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by Virginia Vickery

## Millions of at-risk youth

### *Federal grant money for Portland State social work programs*

Three programs housed in the School of Social Work recently received a total of \$11.1 million in federal grants to help at-risk youth.

The Regional Research Institute (RRI) was awarded \$3.2 million from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to test the benefits of intervention to strengthen relationships of siblings in foster care.

A total of \$4.2 million was awarded to the Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and the Center for Mental Health Services for young adults with serious mental conditions.

A nearly \$3.7 million federal investment was announced by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The money will be used to expand the Reclaiming Futures model into three more juvenile drug courts across the country over the next four years.

"With this latest investment, the Reclaiming Futures model will now be in 26 communities across the nation," said Laura Nissen, national program director for Reclaiming Futures, in a statement released Oct. 26. "We are honored that the federal government is supporting this innovative approach and helping us spread the model to even more communities where teens need our help."

With its additional dollars, Pathways will focus on the transition to adulthood of young people with serious mental health conditions. Co-directed by Nancy Koroloff and Janet



Adam Wickham/Portland State vanguard  
Jim Carlton: Research associate in Portland State's School of Social Work.

Walker, Pathways incorporates research, training and dissemination projects informed by the voices of young people with serious mental health conditions and grounded in positive youth development and recovery approaches, according to a press release.

Lew Bank, RRI principal investigator, and co-investigators Laurie Powers, Sarah Geenen and Bowen McBeath will use the NIMH funds to carry out the five-year study of foster care. They will collaborate with the Oregon Social Learning Center and the Oregon Department of Human Services and child welfare offices in Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington and Marion counties.

This is the first experimental study funded on the topic, according to a press release.