

Fund county's adult treatment court

Deschutes County's Family Drug Court was special for a number of reasons.

It just felt different than most courtrooms. One difference: Standing ovations. You don't see that often in court. The court has helped so many families succeed in reunifying, finding drug treatment, employment and housing. It likely also reduced crime.

It began in 2006 in the county as a focused effort to help parents from losing custody of their children due to substance abuse. Now in a way that's gone. But is replaced by something better.

It's now called the Adult Treatment Court. It still prioritizes handling cases that involve parents that may lose custody of their children due to substance abuse. It now also works

with individuals who don't have children to get their lives on track.

It's a single-judge court. That enables the judge to gain specialization and the kind of understanding of a situation to make excellent decisions. And the judge is backed up by supervised treatment for individuals with substance abuse problems and resources to help with housing, training and employment.

The family drug court has been a county success story. And the Adult Treatment Court should be able to bring that success to more people. It's submitting a \$515,299 grant proposal for two years of funding to the state. Let's hope the state sees fit to fund it again.

State should change drunken driving law

A drunken driving conviction for John Hedgpeth seemed a cinch.

An Oregon state trooper pulled Hedgpeth over in 2014 for riding his motorcycle without a helmet. The trooper took him into custody for DUII and brought him to the North Bend Police Department for an intoxilyzer test. It was one hour and 45 minutes after Hedgpeth had been stopped before the test began. The test showed his blood alcohol content was .09%. The legal limit in Oregon is .08%.

Charged. Convicted. Case closed? Nope. Hedgpeth appealed and the case ended up before the Oregon Supreme Court. The defendant claimed the state's evidence did not show he was intoxicated at the time he was riding the motorcycle. The court ruled in his favor.

In many cases, more police work would have prevented that outcome. The prosecution could have presented evidence of a roadside sobriety test. There could have been testimony from experts showing that a .09 blood alcohol content about two hours after he was stopped indicated he was impaired at the time of the stop. That evidence, though, was not presented at his trial.

Most states allow a two-hour window if .08 is established. Not Oregon. Some states allow a three-hour window. So this legislative session Senate Bill 201 would change Oregon law. It creates a two-hour window. And the bill seems on track to pass. The bill also would make a second change in the law regard-

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ing DUII. It relates to the Supreme Court's decision in what is called the Guzman case.

In Oregon, a person cannot be held accountable for DUIIs in other states unless the laws are essentially identical — the Oregon law's "statutory counterpart."

Ricky Guzman was indicted for felony DUII and other crimes. The indictment for the felony DUII alleged that Guzman had two prior convictions for DUII from other jurisdictions, including one from Kansas.

Guzman challenged that the Kansas conviction was not a statutory counterpart and so his Oregon charge could not be a felony.

The Kansas statute is broader than Oregon's statute in that it applied to operating any vehicle and allowed conviction based on a blood alcohol content of .08% within three hours of operating a vehicle. The court found for Guzman.

The impact could be that Oregon would be the only state in the country that did not allow out-of-state DUII charges to count toward a felony. SB 201 puts a stop to that.

In 2019 in Oregon, 34% of the driving-related fatalities were related to alcohol-impaired driving. That's more than 160 deaths. The law needs to be changed. Pass SB 201.



GUEST COLUMN

Vote for transparency and commitment

BY MELISSA BARNES DHOLAKIA

Serving on a school board is hard work. It is a volunteer position. You are charged with every family's most cherished gift — their children. To rise to that challenge, our community deserves future board members who have a demonstrated commitment to our students, families, and schools — and are committed to the transparency and integrity required to do the job well once in office.

That is why I am advocating for Marcus LeGrand, Janet Sarai Llerandi, Shirley Olson, and Carrie McPherson Douglass for the Bend-La Pine School Board in the May 18th special election.

Demonstrated commitment. These four are parents and have actively worked professionally and as volunteers to improve our community's educational system. In a campaign cycle, it is easy to make critiques and promises. But I find the best indicator of future work is past performance. These four have it in spades.

Marcus is the college and career success coach and an instructor at Central Oregon Community College — a true asset as the district continues to develop its career and college pathways ensuring all students have a plan for their future. As a volunteer, he sits on the district budget committee, helps to facilitate student town halls, and is a core founding member of the Black led nonprofit The Father's Group, which is piloting a mentoring program in our high schools.

Janet is the administrative and finance Coordinator for The Early

Learning Hub of Central Oregon and Better Together — a combination of financial knowledge and educational expertise that will further hone the focus on early childhood and the prioritization of funding. As a volunteer, she founded Mecca Bend — a nonprofit that responded to the needs of the Latinx community during this pandemic, through cash assistance for those disqualified from federal stimulus aid, distribution of food boxes in partnership with local food banks, and bilingual counseling and coach-

ing. Shirley has a 50+ year career in education as a teacher and administrator — a depth of experience that will provide an important perspective and grounding during these uncertain times. As a volunteer, she serves on the district budget committee, as a SMART Reader at Rosland Elementary in La Pine, and directing philanthropy for the Sunriver Women's Club to address needs in south county.

Carrie is a small business owner who currently runs a national nonprofit supporting school boards around the country, as well as a former educator — from finance, to governance, to innovation in education, these are critical perspectives she brings to our board. As a volunteer, she currently serves on the Bend-La Pine School Board (and will be the longest serving member if re-elected), serves on the boards of several nonprofits, and actively works to support diverse candidates in seeking public office.

Transparency and Integrity.

To rise to that challenge, our community deserves future board members who have a demonstrated commitment to our students, families, and schools.

Marcus, Janet, Shirley and Carrie are actively and transparently engaging with the public, helping them know who they are and what they stand for. Their four opponents didn't even participate in the basics — not during the endorsement process with The Bulletin or The Source, not in the nonpartisan forum sponsored by the City Club of Central Oregon and the League of Women Voters. They were, however, slated to attend a \$32 per person paid event on April 28th held at the Bend Golf Club. And one candidate, Maria Lopez-Dauenhauer has already self-funded over \$27K of attack ads and mailers. Public forums and open conversations cost nothing; attack ads with no opportunity to respond require wealth. Our community deserved an honest conversation between candidates about issues — again, I find past performance a strong indicator of future work.

If you want candidates that will show up, be transparent, model integrity and do the work, please join me in voting for Marcus LeGrand, Janet Sarai Llerandi, Shirley Olson, and Carrie McPherson Douglass. They are willing to share their deep experience and demonstrated track record — that is a gift our students, families, and schools deserve.

■ Melissa Barnes Dholakia is the vice chair of the Bend-La Pine School Board

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Why reforming qualified immunity will never resolve police violence

BY CEDRIC ALEXANDER

Special to The Washington Post

As lawmakers in Congress negotiate their long-awaited police reform bill, Democrats are sticking firm to their conviction that the legislation must include some type of reform of qualified immunity — the legal protections that make suing individual police officers for misconduct nearly impossible. For many on the left, that raises an important question: To what extent should they be willing to compromise on reforming the law?

It's the wrong question to ask. As a 40-year veteran of law enforcement, from sheriff's deputy to chief and director of public safety, I firmly believe that nothing federal, state or local governments do about qualified immunity will significantly reduce or increase the incidence of unjustified deadly force by police. Real reform requires us to go much deeper than tweaking tort rules.

I do not wish to dismiss the debate about qualified immunity. Indeed, the arguments against it are compelling. Some say it puts the officer

above the law, at least civil law, by denying the families of those unjustly killed by the police their constitutional right to seek redress of grievance.

This is a legitimate point, but so, too, are arguments that immunity should be available when officers are called to account for split-second life-or-death decisions. Concern over financial liability should not be permitted to cloud an officer's judgment at a critical moment.

And financial liability is a real concern. I am certain that the most committed supporters of the doctrine remain the majority of cities and other local governments that see the qualified immunity defense as an urgent budgetary matter. A report published early this year revealed that, over 10 years, New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles spent a combined total of \$2.5 billion to settle lawsuits against police.

Put it this way: Taxpayers cannot afford the mounting direct monetary costs of the abuse of policing authority. Realizing this, city and other local governments have embraced quali-

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fied immunity not only as a means of defeating liability lawsuits, but also to manage liability itself.

A far better strategy would be to eliminate the risk of ending up in court. Just imagine what local and state governments could accomplish if they were to invest the money they spend on misconduct lawsuits on making policing more humane and more effective. They could better train officers in de-escalation tactics to reduce the likelihood of lethal violence. And they could train officers to use effective alternatives to lethal force and to deal with mentally disturbed people safely. Doing so would improve the public perception that the police have earned their authority from the community and that they use it to serve and protect, not

to punish. Officers and agencies need to learn and embrace procedural justice — the idea that the processes by which police officers resolve disputes and police agencies allocate resources are fundamentally fair.

As important as training is, even more critical is instituting more selective recruitment standards. Police agencies must ensure that they attract the best, the brightest and only those whose values are aligned with the values of our democracy. To attract such applicants, they need to make policing a genuinely viable long-term professional career, with salaries, benefits and working conditions competitive with the most coveted careers in the private sector.

Finally, we must think beyond mere "reform" and instead tackle

bold redesign. This can begin by focusing the role of the police more narrowly. Today, officers are called upon to be everything to everyone — not only to fight violent crime but also to care for the socially disadvantaged, the mentally ill and people with addiction disorders. They are called on to direct traffic and to ticket those who have done nothing more than commit traffic offenses. It makes no sense to send armed men and women into situations that require social workers, paramedics, or traffic and parking enforcement professionals. Policing should be regarded as only one dimension of public safety.

We need reforms that work to eliminate police abuse, not change how police agencies fight it in court. That's why debates in Washington, D.C., feel so hollow: With or without qualified immunity reform, our nation can no longer afford — financially or morally — police misconduct.

■ Cedric Alexander served as a member of President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing and is former director of public safety for DeKalb County, Georgia.