

# Appeal Tribune

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## Woodburn program plants seed for STEM teachers

**Natalie Pate**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A masters degree program based in Woodburn is investing in the next generation of science, technology, engineering and math teachers, placing an emphasis on culturally inclusive practices and access to these subjects in rural areas.

Since its inception in 2011, Pacific University's STEM Teacher Pathways program has produced more than 80 high school math and science teachers and boasts a 95% employment success rate for graduates.

The program recently received a \$1.4 million grant from the National Science Foundation, part of its Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, to support 60 additional scholars over the next five years.

Through the grant, Pacific is able to award each can-

didate up to \$25,000 to lower the cost of becoming a teacher. Combined with other scholarship programs available, officials said a current community college student could receive more than \$32,000 during their college years to become a STEM teacher.

Kevin Carr, program director and professor of education, said this not only sets the teaching candidates up for success, but it allows students in local K-12 schools to work with outstanding teachers and, subsequently, opens the door to high-paying STEM careers in their futures.

### Changes in teaching STEM subjects

In the past few decades, there's been a growing push for students to be well versed in STEM subjects.

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**Nicole Montero works with a rising seventh grader in a climate change class at Washington Elementary School in Woodburn on July 24.**

ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

## Beloved Cheesecakes



**Jen Jacobson asked for help from friends on Kickstarter and raised enough money to open Beloved Cheesecakes in Silverton** COURTESY OF JEN JACOBSON

### New gourmet cheesecake shop downtown just needed a kick to get started

**Christena Brooks**  
Special to Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Love is practically in the air at Silverton's new gourmet cheesecake shop downtown. It's in the name, on the walls, and probably mixed into the handcrafted desserts at the counter.

It's definitely in the \$27,633 donated online by the friends, family and supporters of owner Jen Jacobson, whose new shop – Beloved Cheesecakes – is her way of supporting her family and loving her commu-

nity. "It's amazing how many people believe in me – and cheesecake," she said.

Jacobson, 42, is the mom of three boys, a survivor of domestic abuse, and a new college graduate. With a 2018 Portland State University diploma in-hand, she expected to be working a parole and probation or counseling job by now.

But it's her side business, baking cheesecakes, that grew into the career she never saw coming. Now she hopes to blend her social services training into her interactions with customers and employees, because "everyone deserves to be loved," she said.

She must've already been loving others well, for they came from all corners of the country to support her new business in an online fundraising campaign

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## Whitewater Trail reopens after 2-year closure

**Zach Urness**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

One of Oregon's most famous wilderness hiking trails will reopen for the first time since a wildfire severely burned the pathway's old-growth forest about two years ago in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness.

The Whitewater Trail, which begins east of Detroit and provides the easiest access to the lakes, meadows and backcountry campsites of Jefferson Park, officially reopened on Thursday (Aug. 1).

The reopening came about a month earlier than ex-

pected. "We are grateful for all the work it took to open it earlier," Detroit District Ranger Dave Halemeier said. "Crews have worked hard to reduce hazards within the area. We remind visitors that hazards still exist, including along the margin of the road."

The trail was closed by the 2017 Whitewater Fire, which ignited July 23, 2017 and burned 11,500 acres, cost \$39 million to fight and marred tourism in the Santiam Canyon during 2017's total solar eclipse.

The fire burned hottest around Whitewater Trail.

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## DHS seeks to hire 300 to improve welfare of children

**Whitney Woodworth**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

In a massive hiring push, the Oregon Department of Human Services posted more than 300 child welfare, protective services and hotline screening jobs this week.

The hiring initiative was driven by Gov. Kate Brown's executive order establishing an oversight board to address the "crisis in Oregon's child welfare system." The Oregon Legislature approved funding for these new positions during the 2019 legislative session

"In order to ensure our children are safe, we need more caring and dedicated people on the ground working with families," Gov. Brown said in a statement. "Hiring more child welfare workers is one important step to right-sizing the system so that it better serves our most vulnerable children and families."

Brown established the oversight board this year, citing the significantly understaffed child welfare program, the more than 80 children sent to out-of-state foster care facilities and the severe shortage in foster homes.

Officials hope a hiring wave will improve safety and build capacity in the child welfare system.

"Oregonians with a passion for helping children and families thrive can make an enormous impact through state service at the Department of Human Services," Brown said.

DHS spokeswoman Christine Stone said the more than 300 jobs for 90 positions are careers jobs ranging from beginner-level to manager.

She said they offer excellent benefits, a diverse workplace and "opportunities to make a positive impact on the lives of children in need of support."

Some of the jobs available across the state include:

■ **Hotline Screener** are considered the first responders to reports of safety concerns. Screeners determine appropriate levels of response and interventions including protective and family support. The hotline receives more than 600 calls during an average 24-hour period. According to job postings, the position requires a Bachelor's or higher-level degree, social work experience and passing a background check. A posting for a Portland position as screener lists a salary range of \$3,664 to \$5,339 per month.

■ **Child Protective Service caseworkers** investigate reports of safety concerns. This includes conducting child safety assessments of alleged child abuse or neglect, evaluating whether a child has been or is currently at risk of being harmed and, if needed, determining appropriate services to ensure child safety, according to DHS officials. An online posting also lists a salary range of \$3,664 to \$5,339 per month. Applicants need a Bachelor's degree and social work experience in order to qualify for the job, but those will an Associate's degree can apply for an underfill position as a non-investigatory social service specialist.

■ **Certifiers** work to identify and certify relative caregivers, foster parents and adoptive parents across all ethnic and cultural groups. They conduct home studies, interview and evaluate the appropriateness of substitute care placements when children

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**Oregon Department of Human Services building.** STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

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