



Marion County
OREGON

For immediate release January 2, 2008
Contact: Nelsa Brodie 503-566-3916

Marion County Commissioners Proclaim January as Mentoring Month

The Marion County Board of Commissioners signed a proclamation today endorsing January as National Mentoring Month and encouraged everyone to look for opportunities to become mentors in Marion County.

Presenting at the commissioners meeting this morning was Kimberly Allain of St. Vincent de Paul Society, who explained that St. Vincent's prisoner re-entry program has ten fully trained mentors and more in training. She said that mentors help provide structure to help people reintegrate successfully back in the community from incarceration. She said that these volunteers provide the one-on-one support necessary for success, preventing recidivism and supporting overall community safety.

Sue Blayre of the Marion County Sheriff's Office explained that she has seen the successes of prisoners who re-enter the community with mentors. "Their success rate is very high because they have the support of someone who provides some structure in their lives," she said.

Sarah Spinks, executive director of Youth Impact, added that mentors in the Juvenile Enrichment Through Mentoring (J.E.M.) program offer guidance and support to juvenile offenders who may not otherwise have role models to look up to.

Sue Bloom, mentor champion, has been working with twelve mentoring programs in Marion County to recruit mentors through United Way's new Volunteer and Mentor Center. She noted that information on mentoring opportunities is available at the Volunteer and Mentor Center of United Way at 503-363-1651 or by visiting the givebacktoday.org web site.

###