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Locals lend help to Chalkboard Project

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Five Douglas County residents have joined Chalkboard Project's statewide citizen corps, promising to help the organization improve public education.

Lance Colley, Norm Gershon, Lee Paterson and Howard Sohn, all of Roseburg, and Carol Whipple of Elkton are on the Southern Oregon team.

Colley is the chief operating officer of the Roseburg School District; Gershon is president of Umpqua Training & Employment; Paterson is superintendent of the Roseburg School District; Sohn is chairman of Lone Rock Timber Co.; and Whipple is the owner of Rocking C Ranch.

Chalkboard Project is an independent, nonpartisan organization funded by Foundations for a Better Oregon. It was founded by five foundations, including the Ford Family Foundation.

In late September, Chalkboard unveiled its 2007 legislative agenda, which focuses on providing more support to educators and early learners, improving financial accountability and stabilizing school funding.

Chalkboard's communications director Shirley Skidmore said the citizen corps will assist in many ways.

"It's really helping spread the Chalkboard message in their communities," Skidmore said.

Corps members have invited other leaders to meetings. They may meet with legislators or write letters to the editor.

Skidmore said the members were invited to join, and they will suggest other members.

- You can reach reporter Teresa Williams at 957-4230 or via e-mail at twilliams@newsreview.info.

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