



**Umatilla County CARE Program**  
**216 SE 4th ST**  
**Pendleton, OR 97801**

Good morning committee members,

My name is Marissa Medrano, I am a CARE Specialist with the Umatilla County CARE Program. My position is a little different from my fellow co-workers, my position partners with the Umatilla County Corrections Office in Pendleton, Oregon. I have been with CARE for three years, two years as the Administrative Aide providing support to the Specialist and the schools. I provided lice kits, basic hygiene supplies to support attendance. The last year as a CARE Specialist supporting families on parole/probation by engaging individuals with treatment obligations, mental health, housing, OHP/EOCCO, etc..

My position follows the same as the other Specialists in the schools but my clientele are coming from treatment, DOC, or jail. The youth attached to these individuals are the ones who suffer the most from the choices their guardians make. They are pulled from their homes, school, family etc.. My goal is to be their support and help stabilize them where they are at, collaborate with the school, ODHS, and Probation Officers to continue to serve the children needs and the parents.

CARE is the bridge to all the services in Umatilla County. CARE can provide a safe space for families to share their concerns, worries, struggles etc without judgement. Allowing for a safe and judgement free environment, this creates strong relationships with staff. This is so important to create these relationships with our families, better relationships with clients allows us to better serve our clients/families more effectively. This is a huge part of the success CARE has seen over the past two decades, being able to be judgement free, open minded and willing to hear their story.

One advantage that CARE has is being able to provide transportation to those who lack that resource. I believe my biggest advantage is being able to provide a non-judgemental space. I have always made it a priority to try and be a safe place for clients, I meet my clients where they feel safe/comfortable. I meet my youth clients in the schools, this is a practice that shows the youth school is a safe and comfortable environment to be themselves. Having conversations about what they enjoy doing in their free time, getting them connected to counselors in the

school. I have been able to provide pool passes and art classes for these families, these are huge family bonding times!

In my role I have partnered with The 6th Judicial District Treatment Court Program, Community Counseling Solutions, ODHS, Law Enforcement, Peer mentors, and other service providers to better assist clients efficiently. Being able to create relationships with my community partners helps me connect my clients with the needed resources in the community.

Marissa Medrano