



# Linn County NEWS



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: apaul@co.linn.or.us

## Record year for county's Youth Wage program

ALBANY — The Linn County First-Time Youth Wage Grant Program has disbursed a record \$70,770 to local businesses that provided teenagers with their first job this summer.

The program, sponsored by the Linn County Board of Commissioners, is financed with Oregon Lottery funds targeted for economic development. Linn County has operated the program for 15 years.

The county has traditionally reimbursed employers \$2 per hour. This year, due to escalating wage scales nationwide, that stipend was increased to \$4 per hour.

According to Administrative Assistant Heather Gravelle, who manages the program, the number of participating employers increased to 28 in 2021, up from 20 the year before. There were seven new first-time employers compared to one last year and the number of young people participating jumped to 61 from 49 a year ago.

Gravelle said those young people worked 17,692 hours this summer, compared to 11,437 hours in 2020.

Sixteen youth were still employed at the end of the reporting period, compared to 10 a year ago. Six earned permanent jobs, compared to one last year.

"These kinds of numbers would be great to see in a normal year," said Board



*Heather Gravelle*  
*Program Manager*

The Point Restaurant & Lounge, Miller Grass Seed, Cala Farms, Wirth Farms, Berkey's Blueberries, Dairy Queen of Albany, Koos Seed Company, Third Knight Farms, Spurlin Farm Inc., City of Mill City, Dairy Queen of Sweet Home, OK Country Feed & Supply, Stutzman Services and Boshart Trucking.

To learn more about the First-Time Youth Wage Grant program, call 541-967-3825.

**Media contact:** Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825.

Chairman Roger Nyquist. "Given the challenges in the labor market, it's incredible."

### QUOTABLE

*"These kinds of numbers would be great to see in a normal year. Given the challenges in the labor market, it's incredible."*

**Board Chair Roger Nyquist**

2021 business participants were: RAM Trucking, Glenn Miller Seed, Morley Thomas Law Firm, A & W Restaurant of Sweet Home, Cascade Timber Consulting, Schmizza Public House/Figaro's Pizza, Kirk Century Farms, David C. Malpass Warehouse, Malpass Farms, Lebanon Aquatic District, Rick Franklin Corporation, Irvinville Enterprise, Phelan Enterprise, The Coffee Hut