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TESTIMONY TO  
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BACKGROUND:

In the past four years, the Portland area has seen a dramatic increase in gang membership and gang-related incidents. As a result, several local organizations have pulled together to develop strategies to impact gang encroachment, recruitment and violence. Efforts span the community as described below.

Law enforcement efforts have centered on development of police interdiction teams, including the Oregon State Police-directed State Gang Strike Force, Portland Police Bureau's Gang Enforcement Team (GET) and the Portland Public School Police Rapid Action Team.

Prosecution efforts both from the State Attorney General's Office and Multnomah County District Attorney's Office have resulted in a Gang Prosecution Unit which targets high profile drug and street gang members for Federal prosecution.

From an education perspective, Portland Public Schools has developed core curriculum which focuses on gang awareness, saying "No to Gangs," teacher training and most recently Violence Prevention. The Violence Prevention Program focuses on youth in danger of suspension and expulsion from the school system.

An increase in the efforts of community-based organizations, employment and training programs has brought forth projects such as the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods Youth Gang Task Force, Youth Gang Outreach Program, Graffiti Removal Project, Redirections, Omega Boys Group, North Portland Youth Service Center Teen Parent Group, Albina Ministerial Alliance/Self-Enhancement, Inc. TNT/TLC, as well as several other projects serving inner North and Northeast Portland youths.

GANG TRENDS IDENTIFIED:

The latter part of 1988 through 1989 saw a noticeable increase in hate crimes and White Supremacy influences, specifically through Skinhead gangs. Southeast Asian youth gangs became increasingly active in violent, weapon-related crime, and organized, vehicle-related crime. This period also had an increase in White youth belonging to traditionally Black youth-focused gangs (Bloods and Crips), and the emergence of new gang "sets" throughout the metropolitan area with specific influence increasing in Southeast Portland high schools and middle schools.

Instances of gang affectation in the suburban schools also became noticeable. Incidents of weapons-related activity at school sporting events, and the formation of White gangs not related to hate crimes, point to a pattern of continued gang activity throughout the Portland area.

**Need For Action Recognized:**

In late 1987, Multnomah County's Juvenile Justice Division, in an effort to focus on the rising gang issue, began assigning gang-related cases to their Northeast District Office. This was due in part to a visible presence of youth gang activity occurring in the inner Northeast area, specifically involving youth under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court for delinquency matters (i.e. Probation).

By spring 1988, roughly 40 percent of the active cases in the Northeast Office showed gang involvement. At the same time, gang activity was on the increase in North Portland, specifically, in and around the Columbia Villa Housing Project, and at several North and Northeast high schools.

The Northeast District Office, which for a period of two years operated with a core staff of two Juvenile Court Counselors, began to function within a "team concept" in an effort to provide focused services to youth living in the district's target area. The team concept allowed an additional four (4) counselors, work space to conduct client meetings, family and individual counseling sessions, and to provide closer monitoring and supervision of youth on probation.

At this time, Multnomah County's Juvenile Justice Division began to operate under a "Balanced Approach" case management process, which focused on providing skill development to juveniles, holding youth accountable and ensuring community protection. The Northeast Team began to offer skill development services (i.e. Community Skills, Responsibility, Anger Management, Values Clarification) through a series of group process classes for periods of twelve (12) weeks. It was during these groups that a clear need developed for focusing services specifically toward gang-involved youth.

**TEAM FORMED:**

The Division began to plan its response to gang-involved youth in September 1987. The initial plans called for the formation of a unit which would target services specifically toward gang-involved youth and use strong intervention methods utilizing adjudication and detention to hold youth accountable. Although innovative in its intent, it failed to direct its approach toward a comprehensive response that included networking with law enforcement, prosecution, schools and the community.

During the past four years, the Division has adjusted its approach to the youth gang issue, developing a program that closely aligns with that of law enforcement, prosecution, schools and the community. The result is the Gang Resource and Intervention Team, or GRIT.

OBJECTIVES DEVELOPED:

In November 1989, Multnomah County and the Juvenile Justice Division received \$57,000 from the State of Oregon's Criminal Justice Planning Office to fund GRIT. The objectives of the group were as follows:

Address internal/external communication between Division units and law enforcement relative to youth gang members under the Court's jurisdiction;

Increase the Division's ability to implement gang intervention strategies, programs and activities, particularly in conjunction with those law enforcement agencies charged with dealing with the population;

Develop coordinated services and treatment plans that are gang specific and focus on decreasing involvement in illegal gang activities and behavior;

Develop and implement gang-specific intervention curriculum that focuses on reducing gang involvement, recruitment efforts and provides positive alternatives to gang involvement;

Develop specific intervention/curriculum for gang-involved youth held in detention facilities.

PROGRESS CONTINUES:

GRIT consists of a Juvenile Court Counselor Supervisor, nine (9) Juvenile Court Counselors, two (2) Intervention Specialists, and one (1) Program Coordinator. The Division's S.E. Field Office has also recently expanded its efforts to join GRIT in providing services to gang affected youth in the SE community.

Since December 1989, GRIT has accomplished the following:

Increased communication between law enforcement and Division units relative to youth-gang trends, activities and on-street monitoring;

Developed a computer software package that allows street officers to determine probation status and probation conditions of youth-gang members, thus assisting in close street monitoring;

Increased intelligence sharing processes between enforcement, prosecution, community-based youth gang outreach staff, and Juvenile Justice Division Field and Adjudicative Counselors;

**PROGRESS CONTINUES:**

Increased the number of gang-affected youth participating in alternative education, and the Division's youth employment and training programs;

Developed and implemented a Street Law curriculum that orients itself to active gang-involved youth;

Provided accountability to those youth on probation through use of "vertical enforcement/prosecution" methods in conjunction with Oregon State Police Youth Gang Strike Force, Portland Police Gang Enforcement Team, Portland Public Schools Rapid Action Team and Federal/State Gang Prosecution Unit.

In addition, the GRIT's Supervisor maintains an active presence at the Youth Gang Strike Force Office to assist in information sharing, coordination and planning. GRIT staff actively participate in Strike Force and GET planning meetings (roll call), ensuring that timely information is made available to street officers on probation conditions, warrants and officer safety issues.

**ASSESSMENT INTERVENTION AND TRANSITION PROGRAM SERVICES:**

As a result of the increasing numbers of youth adjudicated by the Juvenile Justice Division involved in gang behaviors, and due to continued downsizing of the State's Juvenile Training Facilities, Multnomah County has developed a secure Assessment Intervention and Transition Program that focuses on the issues of gang-involved youth and severe out-of-control youth needing a period of intensive group process services.

THE ASSESSMENT INTERVENTION TRANSITION PROGRAM is a 20-bed detention-based treatment program developed under ORS 419.507(4-A). The program is an integral part of the Multnomah County Juvenile Justice Division's package to address the problem of youth gangs, as well as at-risk youth facing possible commitment to the State Training School.

The Juvenile Justice Division has created AITP to provide assessment, stabilization, education, skill building, and secure treatment for youth who enter the program.

MISSION: The Assessment Intervention Transition Program of the Multnomah County Juvenile Justice Division supports the Division's Mission Statement as it relates to the doctrine of the "Balanced Approach." It focuses on:

Providing each youth with an assessment of strengths and needs. Stabilizing the youth's behavior and continuing the process toward skill development and treatment needs.

Facilitating the transition of youth to appropriate community resources.

Youth who are assigned to Juvenile Court Counselors of the Multnomah County Juvenile Justice Division are eligible to be screened for admission to the AIT Program. The Screening Committee is especially committed to targeting those youth identified as gang affiliated and/or those youth who are identified at risk of being committed to State institutions.

Those youth having an identified assessment issue that needs to be addressed or clarified, skill building issues that can be initiated or continued during a 30-day time period, and those youth in which there is a post-treatment program in mind are deemed as most appropriate candidates.

Program:

- A. Assessment: All youth accepted into the AIT Program are involved in an initial diagnostic assessment or an update assessment to determine skill needs. The assessment package includes the following areas: Family, drug and alcohol, education, mental health issues, employment, and medical.

Upon completion of the assessment, a meeting is held with the child, family, Court Counselor, Children's Services Division Caseworker, Alcohol/Drug Specialist, and all other concerned professionals to determine an appropriate skill-building program for the child's continued placement in the AIT Program.

- B. Skill Building: While in the AIT Program, youth are involved in a variety of skill-building and educational groups and programs. Skill-building groups include Youth Crossroads, Violence Prevention, Value Clarification, Street Law, Anger Management, and Sexuality. A variety of educational programs, which include Health and Hygiene, Emotional Wellness, Goal Setting, Self-Image, Self-Control, Cultural Competency, Employment, Drug and Alcohol, and Spiritual Enhancement are part of the daily program.

- C. Transition: The final phase of the AIT Program is working cooperatively with the assigned Court Counselor to facilitate a successful placement (i.e. home, alcohol and drug treatment/inpatient care, House of Umoja, or other residential treatment programs).

S.E. FIELD OFFICE - GRIT EXPANSION:

Early this year, the Division expanded its S.E. Field Office in order to address growing gang issues appearing in the S.E. communities. Joining in the aforementioned GRIT effort, this office focuses on organized gangs located in S.E. and includes Southeast Asian, Hispanic, and White Supremacist gangs.

This staff is actively involved in community organizations including, N.E. Youth Gang Outreach Team, East County Gang Task Force, Gang Enforcement Team, Rockwood Safety Action Team, Hispanic Services Round Table, and Southeast Asian Law Enforcement Advisory Committee. This staff also regularly provides cultural and gang presentations to community high schools and colleges, law enforcement organizations, and community interest groups.

HOUSE OF UMOJA:

Portland House of Umoja is an Afro-Centric model of residential programming designed for high-risk, gang-involved males between the ages of 15 and 18. House of Umoja is replicated after a highly successful program in Philadelphia which has a twenty year history working with this population. House of Umoja accepts those youth that are unable to remain at home and provides them with a home environment, while at the same time offering them individual counseling, employment, recreation and education. A projected length of stay for youths is six months to one year. In addition to the residential program, House of Umoja offers outreach services to youth in the community who are gang-impacted but not in need of residential services.

STREET LAW:

Street Law is a law-related education program designed to increase the ability of adolescent youth to be able to think critically and to identify and learn the responsibilities incurred in being a law abiding citizen. Already in its third year of operation, Street Law curriculum has been provided to youth on probation who have been gang identified; to youth participating through a diversion program; and to youth in a middle school setting. Selected youth from the GRIT and the SE Office are referred for the probation Street Law program.

STREET LAW: - CONTINUED:

Guest speakers have been attorneys, police officers and the Honorable Federal Judge Malcolm Marsh who also allows the youth into his Courtroom. The course culminates in a "mock" trial and an awards ceremony with youth receiving certificates, T-shirts, and for outstanding youth, Starter Jackets.

Street Law services are also provided to Gang youth weekly in the Assessment Intervention and Transition Program, (AITP), a 30-day treatment program. Because of their limited stay there is a high turnover from week to week.

The last two areas, diversion and middle school youth, were addressed at the request of the community and as an experiment with youth not as deeply involved in the system. Through the diversion piece, classes took place for a 12-week period at the Urban League of Portland. Eight youth completed the program. Students were served at Whitaker Middle School approximately six times to groups ranging in size from 8 to 20.

EARLY SERVICE AND INTERVENTION - (E.S.I.):

ESI provides screening, referral and client tracking services for chemically affected delinquent youth. A 30-minute interview is designed to elicit an individual's drug and alcohol use history, its effect on their involvement with the Juvenile Court, and information regarding the client's patterns of use; i.e. social history, family dynamics, genetic predisposition, and cultural specificity. In addition, referral for treatment is made only after considering the child's economic resources, their school involvement and their legal history. Youth receive services as a referral from their Probation Counselor, upon referral of the Juvenile Court Judge and/or Referee, or through referral while they are in detention. Youth who are referred for further treatment are monitored and tracked for a minimum of three months, with many being followed for as many as six months.

DETENTION ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM - (DAP):

Youth on probation for charges that enable them to be detained are eligible to be held in detention in the event they violate their probation. Oregon law allows the Division to hold youth on probation violations for eight days, or up to 30 days when a treatment program is in place. As the amount of youth being sent to detention increased, and the space in detention became limited, the Detention Alternative Program emerged in September 1990 as a viable option.



DAP - CONTINUED:

DAP gives youth the choice of working eight hours on a work crew in the community in lieu of being held in detention. The workcrews perform community work projects throughout the city. They have worked at: Blue Lake Park, Hoyt Arboretum, Multnomah County Cemeteries, Eastmoreland Park and Golf Course, Pioneer Square, The Juvenile Court Grounds, the Grotto, The Vietnam Memorial Park and various other special projects.

These youth provide multiple hours worth of service to the community and save the community many days of detention costs.

GENESIS PROGRAM:

The Genesis Program is an alternative school program located in Northeast Portland which serves high-risk, predominately gang-involved youth. The Juvenile Justice Division has overseen the contract with this agency since October of 1990 when the CSD/Downsizing contract allowed for the transfer of this component of service. The Juvenile Justice Division's total contract award for this agency is \$143,922 with an additional \$255,000 from Portland Public School for the educational component of this contract.

Genesis has a no-decline policy, and as such the majority of the cases are referred by the Juvenile Court and have extremely active criminal histories. Each youth had an average of three offense allegations at the time of referral.

Youth served by Genesis receive an intense amount of services through this program. The program model highlights a comprehensive services needs assessments, recreation, support services and case coordination. On an average month the program provides nearly 1,600 total hours of service, with each youth receiving an intensive package of services.

The relationship between the Juvenile Justice Division and the Genesis program continues to be a healthy and rewarding one. The advocacy, instruction, and overall support this program offers to their students is central to maintaining these youth in social service programs.

GANG INFLUENCED FEMALE TEAM - GIFT

Through the process of providing services to gang involved males, issues regarding the need for services for the young women involved with them began to emerge. When studying this population the Division found that girls involvement with gang activity ranges along a continuum from early gang identification

GIFT - CONTINUED

and association to active gang involvement, and that involvement is progressive in its development.

The Division further found that high risk young women rarely meet the strict eligibility criteria of existing programs, many of these girls are runaways, live on the streets, and are seldom charged with any serious offense.

In March of 1991, the Division submitted a grant to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to fund a program for these gang affected girls and their babies. This grant brought federal resources into the community's plan for gang affected youth and funded a missing element in an otherwise comprehensive community strategy to address the gang issue.

The project implements four service components including, a Women's Collective, a family support model, and a crisis housing component.

Women's Collective: The gang culture plays a very strong role in the lives of these young women. It provides sense of family, a sense of self, common friends, financial support and a key to an adolescence's independence. The Women's Collective seeks to challenge those unhealthy relationships with positive relationships and means of achieving a healthy sense of self, legal financial activities, proper modeling for age appropriate activities, and, where relevant, parenting skill training and bonding. This component also develops critical connections with community based organizations in support of the young women residing in their own neighborhood environment.

Family Support Model: Gift also attempts to influence the behavior around the relationship the young women have with gang members, since when babies are involved, the relationship is ongoing. This component of the program seeks to empower the young women with skill that they can pass on to their children. In their relationship with the male, he currently has all of the power and none of the responsibility. Once this realization is made, and the young women have gained the skills promoted in the Women's Collective, the relationship between family members can also be addressed. Through this piece, culturally specific parenting skills and child development knowledge will also increase.

## WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Today, the County is enjoying the most comprehensive approach ever to addressing gang issues. Crucial partnerships exist between federal, state, and local governments, between law enforcement and the community. A balance is in place between prevention, intervention, and treatment.

In many ways, this balance is very tenuous and is threatened by many pressures. Oregon's Measure 5, the Property Tax Limitation Measure threatens to reduce available state support for gang intervention efforts. Not only is direct financial support for the County's gang programs in danger, Measure 5 will force the State to further downsize its state programs on which we heavily rely. In preparing for the impact of Measure 5, the State plans to close one of its training schools and two of its five residential camps. It also plans to reduce funding for juvenile parole by 40%.

At the front end, the community shelter care system is totally overloaded, turning away two youth for every one served. In the middle is the County's Juvenile Detention facility. This facility is seriously outdated and has become severely overcrowded in recent years. As a result, the County has become the subject of a law suit concerning conditions in detention. The Board of County Commissioner has recently decided to construct a new dentation facility but at a reduced capacity from the current facility. In so doing, it has also made a commitment to fund additional alternatives to detention.

Without the continued partnership of the federal government, our system will be like an erector set with one side knocked out of it. Our problems are real, our problems are serious, our problems will continued to take massive, collective partnerships to address and solve.

REVENUE:

State General Funds.....	\$ 1,165,059.00
Office of Criminal Justice.....	360,000.00
Downsizing.....	683,871.00
OJJDP.....	500,000.00
County General Funds.....	296,358.00
Indirect Costs to Support	\$98,000.00
Match for Crim. Just. Grant	83,356.00
Alcohol and Drug Package	82,000.00
Detention Alternative Prog.	33,002.00
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	296,358.00
Total.....	\$ 3,005,288.00