

**INCARCERATION, from page 4**

over his life.

Part of his sentence included a two-hour tour of Oregon State Penitentiary, which he said had a big impact.

"It gave me a look of where I would be going," he said, "and where I didn't want to go. It helped me a lot."

Now, he said, "he's on a track of no return." He's even become a mentor to a foster child who was adopted by one of his friends.

"You can't be a mentor if you're a criminal," he said.

We also checked back in with Carole Hinojosa, who was featured in our initial coverage of the Justice Reinvestment Program.

She grew up in a drug house in deep Southeast Portland in the 1970s, where, she said, she began her long affair with alcohol and methamphetamine when she was just 8 years old. She had done time in prison when she was 28, and when she entered the program she was looking at a 46 to 50-month prison sentence for assaulting someone when she was drunk and high on meth.

She excitedly told us she's still "doing really great." This month she finished her first term at Portland Community College with a 3.7 GPA, she said.

She's studying to be an alcohol and drug counselor.

"Not a lot of counselors that have a background like mine," she said. "People with a lot of childhood trauma need someone who relates to childhood trauma."

After her first 120 days of intensive probation she moved into recovery housing, and later this month, she'll be moving out on her own.

"I went from living under a bridge for 10 years to having my own apartment," she said. "They gave me the opportunity to change my life."

Each of Oregon's 36 counties receives justice reinvestment grant money, doled out by the state's Criminal Justice Commission based on a formula that takes the county's size and population into

account. In the last biennium, Multnomah County received the largest chunk, with a grant of \$8.1 million.

Multnomah County leads the state in cumulative reduction of prison sentences, but a handful of counties have actually increased the number of people they send to prison for drug and property crimes, despite receiving money to do the opposite.

With budget cuts to the program looming, those counties could potentially lose their justice reinvestment funding, said Mike Schmidt, director of the Criminal Justice Commission.

Leading up to the current biennium, proponents of the Justice Reinvestment Program argued it needed an investment of \$58 million.

The Legislature gave it much less, with a budget of \$38 million.

That investment helped the state avoid roughly \$52 million to \$56 million in corrections costs, on top of what it would have cost to open a new prison, Schmidt said.

But that "avoided cost" is not the same thing as "cost savings," he said, as corrections costs go up each year.

"To actually achieve savings," he said, "we would need to close a prison."

With Oregon facing significant budgetary shortfalls in the upcoming budget cycle, Gov. Kate Brown is proposing an allocation to the program of just \$32 million for the next two years.

Schmidt said the fact that she didn't cut the program completely, given the circumstances, shows her support. But, with less money to go around, he said, "we're taking a hard look at counties that have not decreased usage of prisons for property and drug crimes."

Those counties include Washington, Clatsop, Linn, Jackson and Josephine.

And in Josephine County, the likely

closure of its jail in 2017 due to dire financial straits could mean further increases in its contribution of inmates to state prisons.

Schmidt said that without a jail to house people awaiting sentencing, they could rack up more crimes that would lead to stiffer and lengthier prison sentences.

Additionally, probation programs offered in the community lack the teeth they need for compliance when there is no jail to send people to for probation violation sanctions.

The governor's proposed closure of the psychiatric hospital in Junction City could also mean an uptick in incarceration.

"Anytime you lose mental health capacity," Schmidt said, "it affects the Department of Corrections."

Scott Taylor is the director of Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, which oversees the justice reinvestment process locally. He said the program simply "can't take a hit" financially.

"We'll be talking to our legislators over the next six months," he said.

Conversations will be about convincing legislators that it doesn't make sense to make cuts to a program that manages a prison-destined population for one-third of the cost to the state, he said.

While the county's initial report on the program found that it is keeping people out of prison without increasing recidivism within the community, there were some negative outcomes as well.

In January, a damning report by the MacArthur Foundation revealed widespread disparity at every level of the Multnomah County justice system.

The period studied for the county's report on its Justice Reinvestment Program

ended about six months earlier, unsurprisingly exhibiting the same disparities.

While fewer participants in the Justice Reinvestment Program were sent to prison across all racial and ethnic groups, white and Asian offenders were less likely than black and Hispanic offenders to receive a prison sentence after the assessment phase.

Whites and Asians were also more likely to opt in to the program, although after the program became established, the number of people opting out dropped dramatically.

Schmidt said he doesn't know how this compares to other Oregon counties because detailed data on racial and ethnic disparities hasn't been analyzed at this level elsewhere in the state.

"At least they had the guts to look in the mirror," he said. "You have to give them credit for asking tough questions."

The report's authors indicated "more evidence is needed to determine what is driving the disparity in prison sentences."

Borg said he believes the disparity is driven by implicit bias.

"The MacArthur report came out in January - no one knew how bad it was," he said.

Another outcome of the program was the increased use of Multnomah County jails. With difficulties in coordinating multiple schedules for risk assessments and sentencing conferences, inmates were held in jail longer leading up to sentencing.

Additionally, some participants who received sentences served time in jail rather than prison because the duration had been shortened to less than a year.

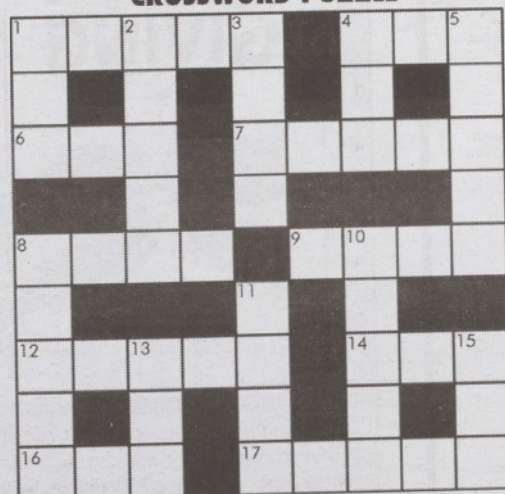
When the program began, the Legislature granted county jails an extra \$5 million to cover this uptick in jail use, but there was no money set aside for that cost in the second biennium, said Caroline Wong, a deputy district attorney who oversees the Justice Reinvestment program for the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office.

"We know that this is an issue, but we don't know how much," she said.

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**ACROSS**

1. Fermentation agent
4. Have a bite
6. Tree fluid
7. Cake ingredient
8. Three-ply cookie
9. Hook's henchman
12. Ground grain
14. The gift of \_\_\_
16. Tease or ridicule
17. Francis or Kevin?

**DOWN**

1. Affirmative!
2. Type of fritter
3. Analyze or try
4. Cake ingredient
5. Tres
8. Deal
10. Potter's practice
11. Nosh!
13. Late rapper; abbr.
15. \_\_\_ appétit

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