

Gladstone student wins state honor

Gladstone High School student Daniel Diaz Rodrigues will be honored this month with the Matt Bailey Student of the Year Award. The honor is given to a student with disabilities who succeeds in launching a career. This is the second time in five years that a Gladstone Student has won the statewide award.

During Daniel’s years at Gladstone High School, he developed job skills by helping in the greenhouse, making wreaths, working for the Backpack Buddies and Food Pantry programs, and helping in the school kitchen. As a result, he was able to land a paying job working in the cafeteria at John Wetten Elementary.

“It’s been a team effort to train Daniel and help him build job connections,” said Youth Transitions Coordinator Toni de Peel. “I attribute a lot of his success to his parents, who taught him motivation and a strong work ethic.”

Photo: Gladstone alumni Daniel Diaz Rodrigues won a state award for students with disabilities. He is now employed in the kitchen at John Wetten Elementary School.

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Gladstone graduation rate surpasses state average

In 2016, Gladstone High School surpassed the state graduation rate by over 5 percent, with more than 80% of students graduating in four years. Over 88 percent of Gladstone students graduated within 5 years of starting high school.

“We continually re-focus our efforts with the goal of getting each student over the bar,” said Principal Kevin Taylor. “Providing support programs after school and Saturday mornings has helped us provide more individual support to students who struggle.”

At Gladstone High more than 76 percent of students in underserved races graduated on time, 8.4 percent above the state average.

Students with disabilities [13% of the student body] surpassed the state average by more than 12 percent, with nearly 68 percent graduating in four years.

“Achievement gaps for disadvantaged students are beginning to close, but we still have work to do,” Taylor said. “To better understand the experiences of students of color in our schools, this fall we held a series of focus groups with students and parents. What we learned will guide our strategy moving forward.”

Photo: Gladstone High’s class of 2016 beat the state graduation rate by 5 percent.

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Gladstone Food Pantry awarded grant funds

The Gladstone Food Pantry received a \$2,000 grant from Clackamas County to provide monthly cooking demonstrations by a professional nutritionist. The program is funded through the Healthy Eating/Active Living initiative. The program will provide recipes nutrition information, and ingredients.

“Many families we serve lack basic kitchen skills, have limited cooking facilities, or are not familiar with the produce we provide,” said Food Pantry leader Leslie Robinette. “These cooking demonstrations will help pantry visitors learn to prepare delicious meals from healthy foods like kasha, cauliflower, garbanzo beans, and butternut squash.”

The Gladstone Food Pantry, located behind Gladstone High School off Nelson Lane, is open Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

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Project Prom helps teens afford special night

Because prom night makes memories that last a lifetime, Gladstone High’s Key Club is on a mission to make sure low-income classmates have a chance to participate.

The group has organized Project Prom, a series of fundraisers to provide students transportation to the Abby’s Closet event, which provides girls with free prom dresses.

The project kicked off last night with a fundraiser at Gladstone Baskin Robbins, raising \$100 for the effort. Three more Baskin Robbins fundraisers are planned with support from the Gladstone Fire Department, Gladstone Police, and Gladstone High students.

Visit the Gladstone Baskin Robbins for \$1.99 ice cream from 5 to 9 p.m. on January 31, February 7, and February 14, and half the proceeds will support the project. Added donations are welcome each of those nights.