

Conservation deadline approaches for corps

Youth 16 to 18 years old can still apply for eight weeks of summer employment with the Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps.

Applications must be received by May 1 and are available online at <http://www.heartoforegon.org>.

Heart of Oregon Corps, a local nonprofit, is recruiting for the education and work program, which provides natural resource employment for conservation projects on the Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and the Crooked River National Grassland.

Nearly 100 applicants will be selected for this summer's program and earn \$9.25 an hour, working 36 hours a week. Projects include building trails, maintaining fences, piling hazardous fuels, restoring campgrounds, improving wildlife habitat and other types of conservation work.

Youth will work nine hours a day, Monday through Thursday, from June 22 to August 13, with crews based in Crescent, La Pine, Bend, Sisters, Redmond, Prineville, Madras, and new this year, Warm Springs.

For more information, contact COYCC Coordinator Yancy Wilkenfeldt at 541-633-7834 x24 or Forest Service YCC Coordinator Paul Smith at 541-416-6431.

Bill would make school vaccine rates available

By Sheila V Kumar
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — A month after a bill eliminating non-medical exemptions from taking vaccines died in committee, Oregon lawmakers could have another fight over the issue after a Senate committee heard testimony Thursday on a bill requiring all schools to make public the rate of students opting out of one or more immunizations.

Bill sponsor Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward has introduced legislation requiring schools to publish their vaccine immunization rates in easy-to-find places, such as on their website or at the main office. It also requires schools to notify parents of their exemption rates at the beginning of the school year and a month after exclusion day, the deadline for parents to prove their children have up-to-date vaccinations, she said.

Oregon's highest-in-the-nation rate of non-medical exemptions for kindergartners — seven percent — has state health officials worried some schools won't be able to achieve "herd immunity," which means enough people are vaccinated to prevent a disease from spreading. Herd immunity is especially beneficial for people who can't get vaccinated, such as the very young or patients with leukemia.

"It's important to give parents information so they can make an informed choice and

if they need to talk about special protections for their child at that school or considering transferring for health reasons," said Steiner Hayward, a Beaverton Democrat.

Opponents of the measure argued this bill would publicly shame parents who decided to opt out of some vaccines. Others, such as Holly Garland, a U.S. Navy veteran who testified against the bill, said the proposal was simply a previous bill Steiner Hayward had introduced, eliminating non-medical exemptions to vaccines, in a new disguise.

That proposal would have made Oregon the third state in the country allowing exemptions from immunizations only for medical reasons. Steiner Hayward has said she decided to no longer pursue the legislation because the conversation had largely shifted from discussion about the health and well-being of Oregon's children to a debate about the credibility of vaccine science.

"When are the medically fragile people going to come to my child's school? I mean, these people who have chemo, wouldn't they be home, wouldn't they be too weak?" Garland said.

Under this new bill, parents wishing to opt out of vaccinations would have to submit a document signed by a health care practitioner, such as a physician, in order to send their children to school.

2015 high school scholarships

Sisters High School (SHS) seniors have completed their local scholarship applications, which were due April 14.

The scholarships are gathered under the auspices of Sisters Graduate Resource Organization (Sisters GRO). Sisters GRO mission is, "To help Sisters High School graduates achieve their educational aspirations, inspiring them to give back by becoming more." Sisters GRO is a nonprofit, focused solely on the development of financial support for higher education and training for Sisters graduates. This year, 42 individual scholarships are being offered by generous private donors and philanthropic organizations in the Sisters community; last year \$122,965 was awarded. Although the final dollar count is determined after the award celebration, Sisters GRO expects the scholarship awards to increase this year.

Three new scholarships are being offered this year.

The Dominic Fouts Student-Athlete Scholarship (\$2,500 awarded to both a male and female athlete demonstrating a high level of academics); the PEO GH Sisters Scholarship (\$2,000 awarded to a female graduating senior); and Ponderosa Heating and Cooling Scholarship (\$1,000 awarded to a student attending OSU) join the list of local scholarships.

Community members are invited to contribute to one of many scholarships to further the goal of awarding every deserving Sisters High School graduate. Contact Betsy Leighty-Johnson at 541-549-4907 for more information.

To learn more about the local scholarships, visit www.sistersgro.com. Information on these scholarships had been shared with seniors via their high school email account and Google Drive application, and are also available in the ASPIRE office at the high school.

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"I contrasted this with my experience at COCC where I learned from incredible professors who really cared about my education and my overall success. I thought of several of my professors from COCC whom I still consider important mentors and good friends, and I thanked my lucky stars that I stayed in Bend where I had so many opportunities to find my way with the support of so many incredible people."

ERIN ZURFLU, M.D., ANESTHESIOLOGY RESIDENT PGY-3 (Past Graduate Year 3 of training), University of Colorado

"I learned from incredible professors who really cared about my education and my overall success."
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