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For more information contact:

Jarrold Lyman, Communications Specialist

503-742-5978 office

503-312-1895 Mobile

Jarrold@MtHoodTerritory.com

Tourism staffer wins international award

Oregon City, Ore. – Annie Austin, Communications Lead for Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs, branded as Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory, received the inaugural Women in Travel and Tourism International (WITTI) Award for Rising Star in Travel and Tourism. Austin received the award at a ceremony during the annual IPW travel show in Washington DC, the largest travel show in the United States, on Sunday, June 4.

Highlights from Austin's efforts that earned her this prestigious award include a media deskside strategy that increased coverage of lodging properties by more than 400% and increased mentions of Mt. Hood Territory's website by 1,000%. The strategies she's devised are directly responsible for dramatically increasing media coverage for the region during her five years with the organization. She also created the agency's social media program, which has grown enough to necessitate additional staff and won multiple awards as well. These numbers are lauded by Austin's supervisors.

"Annie's dedication and results have really put Clackamas County on a whole new level in terms of public relations in the Tourism industry," said Danielle Cowan, executive director for Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory. "She is excellent at her craft and brings a high level of professionalism and integrity to our organization. I am so proud of her and her accomplishments, as well as those of our entire team."

Austin credited her mentors at work with her success. "I am incredibly grateful for the strong women leaders, Danielle and Jeannine (Breshears, Marketing Manager), for offering me the resources and encouragement to grow our PR program."

This is the second major award for Austin. She also won the US Travel Association's Rising Star award in 2013, while her PR initiatives and campaigns have earned numerous trophies as well.

About Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory: Please visit us at: www.mthoodterritory.com. Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs (branded "Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory"), is dedicated to economic development through visitor spending, and is funded by transient room taxes from area lodging facilities and campgrounds. Clackamas County is a contributing partner in enhancing Oregon's quality of life by strengthening the economic impacts of the state's \$10.3 billion tourism industry.