



March 14, 2017

Joint Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

RE: YDC Testimony letters

In June of 2016, Community in Action (CinA) applied for funding through the Oregon Youth Development Council using the Youth & Innovation Entrepreneurship and Career Readiness Grant. CinA developed a relationship with a young man named Eddie Melendrez who had a story so compelling that we had to see if it would work for opportunity youth in our area. We developed a program that blended work readiness training and learning how to become an entrepreneur with the reward for opportunity youth to participate in a physical fitness and boxing program. When the youth completed their skills/entrepreneurship training, they are rewarded by the opportunity to participate in boxing tournaments and other activities with the support of their mentor.

With the ability to learn about boxing comes many skills including the practice of being on time, respect for others and self, learning the importance of staying in school, becoming physically fit, and learning to communicate in a positive way. The mentor will become a life-long positive adult in the lives of opportunity youth and the investment has been tremendously successful.

Below are stories from the youth who have participated in this program.

Sincerely,

Angie Uptmor
Housing Program Manager
angie@cina.team
Like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/cinaontario

Julian Gutierrez; 21-years old

My name is Julian Gutierrez, I am 21 years old and was born and raised in Ontario. I got to know my YDC mentor, Eddie Melendrez when I was a juvenile. I later got back in touch with Eddie when he opened up the gym, Treasure Valley Boxing club when he asked me to be a part of it. The YDC has helped me stay motivated in doing something I enjoy. The program as tremendously helped me in staying active and out of trouble. I think it has greatly affected my life by helping me realize what I want to do in the future. It has made me realize that I would like to further better my education. Eddie is a good mentor, he does a good job on holding me accountable for things and making sure I'm doing good.

Rita Lamas, mom of Julian Gutierrez

Eddie Melendrez has been a good role model in my son's life. My son got not trouble a few times and had to do work crew with Eddie, which was the first time my son Julian, met Eddie. As Julian served his work crew Eddie and him formed a bond with each other. Even after Julian finished his work crew, he and Eddie still kept in contact. As Eddie opened up his new gym, my son has faithfully kept up with the program. Not only is he involved in the boxing program but he participated in an entrepreneur program located in Bend where he stayed the night. Eddie has also introduced my son to the equity team where they find solutions to better the community. It is great to have a good role model in my son's life.

Daniel Estrada, 21-years old

1. My name is Daniel Estrada. I am 21 years old. I am first American generation from my family. I was mostly born and raised in Vale, OR. I served my country right after high school, joining the army as an infantry man.
2. I got to know my YDC mentor when I was around 13 years old. My mom and his mom are good friends and told her I loved and wanted to box so that was the day we got introduced to each other and to know on another.
3. My YDC mentor has helped me with many ways. First, he is a great role model. I always looked up to him, he is a great kind person. With a big sense of humor, always looking to help others in any way possible giving everyone a chance to shine. Second, he is a great fighter and has showed me to learn to defend myself and use my boxing as an art. He has sparked my brain to be the change of this world for good not evil.
*Over the years, I noticed that many kids, young adults, adults, etc... have always looked up to Eddie and have changed their views of life to pursue to a better person in life.
4. Without Eddie I believe I would have been in the wrong path with the wrong people and without him I wouldn't have been a great boxer.

Leticia Estrada, mom of Daniel Estrada

1. My name is Leticia Estrada. I was born and raised in Mexico. I came to the USA when I was around 71 years old and have lived in Vale, OR ever since.
2. I knew Eddie from his mother who is a good friend of mind and who I have known for many years. Eddie has always been a very kind person to everyone with a sense of humor.
3. Eddie has always been around my boys especially Daniel who they got to know each other around 8 years old ago teaching him to box and was willing to give his free time to teach him boxing. Now to this day they still hangout at his house and trains with him; glad to know he isn't into trouble around him.
4. Without Eddie I believe my oldest son would have been up to trouble for he has always been the most trouble maker and dare devil and without him he wouldn't have the passion and desire for boxing like he does now.

Rafael Elias, 18 years old

My name is Rafael, I am 18 years old. I am in school finishing up my GED so I can accomplish goals I have for my future.

I got to know my YDC mentor, Eddie Melendrez through the Treasure Valle Boxing Club (TVBC).

My YDC mentor has helped me open up and not to be sh. He has also helped me make goals for my future.

The YDC mentor gave me opportunities to travel with TVBC and meet new people and make new friends.

Eddie has taken the time to get to know me and also understand me. He has made me feel more confident about myself and gives me useful advice.

Mary Pechie, mom of Rafael Elias

I am so thankful for all the help and support my family and I have had from Community In Action. At the time, I got in contact with Community In Action I was living in a motel. On the verge of having to stay in my car because it was getting difficult to pay the weekly rate which was practically my whole weekly check. I was able to receive help with paying for the motel while I waited for the apartment I got approved for to be available. Which was a great relief! During this time, I enrolled in a financial budgeting class which was extremely helpful!

Although it's the programs from Community In Action that helped my family and I out tremendously I am especially thankful for the help and guidance I have received from Mari and Chris. I am new to the area and often felt alone and really stressed! They were

there for me and helped me build the confidence I needed so I didn't give up and the strength to believe in not just myself but in my goals.

I stressed a lot with being a single mom to 2 boys. One of them being 18 years old now and not being able to help him through what life will bring his way being a young man now. He started losing his interest in school and what he wanted in life. The other is 8 and is full of energy and needy that made it challenging to give him what he needs when I work so much to be able to provide for them. Both Mari and Chris connected me to Eddie and his program. Eddie has stepped into my older son's life as a mentor which has been a dream come true! Both of my boys are active in training with the Treasure Valley Boxing Club.

I have not been this happy with my life in so long! I feel like I could not be here where I am in life with my kids if it wasn't for all the love and support and help from the team and programs of Community In Action and Treasure Valley Boxing Club. My boys and I have a home! A life! And a future to look forward to. Thank you so much!

Mari, I will have to get the boys together and get a picture of the 3 of us. I don't have anything recent with my oldest. Just Johnny and I. I have pictures of all my kids but this is just about the 3 of us so I didn't think I should submit that. I hope this is ok.

Eddie Melendrez on Andrew Casillas, 18 years old

Andrew Casillas enrolled into the YDC Jobs Skills program 9/21/2016. I have known Andrew for about 7 Years through Juvenile Probation. First as an Assistant Probation Officer to his two older brothers. Eventually he ended up on Juvenile Probation as well and I worked with him to help him complete his Community Service hours. He completed his Probation sentence successfully but we kept a relationship. Andrew has learning disabilities which caused him to drop out of high school. Andrew also has a problem with getting along with his siblings. These siblings try to persuade him to be stronger and affiliate with the gang. Andrew resists but struggles every day to stay on the right path. Andrew enrolled into the YDC Jobs Skills program and struggled at first. He would attend mentoring periodically but eventually came every day and now doing very well. I signed him for GED classes at the Treasure Valley Community College GED center. Youth shows up to YDC Mentoring every day and wants to compete in a boxing bout in the near future. I asked both Andrew and his Mother to write testimonials for the YDC Mentoring program. Listed below is the words of Andrew Casillas and his Mother Sandra Casillas.

Andrew Cassillas, 18 years old

My name is Andrew Casillas and I moved to Oregon from California when I was 13 years old. I joined the Treasure Valley Boxing Club last September of 2016 and it helps keep me busy and out of trouble. I got to know my YDC Mentor because my older brothers who were in gangs got in trouble and worked with my YDC Mentor through

Juvenile Probation. It teaches me to do things without anger, to keep calm and focus on what you have to do. TVBC is a very good program. This area does need help and the Treasure Valley Boxing Club Program helps with those needs.

Sandra Casillas, mom of Andrew

My name is Sandra and I have six kids. I moved from California. I'm a working Mother and trying to keep my kids on the right path. I don't want Andrew to go through the same path as his older brothers. I first met the YDC Mentor because my older sons were on Juvenile Probation. I think the program keeps the kids out of trouble and occupied. It has changed my son and helped him with his anger. He was starting to go down the path his older as his older brothers. That all the kids go to Eddie (YDC Mentor) for advice. I think that the YDC Mentor is a good person that I look up to because of the people he helps. The YDC Mentor motivated my son to get back into school. YDC Mentor is a great help to the community.

Juan Ramirez, 17 years old

I'm Juan Ramirez, a junior in the high school. I'm involved with FBLA (Future Business leaders of America) and I help YDC mentor Eddie with boxing. I met him helping with a non-profit. I've gained business skills and work experience. My mentor (Eddie) has helped me gain confidence and learn more business and job skills.

Cesar Raymundo, 18 years old

My name is Cesar Raymundo, I'm currently 18 years old and attend Vale High School. I got involved with YDC Entrepreneurial Program by Eddie Melendrez. I am friends with Eddie's younger brother that is also involved in the program and I've always heard and seen Eddie, but never got the official chance to meet him until January of 2016. I met Eddie at a gym in a Vale, he told me all about his goal with the boxing program months before it was official and told me that I should join when it's running, at the time I wasn't too sure but once Eddie had everything organized, I joined the program, since then I know much more aspects about being a successful entrepreneur. The YDC program has helped me with entrepreneurial skills making myself and the group to do various tasks. For example, our group went to Bend, OR with other groups and there was college students from OSU that helped us with entrepreneurial skills. We did activities that helped with our entrepreneurial skills. That helped dramatically with my entrepreneurial skills because I learned various skills that can help an individual to be successful. Another task we did later on the program, we met up at a coffee shop and discuss our plan with TVBC about how to help it financially. After discussing for a well amount of time it made it use our skills to help one another out to find the best options for the club. Having this meeting made me realize that I had to use my entrepreneurial skills to find the best route to go with in my perspective. My YDC mentor, Eddie Melendrez has helped greatly with my job skills. Whenever I asked him about obtaining a job, he gives me the best tips, so I can pick the best route. Eddie helps me and others

in the program when we ask him about job skills. He tells us about proper attire we should wear at an interview, how to impress an interviewer, how to answer questions for a job interview, how to fill a job application, etc... To summarize, being involved in the YDC Entrepreneurial Program has helped me tremendously with all the perks it has being in the program. I'm very thankful for meeting Eddie because without him, I wouldn't be involved in this program or boxing in the gym. Nothing but great opportunities I have been given being enrolled in this program. Eddie is a passionate individual, he loves what he's doing currently. He gets to do two tasks he loves doing, helping kids and coaching boxing. I can tell that Eddie is very thankful for what he was offered because he shows that he cares about his pupils and basically everybody else. Eddie is a respectful man and made this program very enjoyable to be in. Without him, the program wouldn't be the same.

Francisco Talamantes, 18 years old

My name is Francisco Talamantes, I am a person who likes to help out with anything people ask. I don't know how I will search or ask somebody. I like to meet new people and get to know them

I got to know Eddie by the last job he was at, he helped me out with the stuff I was in. One day I asked him to be my mentor for the Oregon Youth Challenge program where I got to know him a lot better and talk.

YDC mentoring has helped me by taking his time from being home with family to take me out to eat or coming to talk to me about how I am doing and if I am staying out of trouble.

The YDC program has helped me by keeping me busy while I am there and keeping me out of trouble and to be around people I don't really talk to.

Eddie has helped me with a lot. He became my mentor for a program; Oregon Youth Challenge, for a total of 17 months. He would travel to Bend, OR, to go visit me check on me and talk about what I was going to do after the program and that he was going to help after the program still would come to my house to check on me and still does and now he is helping me get myself to Job Corp and it's allowing me in his gym to box and train.

Juan Corona, 17 years old

1. My name is Juan Cesar Corona. I am currently 17 years old attending high school.
2. One summer day I was walking around Lions Park and this dude really short (ha ha), anyways, he came up to me and said "hey would you like to join a program I'm putting up?" Me being the little rascal I am said yes.
3. Honestly, this program has helped me through not only death by boredom but also helped me with depression and suicidal thoughts and actions. Overall, I'm now engraved with techniques like social skills and boxing skills. Overall, what Eddie is teaching us is helpful because not only is it free, it's also useful for every day fitness.

4. Over everything (sorry for making this long and boring and pure impossible to read) this program saved not only a life but a future worker of America.

Maria Cruz Bobadilla, mom of Juan Corona

My name is Maria Cruz Bobadilla. I am Juan Corona's mother and we heard about YDC through my son. I love the fact that he's progressed in his attitude and in his way of being as a person. YDC has also helped him stay away from trouble, it is also helped him focus on school work. Eddie has been a huge help in that he's helped my son get job skills.

Terseta Carrasco, 17 years old

1. My name is Terseta Carrasco and I'm 17-years old and currently attending Ontario High School. I also love to draw.
2. I knew my YDC mentor through probation and one day he asked me and my boyfriend to join his boxing club, which I got to know him more and more each day.
3. My YDC mentor has helped me with having a job experience and with finding and filling out the applications for jobs.
4. The program and my mentor have helped my have something to do after school. I have anxiety and I'm really shy but this program has helped me distract my anxieties and be more confident around people. The boxing program and the people in it help me feel welcomed.

Kobe Melendrez, 17 years old

Hello, my name is Kobe Melendrez and I participated in TVBC and OSU Entrepreneurial program, the program opened my eyes to different avenue of learning. This program definitely helped me communicate and also helped me endure public speaking. I got introduced to the program from Eddie Melendrez, (my brother) then Barbara Brody took over and really helped me get through the program, if it wasn't for everyone in the program for helping, this wouldn't have ever opened my eyes and I would have been the shy guy I always was. This helped me learn communication skills and many different entrepreneurial skills like how to start my own business and give me different pathways for my life.

3/12/17

JULIAN GUTIERREZ AND RITA LAMAS (MOTHER)

My name is Julian Gutierrez, I am 24 years old and was born and raised in Ontario. I got to know my YDC mentor Eddie Melendrez when I was a juvenile. I later got back in touch with Eddie when he opened up his gym Treasure Valley boxing Club when he asked me to be apart of it. The YDC has helped me stay motivated in doing something I enjoy. The program as tremendously helped me in staying active and out of trouble. I think it has greatly affected my life by ~~making~~^{helping} me realize what I want to do in the future. It has made me realize that I would like to further better my education. Eddie is a good mentor, he does a good job on holding me accountable for things and making sure I'm doing good.

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- role model in my son's life. My son got
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1.) My name is Daniel Estrada. I am 21 Years old I am First American Generation from my family. I was mostly born and raised in Vale, OR. I Served my Country right after high school, Joining the Army as an Infantry man.

2.) I got to know my VDC mentor when I was around 13 years old. My mom and his mom are good friends and told her I loved and wanted to box so that was the day we got introduced to each other and got to know one another.

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1) My name is Leticia Estada. I was born and raised in Mexico. I came to the USA when I was around 17 years old and have lived in Cole, OR ever since.

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3) Eddie has always been afraid of my boys especially Daniel who they got to know each other around 8 years ago teaching him to box and was willing to give his free time to teach him boxing. Now to this day they still hang out at his house and train with him. Glad to know he ain't in no trouble around him.

4) Without Leticia I believe my oldest son would of been up to trouble for he has always been the most trouble maker and chive devil and without him he wouldn't have the passion and desire for boxing like he does now.

My name is Rafael, I am 18 years old. I am in school finishing my G.E.D. so I can accomplish goals I have for my future.

I got to know my YDC mentor Eddie Melendrez through T.V.B.C. (Treasure Valley Boxing Club).

My YDC mentor has helped me open up and not to be shy. He has also helped me make goals for my future.

The YDC mentor gave me opportunities to travel with T.V.B.C. and meet new people and make new friends.

Eddie has taken the time get to know me and also understand me. He has made me feel more confident about myself and gives me useful advice.

My success story by: Mary Pechie

I am so thankful for all the help and support my family and I have had from Community In Action. At the time I got in contact with Community In Action I was living in a motel. On the verge of having to stay in my car because it was getting difficult to pay the weekly rate which was practically my whole weekly check. I was able to receive help with paying for the motel while I waited for the apartment I got approved for to be available. Which was a great relief! During this time I enrolled in a financial budgeting class which was extremely helpful!

Although it's the programs from Community In Action that helped my family and I out tremendously I am especially thankful for the help and guidance I have received from Mari and Chris. I am new to the area and often felt alone and really stressed! They were there for me and helped me build the confidence I needed so I didn't give up and the strength to believe in not just myself but in my goals.

I stressed a lot with being a single mom to 2 boys. One of them being 18 years old now and not being able to help him through what life will bring his way being a young man now. He started losing his interest in school and what he wanted in life. The other is 8 and is full of energy and needy that made it challenging to give him what he needs when I work so much to be able to provide for them. Both Mari and Chris connected me to Eddie and his program. Eddie has stepped into my older sons life as a mentor which has been a dream come true! Both of my boys are active in training with the Treasure Valley Boxing Club.

I have not been this happy with my life in so long! I feel like I could not be here where I am in life with my kids if it wasn't for all the love and support and help from the team and programs of Community In Action and Treasure Valley Boxing Club. My boys and I have a home! A life! And a future to look forward to. Thank you so much!

ANDREW CASILLAS,

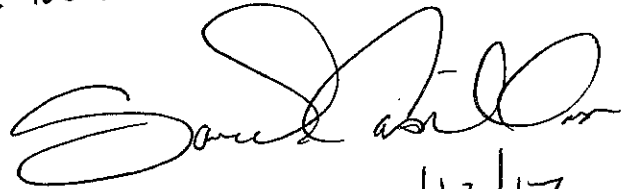
MY NAME IS ANDREW CASILLAS AND I MOVED TO OREGON FROM CALIFORNIA WHEN I WAS 13 YEARS OLD. I JOINED TREASURE VALLEY BOXING CLUB LAST ~~AUGUST~~^{SEPTEMBER} OF 2016 AND IT HELPS KEEP ME BUSY AND OUT OF TROUBLE. I GOT TO KNOW MY YDC MENTOR BECAUSE MY OLDER BROTHERS WHO WERE IN GANGS GOT IN TROUBLE AND WORKED WITH MY YDC MENTOR THROUGH JUVENIL PROBATION. IT TAUGHT ME HOW TO DO THINGS WITHOUT ANGER. TO KEEP CALM AND FOCUS ON WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO. THAT TVBC IS A REALLY GOOD PROGRAM. THIS AREA DOES NEED HELP AND TREASURE VALLEY BOXING CLUB HIGHLIGHTS THOSE NEEDS.

3/13/17

Andrew casillas

SANDRA CASILLAS,

MY NAME IS SANDRA AND I HAVE SIX KIDS. I MOVED FROM CALIFORNIA. I'M A WORKING MOTHER AND TRYING TO KEEP MY KIDS ON THE RIGHT PATH. THAT I ~~DO NOT WANT ANDREW~~ TO GO THROUGH THE SAME PATH AS HIS OLDER BROTHER. I FIRST MET THE YDC MENTOR BECAUSE MY OLDER SON GHERMEJIA WAS ON JUVENILE PROBATION. I THINK THE YDC PROGRAM KEEP KIDS OUT OF TROUBLE AND OCCURED. IT HAS CHANGED MY SON AND HELPED HIM WITH HIS ANGER. HE WAS STARTING TO GO DOWN THE PATH HIS OLDER BROTHERS. THAT ALL THE KIDS GO TO ~~SEE~~ ^{THE YDC MENTOR} FOR ADVISE. I THINK THAT THE YDC MENTOR IS A GOOD PERSON THAT I LOOK UP TO BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE HE HELPS. THE YDC MENTOR MOTIVATED MY SON TO GET BACK INTO SCHOOL. YDC MENTOR IS A GREAT HELP TO THE COMMUNITY,


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I'm Juan Ramirez, a junior in high school. I'm involved in FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) and I help YOC mentor Eddie with boxing. I met him helping with a non-profit. I've gained business skills and work experience. My mentor (Eddie) has helped me gain confidence and learn more business and job skills.

Cesar Raymundo
1119 C St W
Vale, OR 97918-1117
March 13, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Cesar Raymundo, I'm currently 18 years old and attend Vale High School. I got involved with YDC Entrepreneurial Program by Eddie Melendrez. I am friends with Eddie's younger brother that is also involved in the program and I've always heard and seen Eddie, but never got the official chance to meet him until January of 2016. I met Eddie at a gym in a Vale, he told me all about his goal with the boxing program months before it was official and told me that I should when it's running, at the time I wasn't too sure but once Eddie had everything organized, I joined the program, since then I know much more aspects about being a successful entrepreneur. The YDC program has helped me with entrepreneurial skills making myself and the group to do various tasks. For example, our group went to Bend, OR with other groups and there was college students from OSU that helped us with entrepreneurial skills. We did activities that helped with our entrepreneurial skills. That helped dramatically with my entrepreneurial skills because I learned various skills that can help an individual to be successful. Another task we did later on the program, we met up at a coffee shop and discuss out plan with TVBC about how to help it financially. After discussing for a well amount of time it made it use our skills to help one another out to find the best options for the club. Having this meeting made me realize that I had to use my entrepreneurial skills to find the best route to go with in my perspective. My YDC mentor, Eddie Melendrez has helped greatly with my job skills. Whenever I asked him about obtaining a job, he gives me the best tips, so I can pick the best route. Eddie helps me and other in the program when we ask him about job skills. He tells us about proper attire we should wear at an interview, how to impress an interviewer, how to answer questions for a job interview, how to fill an job application, etc... To summarize, being involved in the YDC Entrepreneurial Program has helped me tremendously with all the perks it has being in the program. I'm very thankful for meeting Eddie because without him. I wouldn't be involved in this program or boxing in the gym. Nothing but great opportunities I have been given being enrolled in this program. Eddie is a passionate individual, he loves what he's doing currently. He gets to do two tasks he loves doing, helping kids and coaching boxing. I can tell that Eddie is very thankful for what he was offered because he shows that he cares about his pupils and basically everybody else. Eddie is a respectful man and made this program very enjoyable to be in. Without him, the program wouldn't be the same.

Sincerely,
Cesar Raymundo

FRANCISCO TALAMANANTES

- MY NAME IS FRANCISCO TALAMANANTES, I AM A PERSON WHO LIKES TO HELP OUT WITH ANYTHING PEOPLE ASK. I DON'T KNOW HOW I WILL SEARCH OR ASK SOMEBODY, I LIKE TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND GET TO KNOW THEM.
- I GOT TO KNOW EDDIE BY THE LAST JOB HE WAS AT, HE HELPED ME OUT WITH THE STUFF I WAS IN. ONE DAY I ASKED HIM TO BE MY MENTOR FOR THE OREGON YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM WHERE I GOT TO KNOW HIM A LOT BETTER AND TALK.
- YDC MENTORING HAS HELPED ME BY TAKING HIS TIME FROM BEING HOME WITH FAMILY TO TAKE ME OUT TO EAT OR COMING TO TALK TO ME ABOUT HOW I'M DOING AND IF I AM STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE.
- THE YDC PROGRAM HAS HELPED ME BY KEEPING ME BUSY WHILE I AM THERE AND KEEPING ME OUT OF TROUBLE AND TO BE AROUND PEOPLE I DON'T REALLY TALK TO
- EDDIE HAS HELPED ME WITH ALOT. HE BECAME MY MENTOR FOR A PROGRAM OREGON YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM FOR A TOTAL OF 17 MONTHS HE WOULD TRAVEL TO BEND, OR TO GO VISIT ME CHECK ON ME AND TALK ABOUT WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO AFTER THE PROGRAM AND THAT HE WAS GOING TO HELP. AFTER THE PROGRAM HE STILL WOULD COME TO MY HOUSE TO CHECK ON ME AND STILL DOES AND IS NOW HELPING ME GET MYSELF →

TO JOB CORPS AND IS ALLOWING ME
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- ① My name is Tereseta Carrasco I'm 17 years old and currently attending Ontario's Highschool I also love to draw
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Juan Corona 3-15-11

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4) Over everything (sorry for making this
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to read) This program saved not only
a life but a future worker of america.

My name is Maria Cruz Bobadilla
I am Juan Coronas mother
we heard about ydc
through my son.
I love the fact that
hes progressed in his
Attitude and in his way
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ydc has also helped
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him focus on school
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a huge help in that
hes helped my son
get job skills.

maria cruz Bobadilla 3-13-17

Kobe Melendrez

13th 3/2017

OSU Business Skills

TVBC Treasure Valley Boxing School

2880 SW 4th Ave Suite 5

Ontario OR, 97914

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