



## ***Marion County*** OREGON

**For immediate release:** September 11, 2009

Contact: Sarah Spinks, Executive Director, Youth Impact, (503) 584-4803

### **Youth Impact receives \$35,000 Oregon Community Foundation Grant**

Youth Impact, a non-profit agency located in Salem, Oregon, is the recipient of a \$35,000 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation Eva Chiles Meyer Fund for a one-year project to build the capacity of evidence-based mentoring in Marion County.

Under the grant, Youth Impact will work closely with the Marion County Department of Children and Families to conduct a community assessment of current programs to identify gaps and opportunities for youth mentoring. Several mentoring programs exist in Marion County but there is a huge need to coordinate services among providers. The goal of the project is to increase access to mentoring for all youth by identifying gaps in services, strengthening current providers, increasing knowledge of and accessibility for families, and raising awareness of the need for volunteer mentors.

“My hope is that as programs begin talking to each other, as providers we will step up and ensure that no youth in need of mentoring goes unserved,” said Sarah Spinks, Executive Director.

As a long-time provider of youth mentoring in Marion County, Youth Impact is eager to see more collaboration and support for existing programs. “I think this is a win-win situation,” stated board chair Elaine Harvey. “Programs will be strengthened and better able to fulfill their missions and the community will reap the benefits from some of our community’s most fragile youth receiving the extra care and support they need.”

Youth Impact connects volunteer mentors with youth, ages 4-18, who are in need of the support and guidance of a caring friend. Youth Impact serves youth who are on probation, have an incarcerated parent, or have a combination of risk factors associated with the risk of juvenile delinquency and other risky behaviors.

The mission of the Oregon Community Foundation is to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. OCF works with individuals, families, businesses, and organizations to create charitable funds to support the community causes they care about. Through these funds OCF awards more than \$60 million annually in grants and scholarships. The foundation makes grants through an application process that involves

local citizens in the review and evaluation of requests of funds. Application materials are available through the foundation's Portland office. Individuals or businesses interested in establishing a fund may contact the Portland office at 1221 SW Yamhill, Suite 100, Portland OR 97205, 503-227-6846.

For more information on this project or to become a mentor, contact Youth Impact by phone at 503-584-4865 or by email at [mcwilson@co.marion.or.us](mailto:mcwilson@co.marion.or.us).

###