

# Heart of Oregon mentors find satisfaction in giving back

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

An educator for 45 years, Greg Pozovich feels right at home mentoring teens who are part of the Heart of Oregon YouthBuild program. Over the past two years, he has done one-on-one mentoring with four boys, as well as group mentoring.

After serving as a mentor for eight years in the ASPIRE program at the high school, Pozovich was looking for a new challenge in a different environment.

"I had a rough growing up in Chicago. If not for the help I received, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. Mentoring is my way of giving back," Pozovich shared.

**"I had a rough growing up in Chicago. If not for the help I received, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. — Greg Pozovich"**

His interactions with his mentees involve many different activities. For one young man, who wants to be an architect, Pozovich arranged an opportunity for him to shadow an architect to see first-hand what is involved.

Pozovich also helps out during class time and accompanies the students during their lunchtime walks. He has driven a boy to Redmond to take his GED test. He says he

does a lot of listening when students need to talk.

"I have the ability to listen without judging or giving advice," Pozovich said.

He estimates he spends five to 10 hours a week in the program, although mentors are only required to meet at least four hours a month minimum with their mentee. They can also sign up for an AmeriCorps mentoring which is 26 hours a month, which works out to one day a week.

"Our program is a group mentoring model for the first three months," explained Amanda Jamison, leadership coordinator for the program. "Mentors interact with students at our Cloverdale school. Once they are matched after the first three months, they can meet outside of program."

Not all students get a one-on-one mentor, but all students benefit from group mentoring.

Pozovich is still in touch with one of his YouthBuild graduates.

"We have coffee about once a month and I am there for him both by phone and in person," he said.

Pozovich said that for students considered at-risk, the YouthBuild program is "one of the best programs I've seen."

Students are spread out in different locations depending on what phase of the program they are in. They start out at the Cloverdale School. Some are in the annex in Redmond learning construction, and some are on a building site constructing homes.

Some of the students will be working on the new

Habitat for Humanity homes in Village Meadows in Sisters. They help out every year putting up the tents and moving easels for the Country Fair at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, and erecting the main tent for the Sisters Folk Festival.

Pozovich would recommend being a mentor with Heart of Oregon Corps "if a person understands going in that these kids are different."

He enjoys his mentoring. "I make a difference in their lives."

Jamison pointed out that mentors receive extensive training when working with their population of young people. They receive about four hours of training on boundaries, trauma, YouthBuild programming, mandatory reporting, and screening.

"We have monthly check-ins with mentors at our mentor coffee clatter. At this time, we discuss what's going well and what could be improved. We also do more trainings, if needed, at our monthly meetings," Jamison added.

Mentors help out with service projects in the community, tutoring in the classroom, goal-setting with students, and participating on the construction jobsite if they want to.

"Our mentors become an integral component in the success of our youth, as well as ongoing support beyond the program in order to ensure their continued educational, personal, and professional success," Jamison said.

Signe Johnson, a retired training and organizational development manager with



PHOTO PROVIDED

Signe Johnson is a mentor with Heart of Oregon.

the State of Oregon, was drawn to the Heart of Oregon program because it has an excellent success rate.

"I wanted to make a volunteer contribution that would directly impact people's lives," she explained.

**"I get a tremendous sense of fulfillment from seeing the students grow and progress. — Signe Johnson"**

Johnson brings patience, understanding, and a passion to change lives to her group and individual mentoring.

"I am relationship-based, which allows me to mentor at a personal level with the students. I have strong skills in the areas of interpersonal communication,

role modeling, and teaching by example," she said when asked what she brings to being a mentor.

Johnson spends at least one day a week at the school, guiding, coaching, and tutoring students. She helps them with GED prep, writing and composition, and things like studying for their driver's license test.

"I get a tremendous sense of fulfillment from seeing the students grow and progress. I love being part of the Heart of Oregon Corps YouthBuild program. It is very much like a family."

Johnson concluded by saying, "The most important thing that I have learned from working with the students is that patience and persistence really pays off."

For more information about being a mentor with Heart of Oregon Corps, contact Amanda Jamison at 541-526-1380 or amanda.jamison@heartoforegon.org.

**Quality Truck-mounted CARPET CLEANING**  
Quality Cleaning 16 years in Sisters!  
Reasonable Prices — Credit Cards Accepted —  
**ENVIROTECH**  
541-771-5048  
Licensed • Bonded • Insured • CCB#181062  
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL

  
Metamorphosis  
hair | massage | nails  
facials | makeup  
541-549-1784  
161-C N. Elm St.  
**Offering Aveda™ Skin & Body Care!**  
**AVEDA**  
the art and science of pure flower and plant essences

**THE GALLERY RESTAURANT AND BAR**

**Back by popular demand!** **\$6 Burger Special!**

**1/4 lb. Burger & Fries!**  
Monday thru Thursday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**SOUP OF THE DAY**  
January 11th - January 17th

Wed .....	Mexican Chicken	Sat.....	Navy Bean with Ham
Thurs .....	Beef Stew	Sun .....	Minestrone
Fri ..	Clam Chowder & Vegetable	Mon.....	Split Pea with Ham
		Tues .....	Chicken Noodle

Orders to go welcome  
Breakfast & lunch 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Nightly dining until 10 p.m. (21 & over)  
171 W. Cascade Ave., Sisters | 541-549-2631

Connect with us for great specials!

**\$25 OFF\*** YOUR FIRST SERVICE OR REPAIR

NOW IS THE TIME to see why **Ponderosa Heating & Cooling** is Central Oregon's premier company for residential heating and cooling equipment.

100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEED!  
\*First-time customers only. Not valid with previously contracted work, other offers, specials or coupons.

541.549.1605  
www.ponderosah heating.com  
**PONDEROSA HEATING & COOLING**

**WE RESPOND WHEN YOU CALL US.**

YOUR LOCAL SISTERS CONTRACTOR FOR:  
EARTHWORK - UTILITIES - GRADING  
HARDSCAPE - ROCK WALLS  
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

**BANR ENTERPRISES, LLC**  
541-549-6977  
WWW.BANR.NET  
SCOTT@BANR.NET  
CCB#165122

**BANR**