as employee recruitment programs.

The open house was so successful that the department plans to schedule similar events in other host communities.

OREGON DEPARTMENT  
OF CORRECTIONS

DAVID S. COOK  
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The mission of the Oregon Department of Corrections is to promote public safety by holding offenders accountable for their actions and reducing the risk of future criminal behavior.

JOHN A. KITZHABER, M.D.  
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## Lessons Learned

In an exercise in face-to-face “value engineering,” the New Prison Construction Program organized a first-of-its-kind four-day workshop bringing together the construction project teams from Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario, Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla, and the women’s prison/intake center.

The symposium, held in Umatilla, was designed to extract those elements of the construction processes at TRCI and SRCI that worked well, to discuss those elements that had presented problems, and to develop solutions to problems encountered. It was novel in the sense that competitors sat at the same table sharing their prison construction experiences. Architects, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, and DOC leaders and content experts were guided through the process by Meng and Associates, a construction-consulting firm from Seattle, and the ODOC’s own construction expert, Dan Brown.

The immediate beneficiary of all this work will be the taxpayers of Oregon. The concepts, techniques, documentation, and processes resulting from this collaborative effort will help the department manage scarce resources for many, many years to come. The workshop is a concrete example of the department’s commitment to continual improvement in its New Prison Construction Program.

## New Program Development at CRCI

by Gary Field, Ph.D.

Three existing programs have been enhanced, and one new program has begun at Columbia River Correctional Institution (CRCI), a minimum security prison in Portland. The changes are all related to developing combined mental health and alcohol and drug programming.

Researchers across the country are noting that many individuals with severe mental illness have co-occurring substance abuse problems that undermine their mental health treatment. Likewise, many people with alcohol or drug addictions have, or develop, severe mental health problems. Perhaps surprisingly, but unfortunately, few mental health programs are able to do substance abuse treatment and few substance abuse programs are skilled in mental health treatment. Policy recommendations across the country are now emphasizing development of “co-occurring disorder” or “dual diagnosis” substance abuse and mental health programs to provide treatment services both more effectively and more efficiently.

Continuing our leadership in correctional treatment programs, the department applied for and received a federal grant last summer to develop a co-occurring disorders treatment system at CRCI. Program modifications and start-up began in September. The Turning Point alcohol and drug programs for men and women have added mental health treatment components, but continue to focus on addictions treatment. The Bridgepoint program for men and the In Focus program for women are providing addictions counseling in the context of mental health treatment for those inmates who need a less stressful program because of their mental health problems. All four programs are available to inmates during the last year before release in order to emphasize careful transition to community services.

While current professional standards are evolving toward integrated mental health - substance abuse treatment, few of these programs exist today, inside or outside of corrections. Federal agencies and other states have expressed interest in following our progress and learning from our experiences at CRCI.

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