

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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ONE DOLLAR

## State flags concerns at mental health agency

Review triggered by incident at respite center

By **DERRICK DePLEGGE**  
*The Daily Astorian*

The Oregon Health Authority conducted a broad review of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare after

the wrongful arrest of a patient at the crisis respite center, identifying concerns over how the agency's executive director was placed on administrative leave and whether clinical documentation improved after a state visit last year.

The health authority determined a review of the agency's

mental health and substance abuse treatment was necessary after what the state described as "a serious incident" at the respite center in Warrenton in December.

Video footage of a fight between two patients one evening showed the wrong patient was arrested by Warrenton police. The error was discovered within a

few hours, but detonated a leadership clash that exposed several other management and oversight problems.

Debbie Morrow, the board chairwoman, placed Amy Baker, the executive director, on administrative leave in late December pending an internal investigation of Baker's on-call responsibilities

at the respite center. The board cleared Baker after the investigation, and she returned to work in January, but Morrow and another board member resigned in protest.

The health authority, in its review, received reports that Morrow handled Baker's leave in "an

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## A PANTRY FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS



Clinton Reed looks over his senior project, a food pantry located at the Capt. Robert Gray School building in Astoria.

Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

### The idea is part of a senior project

By **EDWARD STRATTON**  
*The Daily Astorian*

In a suite of classrooms on the second floor of the Capt. Robert Gray School building, Astoria High School students study at their own pace toward graduation and the GED exam in the Gray Alternative High School, often in relative anonymity from their peers.

But the Alameda Avenue campus also hosts a free pantry started by seniors to provide food and toiletries for fellow students in need.

"The idea was just collecting pop cans and taking those proceeds to the store and just purchasing a few things and padding the pantry," said Alexa Haller, the head teacher at Gray School.

The pantry was started last year as a capstone project for senior Anthony Espericueta, with help from Gray School counselor Rachel Rollins, Haller said. This year, senior Clinton Reed took the pantry on as his cap-



Shelves are stocked with food and other supplies at Clinton Reed's senior project food pantry.

stone project.

The pantry carries nonperishable food and toiletries. "Any kids that need it can come up here," Reed said.

Haller has seen current and former students, along with their families, come in and fill up backpacks.

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### HOW TO HELP

For more information on donating to the Capt. Robert Gray School food pantry, contact Alexa Haller at 503-325-4197, ahaller@astoria.k12.or.us or stop in at 785 Alameda Ave.

## Woman sentenced for identity theft

Schehl gets 10 years in prison

By **BRENNA VISSER**  
*The Daily Astorian*

A North Coast woman was sentenced Friday to 10 years in prison for racketeering and more than 20 identity-theft related charges.

Desirai Skye Schehl, 28, was charged with 145 counts of identity and mail theft, first-degree forgery and other crimes earlier this year. More than 130 Clatsop County people and businesses were listed as victims.

As part of a deal with prosecutors, Schehl pleaded guilty or no contest to 13 counts of identity theft, three counts of first-degree forgery, six counts of mail theft and one felony count of racketeering.

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Desirai Skye Schehl

## College tackles maritime funding

Several ideas under consideration

By **EDWARD STRATTON**  
*The Daily Astorian*

Clatsop Community College is hoping a patchwork of financing will help reach \$22 million for a new maritime sciences hall at its Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station campus.

The college's maritime science program is one of the only in the region, training people to work in an industry with an aging workforce.

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## North Coast residents discover Cuba

Astoria man organizes trips

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**  
*The Daily Astorian*

The empty fields of Cuba's farmland stood out. Celia Tippet can't stop thinking about it: Acres of a beautiful countryside not being worked and old orchards, neglected, waiting to bloom again.

Once known for its sugar cane production, Cuba's farming is in flux, with activities restricted and food priorities controlled by the gov-



ernment. There has been a recent push toward small-scale organic farming, but the country imports most of its food — something Tippet struggled to connect to the open land she saw around her.

Tippet, an Astoria resident, was one of 10 people from the North Coast who visited the island country as a group in January.

President Barack Obama

re-established diplomatic ties, ushering in a new wave of American visitors to Cuba. When the Trump administration tightened an economic embargo against the country in 2017, it made it more difficult for Americans to access hotels and businesses tied to the Cuban military, but visitors still went.

The group Tippet traveled with — all friends — was led by Manuel Suarez, a retired teacher who lives in Astoria. Suarez is born in Cuba and spent the first few years of his life there until his family fled after the revolution.

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Manuel Suarez

North Coast residents Sandra Baker, Gil Gramson, Ann Gramson, Manuel Suarez, Jim Holen and Celia Tippet pose with a Cuban school administrator and a student during a recent trip to Cuba.

