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HUMAN RESOURCES
CURRENTS
• OREGON DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES •

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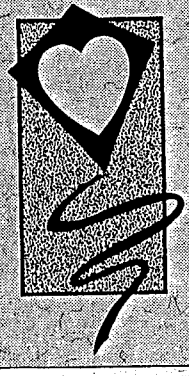
Fastcopy

Thirty Children's Services Division employees in Bend split a recent $100,000 **Powerball jackpot**... 848 heads of welfare households participating in the **JOBS** program went to work in March... A new Department of Human Resources **personnel profile** shows 12 percent minorities, 5 percent people with disabilities, 64 percent women... Several **Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs** employees were featured in a KATU television story about receiving watches as the monthly Persistence Award from their boss, Jeff Kusher, who pays for the watches... A suggestion from **Health Division**'s Wayne Jeffers to save $5,100 by modifying lab-licensing inspections was approved by the Employee Suggestion Awards Board... Enrollment in the **Oregon Health Plan** Medicaid expansion has surpassed 60,000, or half the 120,000 projected new eligibles.



Children's Services Division featured: *new administrator selected (page 2).*

CURRENTS *follows activities of a CSD caseworker through the challenges of protecting children (page 3).*

From the Director

'HUMAN RESOURCES DOLLARS AT WORK'

by Kevin W. Concannon

WHEN WE SEE A HIGHWAY BEING PAVED or a bridge repaired, we make the quick connection to the phrase "Your Highway Tax Dollars at Work." That message conveys images of private contractors meeting public works needs, creating a better quality of life for us all.

I was reminded of the power of that message one Saturday morning while watching a middle-school soccer game. I asked another parent how his sister with mental illness was faring in a Hillsboro group home. He told me she was "doing very well," and I commented that the non-profit group home was run by a wonderful organization with which I was well acquainted.

He was surprised: "It's a private not-for-profit organization, it has nothing to do with the state." To which I replied, "Oh, but 95 percent of its funds come from the state of Oregon in the form of state and federal funds."

> 'Similar to highway tax dollars, state government channels money into local governments and the private sector through private not-for-profit and for-profit organizations.'

That conversation dramatized the serious difference between public understanding of *highway* tax dollars and those state tax dollars that make *human resources* investments in our communities.

Similar to highway tax dollars, state government channels money into local governments and the private sector through private not-for-profit and for-profit organizations. Consider some examples:

• For mental health, Oregon spends $107 million annually for about 114,000 Oregonians on community programs such as the Hillsboro group home, local clinics, counseling centers and local hospital in-patient units. In addition,

*Please see **Director's column** — page 5*

Director's column, *from page 1*

Oregon Medicaid provides additional health care valued at more than $75 million to these same patients, who may also receive food stamps.

• For 3,900 Oregonians with developmental disabilities, Oregon Human Resources invests $130 million annually in local community programs, $61 million on Medicaid, plus food stamps for many.

• In health care, Oregon spends $500 million a year for an average of 275,000 Oregonians — about half are children — with local hospitals, physicians, nurses, dentists, clinics, psychotherapists, pharmacies and other local providers.

• Oregon Human Resources spends $130 million a year to help more than 53,000 seniors and people with disabilities live with dignity in their own homes or in home-like settings, as well as underwriting about 7,700 seniors in privately operated nursing homes.

Not long ago, SDSD Administrator Jim Wilson was visiting an adult foster home. An elderly woman whose care was being underwritten by the state's innovative community-based Medicaid-financed program remarked to him, "Were it not for the help I'm getting from Medicaid, I'd have to depend on the state welfare department!" It was another poignant example of the absence of recognition of vital investments Oregon makes for children, families and elderly persons.

• For nearly 4,000 abused and neglected children whose parents cannot care for them, about $50 million a year is provided to foster homes and community residential care.

> 'Each of us has to become a mobile, living billboard reminding friends and acquaintances of Human Resources' powerful privatizations, partnerships and pass-throughs.'

Another 1,000 children with significant treatment needs receive daily care from not-for-profit agencies while CSD works with private agencies to provide permanent homes for 400 children a year.

• Likewise, about 10,000 people with physical and mental disabilities benefit from Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation investments annually at the local level, typically through a combination of local nonprofit agencies.

• Alcohol and drug treatment services, delivered through local nonprofit agencies largely with public support, are repairing broken lives and preserving families. More than 52,000 Oregonians are served annually at a cost of $30 million.

• Even the mileage expense for more than 3-million miles that volunteers drove more than 20,000 clients last year was paid for by state Human Resources dollars — saving millions of dollars in the process.

Unlike public schools and police departments, which people immediately recognize as public entities, most of Oregon Human Resources' help to a family, child or adult is done confidentially in a hospital, home or private agency.

Each of us has to become a mobile, living billboard reminding friends and acquaintances of Human Resources' powerful privatizations, partnerships and pass-throughs. We need to help people understand these investments are bettering Oregon by investing in healthier, more productive citizens and greater public safety.