

Oregon School for the Blind

A Statewide Resource for ALL Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired!

The Oregon School for the Blind provides countless opportunities for ALL of Oregon's students who are blind and visually impaired. While our on-campus residential numbers may be down due to a variety of circumstances, our various outreach programs easily impact the lives (both directly and indirectly) of more than half of all such students in our state.

Technology

- Troubleshooting phone calls – on average, 3 to 5 calls per week from Regional Staff.
- Regional staff visits for 1:1 training
- Regional staff visits for small group training
- Visits of Tech Staff to Regional Programs
 - Work with students on new equipment
 - Demo or Train staff on new equipment
 - Troubleshoot equipment set-up and operation issues (both in schools and in the student's home)
- Workshops
 - During annual Fall Conference (Step Into Fall) which saw approximately 150 participants from around the northwest.
 - As requested either at OSB or on location
 - Frequent vendor visits – AND Regional Staff are invited to participate in these visits/demos by vendors.

Sports & Leisure Recreation:

- Individual and team sport opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired.
 - Public schools do NOT offer “blind-only athletic sports” teams. This means that a blind student would have to compete in football, basketball, baseball and the like if he/she wanted to participate in team sports!
 - Wrestling could be done by a blind student in the public school.
 - QUESTION: How many school programs have (or even encourage) blind athletes in their sports program?
 - Athletics provides the participant with an excellent way to become physically fit and to greatly increase one's self-esteem!

- Goalball tournaments and matches
 - Partnering with community volunteer groups who assist at tournaments (e.g. Canby Middle School)
 - Represent OSB/Oregon at regional and national goalball tournaments
 - Recent former student made the US Junior National Goalball team AND was an alternate for the Men's Paralympics Goalball team. (It should be noted that he was newly blinded when he came to OSB and ALL "blind" skills were taught to him while at our school.)
- Track & Field Events – including annual meet held at OSB. Attendance averages well over 100 vision impaired students, Regional staff and families from around the state.
- Swimming Meets – both at OSB and other locales.
- OSB has an on-going competitive sports relationship with Washington State School for the Blind in Vancouver, WA
- Athletic Club
 - Conducted at OSB
 - Joint venture of OSB and Willamette Education Service District staff/students
 - Weekly activity – involve students and staff from both organizations
 - Participate in a variety of fitness activities (swimming, track/field, bicycling, etc.)
- Marshmallow Club
 - Outdoor "school" for OSB and WESD students.
 - Conducted at "Camp Grizzly" on the OSB campus
 - Joint venture of OSB and Willamette Education Service District staff/students
 - Monthly activity – involve students and staff from both organizations
 - Participate in outdoor-related activities
- Blind Golf Experience
 - Lions Clubs of Oregon sponsored event.
 - Conducted annually at Portland area golf courses.
 - Ron Plath, a nationally known blind golfer, coordinates this event.
 - Involves students from the Oregon School for the Blind, Washington State School for the Blind and Oregon Regional Programs.
- Horseback Riding
 - Adapted Riding Institute regularly sponsored event.
 - Oregon Elks Clubs pay for this opportunity.
 - Offers students with opportunities to encourage communication, confidence, and sensory experiences.
 - Physical benefits include increased strength building and flexibility.
 - Coordinated with our Willamette ESD OT/PT.
- Oregon Blind Athletes Hall of Fame
 - In its second year of recognizing athletic achievement.
 - Hall of Fame is on the OSB Campus.
 - OSB is a key participant in the OBAHF Board of Directors.
 - Other representatives include Regional Teachers, Commission for the Blind, Alliance for Blind Children, Advocates for the Visually Impaired and interested members of the community.

- Annual induction ceremony takes place on the OSB campus each spring.

Vocational and Career Education Program:

- OSB offers a full school year of Vocational Training
 - Many students come from their districts without any work experience.
 - Students work every week to learn and practice new work skills and work behaviors.
 - Students can incorporate their Orientation and Mobility training while traveling to and from their work sites by bus, para-transit or walking.
 - Students learn to create resumes and practice interview skills.
 - Students earn money for their work and this becomes a part of their budgeting class.
- Community Vocational Opportunities
 - Various community businesses and agencies partner with OSB.
 - Provide vocational opportunities for OSB students in a wide variety of on-the-job settings
- OSFB Radio Station
 - Jointly supported by OSB and the Oregon Commission for the Blind
 - Provides a 24/7 internet-based streaming radio station.
 - Students plan and manage the operation of their program.
 - They select the theme of music and add in the voice announcements.
 - Local Regional students have opportunities to participate in this real-life on-the-job training program.
- Annual Career Day
 - Provides opportunities to both OSB and Regional students to gather information from businesses, vendors and individuals about employment options.

Enrichment Activities:

- OSB staff and students – along with Regional staff and students – have participated in SCIVIS (Space Camp for Interested Visually Impaired Students) in Huntsville, Alabama. This event, funded by the Oregon Elks, has seen a number of Oregon crews attend over the years.
- Similar to the Space Camp trip, OSB has taken the lead to provide a ski trip adventure for Oregon staff and students. This trip's destination for 2008 was Aspen, Colorado and, again, it was made possible through the funding and cooperation of Oregon Elks.
- US Forest Service and the Teacup Lake Nordic Club — annually providing a day or overnight experience for both students of OSB and the Washington State School for the Blind to experience snow related activities such as snow shoeing and cross country skiing.
- ELKS of Oregon — have provided ongoing funding to support school transportation so students can experience a variety of hands-on experiences in a variety of areas
- OSB Sensory Garden — Established with support from AI's Nursery, Lowe's Home and Garden, a local Eagle Scout project and annual 'Make a Difference' volunteers, as well as the students themselves. The garden provides a variety of plants with textures and aromatic characteristics to enrich students' appreciation of outdoor experiences.

Social Activities:

- Prom
 - This is an annual event not only for OSB students, but for ALL Regional students throughout Oregon.
 - It is set-up like a typical high school prom with music, portraits, and plenty of FUN!
 - Students work on committees to help plan the event.
 - Students typically shop for their own attire and go out to dinner with their "date"
- Winter Carnival
 - A festive, fun time for OSB and Regional students
 - Features a visit from St. Nick with gifts for each child provided by a group of OSB parents and other supporters.

Other Programs:

- Low Vision Clinic
 - Operating in cooperation with the Oregon Statewide Lions Clubs
 - Provides a comprehensive low vision exam free of charge to any student served by either OSB or Regional Programs.
 - Have a long-time relationship with Dr. John Lowery who is an expert in the diagnosis of visually impaired children's special needs. Dr. Lowery is an optometrist and faculty member of Pacific University School of Optometry.
- Summer School
 - Joint venture with the Oregon Commission for the Blind and the ELKS of Oregon.
 - OSB provides various "camps" for students served by either Regional Programs or OSB. (Note: The majority of these students come from the Regional Programs and are NOT regular OSB students.)
 - Minimal (\$50 per week) cost to participate thanks to generous supporters.
 - Provide a wide range of activities from dragon boat experiences (Blind Ambition), cooking, travel skills, camping, creative enrichment, sports, and other activities.
 - The SWEP (Summer Work Experience Program) provides invaluable hands-on job experience for students from throughout Oregon.
 - SWEP and the camps are VERY popular and are widely attended each year!

Other Partnerships:

- Advocates for the Visually Impaired
 - Provides a lending library of technology and orthopedic equipment for students both at OSB and in the Regional programs
 - Supports recreational and enrichment opportunities for students
- Oregon Research Institute
 - Use OSB as a site to field test software & hardware geared toward the blind and visually impaired
 - Virtual reality software
 - Programs and activities to foster greater Orientation and Mobility skills

- ORI staff participate in OSB's weekly Friday elective class (entitled "Communication in the New Millennium")
- University of Oregon Geography Department (Dr. Amy Lobben)
 - Working on a project to standardize tactile map symbology.
 - Working on software to provide audio maps
 - Dr. Lobben and her students have assisted with Techno Trail Summer Camp.
 - Dr. Lobben is planning to assist with Outdoor School Summer Camp in 2009.
 - Project has involved interviewing students and staff to get insight as to what features/symbols are desirable.
- George Fox University
 - Students and faculty have selected OSB as a site for their Volunteer Day each year for the past 3 years.
 - Got involved with interviewing OSB students/staff regarding what devices/gadgets they would like to see developed.
 - George Fox University students have taken information from OSB and then gone back to their lab to develop new "gadgets" based on OSB staff and student suggestions.
 - As a result of their work with OSB, the George Fox University engineering curriculum has changed to include a community involvement/service component.
 - OSB students/staff toured the George Fox engineering department at the invitation of GFU faculty.
- Chemeketa Community College – Human Services Department
 - OSB has hosted CCC Human Service student interns for more than 12 years.
 - These students work a set number of hours each week in school, dorm, or both.
 - The Winter Term, 2009 saw 4 CCC student interns working at OSB.
 - OSB has an excellent working relationship with the CCC Human Service Department.
- Chemeketa Community College – Office for Students with Disabilities
 - OSB has worked with this CCC Department for 14 years or more.
 - OSB has placed students at CCC and have worked closely with this Department to insure that OSB students have the materials they need to be successful in college.
 - OSB staff have provided in-service training to the staff of this department on tips and techniques for working with persons who are blind or visually impaired.
- Various College Programs/Students
 - OSB has served as a practicum site for people from the Portland State University Vision Program
 - OSB has served as a practicum site for people from University of Northern Colorado
 - OSB has provided a platform within which an art college student was able to conduct a study/project dealing with tactile graphics/photographs.
 - Multiple Willamette University students selected OSB as the site for their practicum.
 - OSB Technology staff and students conducted a training on assistive technology for people in a Masters of Education program at Willamette University.
- Alliance for Blind Children
 - Supports students attending OSB and students accessing programs provided by the school

- Snowman Foundation
 - Pianist/Composer Michael Allen Harrison and the Snowman Foundation have provided music lessons and opportunities for a gifted (OSB) pianist.
 - This student was given the opportunity to be a guest performer at the 2007 Ten Grands Piano Concert in Portland and will return to that venue in 2009 with an additional show in Seattle.
 - This student has shared his musical gifts to a wide variety of audiences over the years including public school students, senior citizen communities, events at the Oregon State Capitol, and has been hired at local venues.
 - This student came from a rural community and these opportunities probably would never have happened had he NOT been at OSB.
 - Production of this student's first CD will be completed by early April 2009.
- Delta Gamma Sorority – Willamette University
 - OSB has a close working relationship with the women of Delta Gamma.
 - Delta Gamma women volunteer in our classrooms and dorm units and they assist with field trips.
 - Delta Gamma provides volunteer workers for various special events (including the Prom) at OSB.
 - Delta Gamma hosts formal meals (including a Thanksgiving Dinner) for both OSB students and staff each year.