

**PSYCHOLOGIST, from page 4**

observes our evaluations, gives us continual feedback and developmental guidance. ... We value the insights that Dr. Jenkins provides us and recognize the importance of collaboration with psychologists of color.

"It appears that our efforts toward transparency need some improvement," Corey continued.

Corey's response was shared with Dr. Allen T. Bethel, a co-director of the Albina Ministerial Alliance, on Oct. 29.

Bethel said he intends to meet with Corey to discuss how he conducts his work.

"How is he making use of Dr. Sandy Jenkins?" Bethel said. "And what are the tools that he is using to help us guarantee that we are getting the diversity we are wanting in the bureau?"

Corey told Street Roots that a high value is placed on diversity and cultural competence.

"We engage in a wide range of activities to expand our competence with respect to race and other

cultural factors," he wrote in an email. "This is consistent with our obligation as psychologists to 'strive to move beyond conceptualizations rooted in categorical assumptions, biases, and/or formulations based on limited knowledge about individuals and communities.'"

The concerns raised by the local advocacy organizations echo their sentiment from 2012, when Corey's contract was up for renewal for another extension.

By that time, Corey's contract had been extended with no bidding process for nearly a decade, since 2003.

In 2012, the advocacy groups urged the mayor and the City Council to solicit applications for the position from multiple psychologists and to reach out to diverse communities in an effort to diversify the psychologists who interacted with Portland police officers.

"I think the criticism was fair," then-Mayor Adams told The Oregonian in 2012. "The fact that the contract has been with one person for so long is worth reviewing."

The precipitating event was the 2010 shooting of Aaron Campbell. Campbell was unarmed and under extreme mental duress when he was shot by Officer Ron Frashour. Frashour was placed on administrative leave but eventually returned to duty.

The city released an RFP for Corey's position and received only two applications,

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Dr. Laurence Miller, psychologist who specializes in police psychology

including Corey's.

Corey was chosen for the position once again and given a three-year \$225,000 contract. That year, a three-year \$45,000 contract was given to Harden to conduct fitness-for-duty evaluations.

A selection committee made the decision. The committee was made up of a representative of the mayor's office, one from the Police Bureau, a retired African-American police officer who then worked as a security officer in City Hall, and two people representing Portland's minority community, one of which represented the Albina Ministerial Alliance.

During the City Council vote to extend the contract, Adams said the city would develop a process to request competitive proposals for the position of police psychologist.

That apparently never happened.

In July 2016, during the administration of Mayor Charlie Hales, Corey's contract was extended. The extension was done administratively, without competitive bidding, without any public notice, without the use of a selection committee and without a City Council vote approving the contract.

In July, the contract was amended to provide Corey with an additional \$56,250 in compensation, bringing the contract total to \$281,250.

A new city law, passed around that time, did not require City Council approval for awarding city contracts of less than \$500,000.

Even if the city strives to solicit more applications for the position, there is a small pool to draw from. The practice of providing psychological services to police officers and others who work in public safety is a rare specialty within psychology.

The American Board of Professional Psychology, which certifies psychologists working in specialty areas, formally recognized

“police and public safety psychology” as a specialty board in October 2011. To work in the area, the board states, psychologists need to be familiar with police work, a police officer's working conditions, “common and novel stressors inherent in public safety work, (and) normal and abnormal adaptation to occupational stress and trauma.”

Dr. Laurence Miller, a Florida-based psychologist who specializes in police psychology and has contracted with the West Palm Beach Police Department and the Boca Raton Police Department, thinks there is some stigma associated with providing psychological services to police officers, as well as “innocent ignorance.”

“When they hear the word ‘law enforcement,’ they treat it like Kryptonite,” Miller said. “More people are becoming aware of it. Police psychology is a small but growing area of specialization.”

Corey, who used to chair the Police and Public Safety Psychology board within the American Board of Professional Psychology, said there are 73 psychologists who are certified as police and public safety psychologists in the country.

“This number is growing each year,” Corey said. “The criteria to qualify ... are so extensive because the consequences of the work are so serious.”

On average, Corey conducts around 45 psychological evaluations each year for the Portland Police Bureau. He disqualifies around 12 percent of applicants as a result of the psychological evaluation.

Miller said it's typical to exclude anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of applicants at that stage.

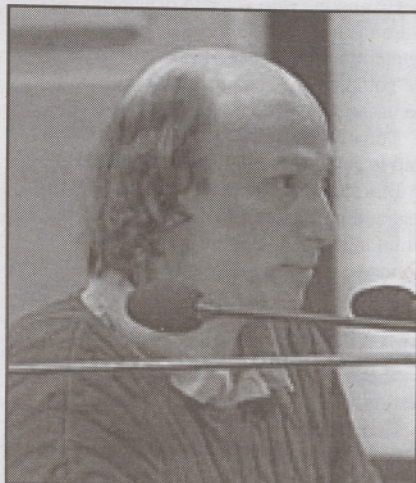
“You're screening for significant red flags of psychopathology,” Miller said.

Corey said the number of disqualified applicants is lower than in past years, and lower than the national average of 15.6 percent, because of “the high-quality” screening done during a background check, which happens before Corey's psychological evaluation.

When asked whether it was necessary for a diverse group of psychologists to evaluate Portland police officers, Miller said no.

He acknowledged that “an Asian or Latino or African-American applicant might feel more comfortable (talking) with an Asian or Latino or African-American psychologist doing the screening,” he said.

But if Corey, or any other psychologist, is “broad minded, intelligent clinically, willing to learn, has an interest in people, (and) has a broad knowledge of people,” it's not necessary, Miller said. “If there are some things these critics can point to ... (and) some specific reason the current person has not been culturally sensitive, let them make their case.”



Dan Handleman

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