

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

Oregon Coast Community College had a very busy 2003. In addition to the OCCC Foundation and the college's community partners, the college is indebted to community members at large who have stepped forward to assist Oregon Coast in the past year as well as to the local citizenry. During the past year, your community college:

- Started the new nationally-recognized Aquarium Science Program
- Increased student enrollment in college transfer and professional/technical classes
- Offered a growing number of pre-Allied Health classes
- Pursued (and received) several significant federal, state, regional, local, and private grants to fund programs
- Provided high school students an opportunity to receive college credits
- Trained local middle and high school teachers in aquarium science
- Received grant-funded interactive video equipment for instruction between Newport and Lincoln City
- Maintained significant partnerships with Oregon State University, Hatfield Marine Science Center, Samaritan Health Services, Oregon Coast Aquarium, Georgia Pacific, Siletz Tribe, Oregon Employment Department, and others
- Provided useful training for local businesses through its Small Business Development Center
- Developed and delivered a college budget that featured a balanced

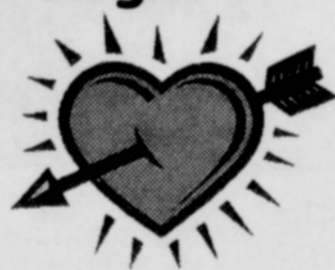
reduction in resources without disproportionately affecting students

- Survived drastic reductions in state funding
- Re-located the college's South Center at a more economical rental rate and in a more appropriate educational environment than in its former location
- Remodeled the college's North Center in the Taft area to accommodate more students
- Facilitated the growth of the college's foundation, especially in the areas of endowments and major gifts for scholarships, equipment, and capital improvements

In closing, I appreciate the personal sacrifices made by OCCC faculty, staff, and students during these challenging times and ask the community to approach this upcoming year with renewed purpose and enthusiasm for a brighter future through education. We all have much to do. Thank you for your continued support of OCCC!

Pat O'Connor, president  
Oregon Coast Community College  
Lincoln County

**Don't forget**



**Valentine's Day!**

## Siletz News Letters Policy

*Siletz News*, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Siletz News* and other tribal issues.

All letters **must include** the author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. *Siletz News* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain profane language, libelous statements, personal attacks, or unsubstantiated statements.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Siletz News*, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

Please note: The general manager of the Siletz Tribe is the editor-in-chief of *Siletz News*.

**Editor-in-Chief: Brenda Bremner**  
**Editor: Diane Rodriguez**  
**Assistant: Natasha Kavanaugh**

To the editor:

I recently received a letter from a member of another Oregon tribe who read my previous letter in our tribal newspaper. His words touched my heart.

He thanked me for sharing the things I've done to develop an awareness of the conditions facing tribal members who are in correctional institutions.

He also shared his feelings and what he believed was happening ... "If the tribal governments were to step up programs for incarcerated Native Americans, it would benefit all the tribal communities. Assistance in the transitional period is definitely needed." He mentioned that "approaching prison officials as well as tribal officials would prove beneficial, but that securing funding for the programs is the biggest obstacle."

He said, "As a Native American prisoner, my biggest fears about my release are - Where will I stay? What about a job? Alcohol and drug counseling? For me to be successful, I do need assistance and support from my family and community. Lots of it. It's like there are plenty of ideas and solutions, however, only a few answers and good results. I came to prison pretty much with a broken spirit, sad and depressed. I've learned about traditional ceremonies that have strengthened my heart, mind, and spirit, but I fear my release back into a fairly non-supportive community."

So here I am again, asking you - tribal members and officials - would you take the time to share in our tribal newspaper the following information

(even a paragraph detailing your opinion would be helpful) on what's being done to bridge the gap that exists.

What programming do we have in place to help our members and their families? What kind of networking is being done to utilize already existing programming? What portion of casino profits is allocated to this **need**? Where's the question in the survey instrument that identifies the need, so we can create the reason to write a grant to develop a program to help modify the behaviors that led our tribal members to be in this position?

Thank you for your time and awareness of this important issue. If you have suggestions or knowledge of how our tribe is working to find solutions, please share with the membership. No more secrets. If it doesn't work, be honest about it so we can focus on possible resources or solutions. That's how we can rectify past mistakes!

In closing, I'd like to urge you to consider voting for Laurie Brown-Godfrey in our upcoming tribal election. I believe she's an individual who's committed to helping tribal members address obstacles and fulfill their right to become self-sufficient. She'll be honest and direct and will listen with an open mind.

Respectfully,  
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**Deadline for the March issue is Feb. 10.** Submission of articles and photos is encouraged. Please read the Passages Policy on page 24 when submitting items for Passages.



Member of the Native American  
Journalists Association

*Siletz News* is free to enrolled Siletz Tribal members. For all others, a \$12 annual subscription fee applies. Please make checks payable to CTSI and mail to *Siletz News*.

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**Change of address:** Tribal members - call the Enrollment Department at 541-444-8258 or 1-800-922-1399, ext. 258; all others - call the newsletter office.