

STREETWISE, from page 10

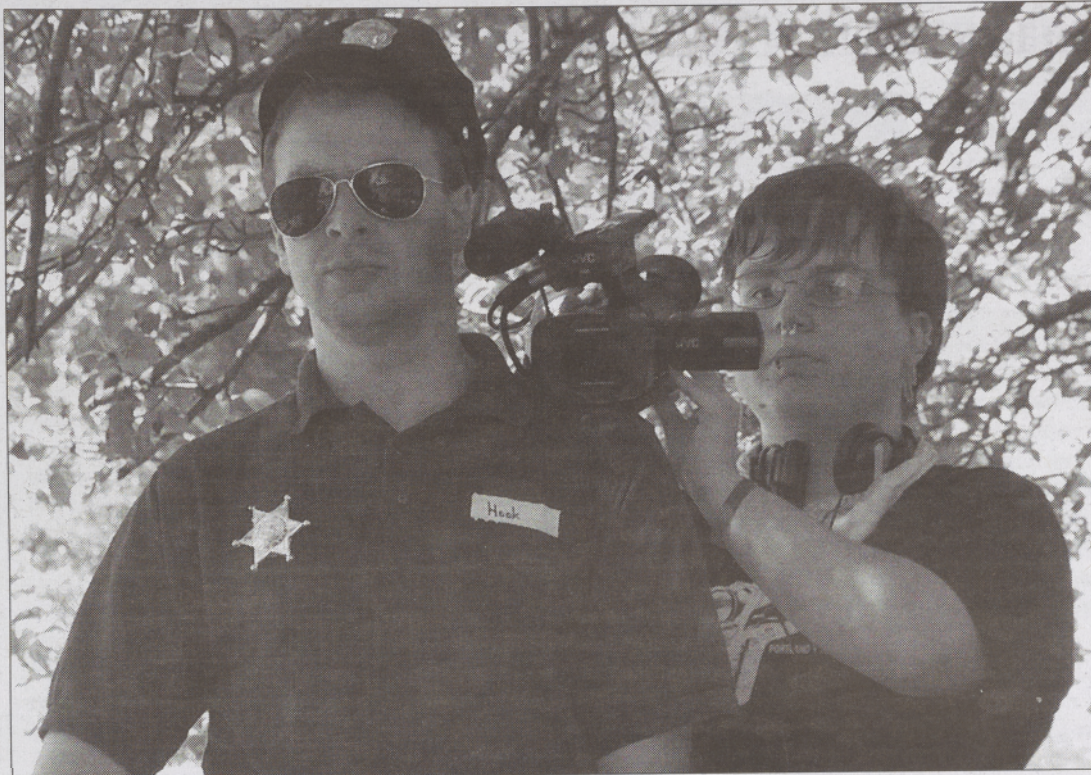
Exact numbers of the current Portland metro area runaway and homeless youth populations are hard to pin down. The 2015 Point-in-Time Count recorded 266 unaccompanied people ages 24 and under sleeping outside, in emergency shelters and in transitional housing. However, the report acknowledges that this figure may be well below the reality and the numbers of unaccompanied youth “doubled up” at the homes of friends or relatives is estimated to be much higher. According to Outside In’s 2014-15 annual report, the organization served nearly 800 youths in that time period. Outside In, along with Janus Youth Programs, New Avenues for Youth, and Native American Youth and Family Center are all part of the Multnomah County Homeless Youth Continuum, which is designed to serve about 1,000 youths each year with basic needs such as food and shelter, as well as case management, education and employment services, and transitional and independent living programs.

But Yosha, who credits youth groups with inspiring and empowering her as a teen, sees arts interventions like Outside the Frame as the missing piece in what the city and county offers those in the continuum, providing a type of social and personal development opportunity other homeless and runaway youth social service programs can’t provide. Through the process of filmmaking, participants gain the skills that come along with working on a team, owning and developing a creative project and presenting that project for the world to see.

“There are great social services here in town, and I feel like Outside the Frame comes in at the tip of the pyramid with the self-expression and self-actualization,” Yosha said. “You absolutely have to have your basic needs met, but it’s not enough.”

Outside the Frame board Director Talilo Marfil agrees.

“Outside In provides housing, employment and food, but Outside the Frame provides a way for them to feel worth it, to feel worth living and to express their art,” Marfil said. “Some kids would commit suicide if they didn’t have that sort of outlet



On the set of the “Lost Boys of Portlandia,” Jake Averi (right) films acting coach and “Captain Hook” Nicholas Kessler.

PHOTO BY OUTSIDE THE FRAME PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

to let people know what they feel or why they’re even living. For me, when I was homeless, it was hard for me to feel worth it or feel like I was even worth living. Outside the Frame definitely boosts the self-worth.”

Born in the Philippines, Marfil moved to California with his mother before settling in Portland with his stepfather – who soon kicked him out of the house at 16. From that point on, Marfil was homeless on downtown Portland’s streets.

Throughout that time, Marfil was involved with Outside In. After being released from a two-year prison sentence, Marfil had the opportunity to participate in Yosha’s filmmaking workshop, where he pursued his interest in rapping and made his first music video, which he then screened before an audience of 600 people at the organization’s second film premiere at the Armory Theater.

Today, the 26-year-old is busy with many social-justice projects, in addition to

pursuing a certificate in videography.

In addition to serving on Outside the Frame’s board of directors, Marfil continues to make music videos for himself and other local hip hop artists. He founded the Portland chapter of Hip Hop Congress, a nonprofit organization that uses hip hop culture to inspire and mentor vulnerable teens and young adults. He also works with Get Reel, the youth media program at MetroEast Community Media that also partners with Outside the Frame, and he is steadily building his own hip hop career.

Outside In and Outside the Frame, he said, saved his life.

“Outside the Frame gave me an opportunity to express myself and it helped me find my worth,” Marfil said. “It put a camera in my hands.”

Yosha said others from the program have also gone on to pursue higher education and their dream careers, helped in part by the soft and technical job skills they gained through the hard work of filmmaking.

At its current capacity, Outside the Frame

serves about 50 teens and young adults a year, but Yosha wants to expand programming to serve even more youths and offer more advanced filmmaking training.

“I want it to be able to change for the better the course of somebody’s life, not turn somebody on and then leave them hanging,” Yosha said.

Yosha, Averi and Marfil hope the premiere gala on June 7 will help change the common narrative around youth homelessness in Portland.

“Everyone assumes that if you’re young and you’re homeless, then it’s your fault and you did something bad in your life and you’re a bad person. And that’s not the way it is,” Averi said. “Some people just had messed up upbringings or just had a messed up series of things happen to them. People just look at them like they’re not human, or they don’t look at them at all, which is worse. People deserve compassion regardless of where they sleep at night.”

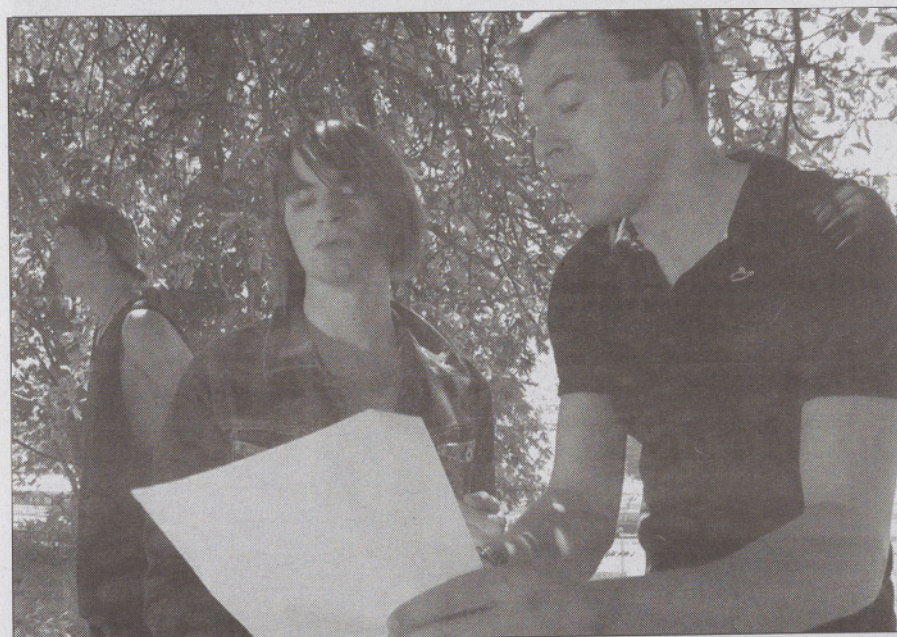


PHOTO BY OUTSIDE THE FRAME PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Acting coach Nicholas Kessler (right) and program participant Seth go over the script on the set of “Lost Boys of Portlandia.”



PHOTO BY OUTSIDE THE FRAME PARTICIPANTS

Joe Whiting filming a scene from the “Lost Boys of Portlandia,” with assist from Jake Averi.