



# EAST OREGONIAN

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## Volunteers, donors keep nonprofits going



Left to right: Tammy Richter began volunteering in the first season at the Pendleton Warming Station in 2011. Chris Hull is a retired special education instructor, who now volunteers with the ASPIRE program at Hermiston High School. Susan Badger Doyle has been volunteering at the Umatilla County Historical Society in Pendleton since 2011. Tina Fox began working as a CASA volunteer in 2016 after a health issue prevented her from working full time.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

# Season of serving

## Early signs point to better local giving

### Volunteers provide the fuel that powers nonprofits

East Oregonian

It takes hundreds of thousands of hours to keep non-profits and charitable programs operating in Eastern Oregon. While some of those hours are filled by paid directors and staff, a host of people volunteer their time to achieve each group's mission. We've highlighted four people who have dedicated their time to making these organizations better.

#### Tammy Richter | Pendleton Warming Station

When the Pendleton Warming Station closes for the season, volunteer Tammy Richter usually takes a sigh of relief.

It's demanding work with long hours that sees them deal with a homeless population that's often in the midst of struggles with addiction or mental illness.

But Richter, the warming station's kitchen director, said she can't help but feel a little sad when she doesn't get the chance to serve food to people looking for a warm bed and a hot meal.

She started volunteering during the warming station's first season in 2011 not knowing what to expect, but she quickly became hooked on the work.

"Once you start doing this, you can dread doing this and regret coming in, or you can put your whole heart into it," she said.

Richter, 56, has volunteered at a homeless breakfast feed and at the Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter, but she's spent the past few years focusing on the warming station, especially after her husband died in 2013.

Richter volunteers at the station four times per week, cooking dinner for the facility's residents during a shift that usually spans about three hours. She runs a daycare service during the day, and she often drives directly to the warming station

See VOLUNTEERS/12A

By PHIL WRIGHT

East Oregonian

Leaders of local charities expressed optimism about an uptick in giving this year but remain cautious after years of downturns.

Kricket Nicholson, executive director of the United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties, has wrapped up her annual pitches for contributions. She said a few more people were present than in the past couple of years. She also said she noticed folks who usually gave \$10 bumped that to \$20 or even \$50.

"This year seems a little up, a little more positive feeling," she said.

The United Way of Umatilla and Mor-

See GIVING/12A

### Happy Thanksgiving

Due to the postal holiday, there will be no newspaper delivered on Thursday.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton High School senior Keyshawn Jackson was awarded a \$16,000 college scholarship from Stand for Children Oregon.

### PENDLETON

## How a PHS senior 'Beat the Odds'

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Keyshawn Jackson's friends like to joke that he's getting the star treatment.

The Pendleton High School senior's compelling life story has led to a polished promotional video, sudden phone calls that cause him to excuse himself from company, and a special award that only a select few receive.

Keyshawn didn't set out for this kind of treatment, but a personal essay helped him secure a \$16,000 "Beat the Odds" scholarship from Stand for Children Oregon, a nonprofit education advocacy organization.

The scholarship wasn't

on Keyshawn's radar until ASPIRE coordinator Jill Gregg informed him about it.

Gregg said it was a tricky application because it was due at the beginning of the school year, meaning she needed to approach high school juniors about starting to work on it.

The title of Beat the Odds scholarship is meant to be self-explanatory. According to Dan Lindner, Stand for Children Oregon's marketing and communications director, the scholarship is awarded to students who have overcome obstacles like broken homes, gang violence and other life-altering challenges to succeed.

Gregg said she knew Keyshawn was from a single-par-

ent home and a low-income family, but she didn't know the depth of Keyshawn's past experiences. Like many of his classmates, Keyshawn didn't openly broadcast his home life for everyone to see.

Keyshawn remembers not wanting to write the personal essay, but under Gregg's encouragement, he followed through.

He wrote about his early childhood, which was spent bouncing around from an encyclopedia's worth of Northwest cities: Bend, Arlington, Stanfield and White Salmon, Washington.

He and his family were able

See ODDS/12A

