

## FCC staff visit KWSO, teleco



KWSO staff with Blackwell (left) and Flannery (fourth from right).

Staff from the Federal Communications Commission Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Office of Native Affairs and Policy, visited Warm Springs last week.

FCC staff members Geoffrey Blackwell and Irene Flannery were in the region for the National Congress of American Indian conference in Portland.

After the conference they made stops at KWSO radio and the new central office for the Warm Springs Telecommunications Company.

The FCC Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP) was established just over a year ago.

The office was created to promote the deployment and

adoption of communications services and technology throughout tribal lands and Native communities.

They also work to ensure robust government-to-government consultation with federally-recognized tribal governments and increased coordination with Native Organizations.

The creation of ONAP was one of the recommendations of the National Broadband Plan.

One of the goals in the National Broadband Plan is to increase access to broadband in Indian Country.

There are 4.1 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States and more than 565 federally recognized tribes with their own unique political and tribal structures.

There is minimal access to

broadband in Indian Country. The best evidence indicates that the broadband deployment rate on tribal lands is less than 10 percent, and anecdotal evidence suggests that actual usage rates may be as low as 5 to 8 percent, compared to 65 percent nationwide.

The FCC regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

It was established by the Communications Act of 1934 and operates as an independent U.S. government agency overseen by Congress.

— by Sue Matters

## Grant helps VOCS offer transitional housing assistance

The Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services program has received a 3-year transitional housing assistance project grant. The grant provides funding through September of 2013.

Federal funding is from the Department of Justice's Office of Violence against Women. Under this grant, VOCS staff coordinates three project activities:

Transitional housing, child care, and transportation assistance. The services are available to eligible program participants; or qualified victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence.

Approved transitional housing assistance expenses will be paid by:

1. Issuing vouchers,
2. Working with vendors who will bill the tribal Finance Department or accept purchase orders, or
3. Providing direct payment by check from the tribes to the vendor (such as a renting agency, landlord or child care provider) but not directly to the program participant.

Transportation services will either be facilitated through prepaid Shell brand gas cards or transportation provided directly by a VOCS advocate.

This allows clients access to employment, job interviews, education, support services and other necessary activities.

The Transitional Housing Assistance project (THAP) will work with eligible victims to provide housing through the use of rentals located on the reservation or adjacent communities, primarily Madras/Jefferson County and Deschutes Counties. Victims apply for funds through VOCS.

The target population will be victims (tribal and community) of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence, who either reside on the reservation, or are fleeing abusive relationships or dangerous situations in other jurisdictions and are returning to their homes on the reservation.

Warm Springs THAP will also take referrals from our collaborators and outside agencies (tribal and non-tribal); and will continue to provide victim services to Native American/Alaskan Natives who are referred from other off-reservation victim assistance programs on local, stand national levels.

### 6-18 months assistance

THAP will provide eligible participants with rental, child care and transportation assistance on a monthly basis as needed.

Participants maintain their transitional housing for at least 6 months up to 18 months of assistance depending upon the need.

Child care and transportation assistance will assist with costs incurred by a participant while establishing an independent life, achieving self-sufficiency, and rebuilding their self-esteem.

For child care support, the client will identify a local child care provider who is not a family member, or utilize Warm Springs Early Childhood Education Day Care to provide child care services during periods when they are at work, attending educational classes to earn a diploma or degree, or participating in other voluntary support services (counseling, therapy sessions, etc.).

VOCS will make payments directly to the child care provider for an amount not to exceed \$25 per week per child.

Transportation assistance will be for the client to maintain access to job sites, educational facilities, job interviews, counseling services, grocery shopping, etc.

Gas card usage is determined where the employment site or educational facility is located. If the site is located within 30 miles of their residence, they will receive up to \$50 a month; and if the site is located more than 30 miles from their residence, they will receive up to \$100 a month.

Eligibility for these services will be based on the same criteria for determining the transitional housing assistance and will be based on:

1. The financial need of the victim who if fleeing abuse, and
2. The commitment of the victim to make a significant life change.

### Process explained

The THAP process is as follows:

1. Initial intake process with the victim that includes a needs assessment, importance of victim client confidentiality, safety planning, signing the release of information.
2. Potential program participant will be interviewed by the VOCS advocate supervisor and

a THAP advocate to determine their level of commitment to maintaining safety by ending an abusive relationship.

Staff members will discuss the requirements of the program, evaluate whether the prospective participant is eligible for THAP.

If approved, the financial needs assessment completed by the applicant will be reviewed and verified by the VOCS Advocate Supervisor.

THAP will only provide housing assistance to victims and their dependents that are fleeing an abusive relationship and are unable to financially acquire housing on their own.

Family size, estimated household expenses, special family needs, the client's own resources, and contributions from family and friends will be evaluated. If the needs assessment indicates that the applicant will be unable to secure housing without assistance, the advocate supervisor will approve the THAP application.

Eligibility for child care assistance will then be determined. These services will be available for at least 3 months after the client acquires a permanent residence.

After the assessments the THAP Advocate will have the participant enter into the THAP agreement.

The agreement will provide the participant with information on time limits for receiving housing assistance, maintaining personal safety and program expectations. Also included will be identified reporting requirements that document the participant's efforts to acquire permanent housing, maintain employment or pursue education.

The agreement will specify resources and support services available from the VOCS program including the explanation of the monthly progress reviews to be conducted by VOCS staff.

For further assistance or information, contact VOCS Advocate Supervisor Dorothy Kalama, or one of the two THAP Advocates, Charlene Smith and Janell Wallulatum, 541-553-2293, or stop by at VOCS at 1132 Paiute St.

(Note: This article is from Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services.)

## 3 separate incidents result in guilty pleas

Three defendants pleaded guilty last week in federal court to separate felony assaults that occurred on the Warm Springs Reservation.

Monty Tewee, 21, of Warm Springs, pleaded guilty to one count of assault resulting in serious bodily injury.

Tewee assaulted his five-week old baby by squeezing the baby, which caused the baby to suffer multiple broken ribs, a lacerated liver, and extreme physical pain, according to the prosecutor.

The extent of the baby's injuries required him to be airlifted from St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, and then to Oregon Health and Science University in Portland for specialized trauma care. Sentencing in this case is scheduled for January 23.

### Knifing incident

Also this month, Krystal Lee Finnley, 20, of Warm Springs, pleaded guilty to one count of assault with a dan-

gerous weapon with intent to do bodily harm.

Finnley was at her residence on the reservation when she heard that a certain person was at a nearby residence, according to the prosecutor.

Finnley then went to that residence to confront the person about a past dispute. After a short conversation, Finnley took a knife from her pocket and sliced the throat of the person she confronted.

The person almost died, as the wound from Finnley's knife came extremely close to the victim's carotid artery. The victim survived after receiving 11 staples in his neck to close the wound. Sentencing in this case is scheduled for January 17.

### Drunk driving wreck

Also in November, Doriann L. Miller (also known as Doriann L. Allen), 23, of Warm Springs pleaded guilty to one count of assault resulting in serious bodily injury.

Miller was driving her car in

Warm Springs when a Warm Springs Police officer saw her commit a traffic violation, according to the prosecutor.

The officer activated the overhead lights on his police vehicle to pull over Miller's car. Instead of stopping, Miller attempted to elude the police at a high rate of speed.

Miller's passengers asked Miller to stop the car, but she refused. Miller eventually lost control of her vehicle and crashed. As a result of the crash, one of the passengers in Miller's car was paralyzed and can no longer use her legs. An analysis of a blood draw from Miller after the crash revealed that her blood alcohol content was 0.187, far in excess of the legal limit.

Sentencing is scheduled for February 6, 2012. These cases were investigated by the Warm Springs Police Department and the FBI's Office in Bend.

## Weaselhead pleads guilty in shooting case

Waylon McKie Weaselhead has pleaded guilty to three counts of assault with intent to commit murder. The maximum sentence for these crimes is 20 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and three years of supervised release.

The incident in question began on May 20, 2010, when Warm Springs police officers received information that Madras police officers were in pursuit of a white Ford Explorer.

The report was that the people in the vehicle had shot at the officers. Later, Warm Springs police officers observed the suspect vehicle driving on the Warm Springs Reservation, and two police vehicles gave chase.

During the high speed chase, Weaselhead, 23, the front seat passenger in the Explorer, leaned out the window with a rifle and shot at the pursuing officers.

A bullet went through the

front windshield of one of the police cars. Another bullet struck the driver's side door of officers Gilbert and Elliot's vehicle. Waylon Weaselhead was arrested in June 2010. In pleading guilty, the defendant admitted that he shot at the officers with the intent to kill them, and that he was doing everything he could to try and escape.

Sentencing is scheduled for December 7.

## Tribal courts lack power over non-Indian abusers

(AP) — A high-level Justice Department official pushed last week for tribal courts to have more power in prosecuting non-Indians in domestic violence

cases, saying the lack of authority has meant many serious crimes have gone unprosecuted.

Although tribal judges can now impose tougher sentences

in such cases under a law passed last year, the courts still have no authority to prosecute domestic violence offenders who are not members of tribes.



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