

Seeking careers for the future

By Nathaniel Scott

"Business, health sciences and the technical fields are areas of the future," said Dr. Carl Parker, career specialist at Portland Community College.

He is a native of Portland, attended college in Alabama, and obtained his Ph.D from Oregon State University. He counsels at Sylvania and Cascade campuses and is involved in other community activities. The *Observer* posed a number of questions to him relating to

careers and career development.

Observer: As a career specialist, what are your main concerns when helping a person choose a career?

Parker: My main concern is to help the person become more aware of him/her self in relation to abilities, skills and experience. In my work here at PCC, I'm involved in individual, group counseling and instruction which is designed to help people become aware of themselves through a structured process. The process involves self-awareness, self assessment, job cluster iden-

tification, career information search, decision making and confirmation.

Observer: What are some of the things to be aware of when choosing a career?

Parker: We have to be aware of what we want to get out of a job. When I say, knowing what we want to get out of a job, I am talking about work values in terms of work schedule, job satisfaction, money, responsibilities, achievement, recognition, and things of that nature. Some other things to be aware of besides work values are; (1) their AIRS (Abilities, interest and skills), (2) Career information as it relates to their awareness of "Self", (3) job supply and demands and job requirements, (4) training and/or educational opportunities, (5) financial assistance available.

Observer: What fields are most lucrative at the present?

Parker: You will probably find a lot of jobs in the accounting and computer fields, certain kinds of

sales, business and health fields. The technical are probably high in employment opportunities also.

Observer: What are some of the employment benefits for a person with a two year college degree?

Parker: A two year college degree is an indication that a person has had two years of training or education in a specialized field. The person without the two years training through an organized situation, such as an institution or OJT (on the job training), does not put himself in a position where he/she can move into the better paying jobs.

Through the two year training programs, people can receive the initial training that will help them get better-paying jobs. Let me also say, there is a misnomer about education in our society that says that a person has to have a four year college degree. However, according to the Department of Labor, approximately 80 percent of the people who are in higher education will

compete for 20 percent of the jobs. And 80 percent of the jobs, which 20 percent of the people are seeking, will come through your vocational on-the-job training process. I perceive the community college as a very adequate place for obtaining skills necessary for better paying jobs.

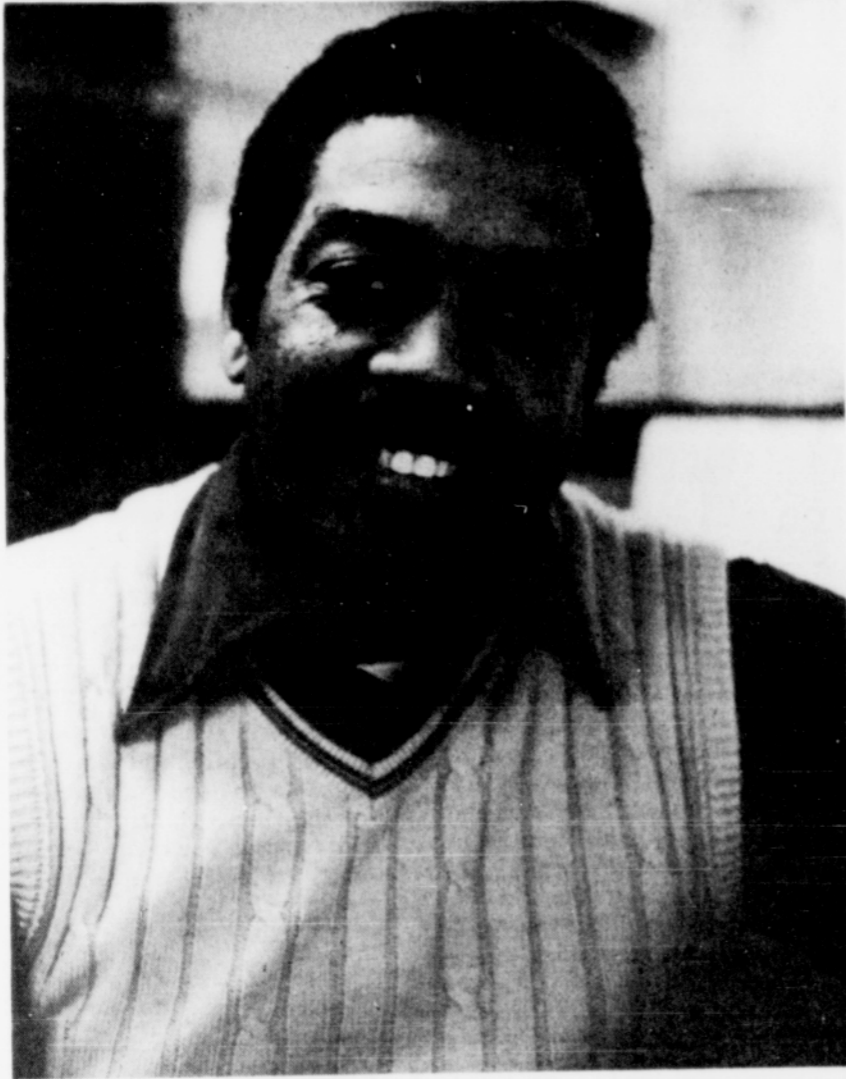
Observer: What are the advantages in seeking early career development help?

Parker: There are so many things that a person has to consider. If a person take the time to do the career planning, he or she will become more aware of abilities, skills and so on. One can begin to identify career or job cluster areas that may complement projected aims. Many times we get locked into jobs due to family responsibilities and making ends meet. Early career development may lead to a more satisfying working career. It can also help eliminate the possibility of getting locked into a job field and being bound there by circumstances.

Observer: Which fields seem more advantageous for Blacks over the next five to ten years?

Parker: Business, accounting, especially the health occupations and other technical and scientific areas are the areas of the future. I encourage Blacks to become more involved in those areas. We have a tendency to focus on the social fields, however, we need to branch out into other fields.

One way to do that is through career planning, which begins not in college, but in childhood in the home. Parents, or guardians along with the community, school and church, must assume the responsibility of introducing the child to a comprehensive educational and living experience that will broaden the child's perspective. This is necessary in facilitating a solid foundation for career direction, character development and citizenry participation. The things the child is exposed to becomes the corner stones of what he/she will become.



DR. CARL PARKER

(Photo: Thomas Gordon)

From the Board Room

By Gladys McCoy, Chairman
Multnomah County Commissioner

The Board of County Commissioners recently approved an agreement whereby corrections, under the sponsorship of Sgt. Gary Walker, would "recog" or release under their own recognizance, certain parole violators.

Formerly an inordinate number, 50 or 17%, of the inmates at Rocky Butte jail, a pre-trial facility, were being held. This added to the overcrowding at the facility. The Parole Board was under pressure to adjudicate these alleged parole violators. One of the Circuit Court judges recently ruled on a Habeas Corpus Writ that alleged parole violators need to be adjudicated within 30 days.

A search of the Oregon Revised Statutes and Parole Board Administrative Rules revealed a 30 day process during which the violator was incarcerated for 15 days under the authority of the Corrections Administrator. Another 15 days was spent under the authority of the Parole Board, under a Suspension and Detention order. Where it could be shown these violators often met the recog criteria, Sgt. Walker of Multnomah County Corrections shared the recog strategy with both the State Corrections Administrator and the Parole Board.

The positive aspects of such a strategy are many fold. The prison population could be limited by approximately 240 less people per month. It is a fact people not incarcerated have an opportunity to continue working, supporting families and doing well in the community.

Such behavior most often results in probation or parole reinstatement. Further it keeps down the likelihood of one entering the prison system from which it is harder to be released. And it allows for greater opportunity for the jail and prison staff to develop programs for those inmates who belong incarcerated.

Sgt. Walker was given permission to interview those alleged violators under the Parole Board's jurisdiction and to recommend those who fit the criteria to the Board for recogging pending formal hearings. The plan was approved and supported by the State Corrections Administration and the Parole Board.

Since the plan was instituted approximately 200 individuals have been recogged with only three failures to appear for formal hearing. There has been a three month decrease in the state prison population including a 4% decrease in the minority population. While the gain is small, it is a significant beginning to bringing equity to minority violators who tend to be disproportionately represented in prison. The majority of the 200 recoggs so far have been minorities. This decrease was held even with a 26% increase in bookings.

The plan has promise and offers a ray of hope that minorities and poor folks, often caught up in the system unjustly, may be given a chance to remain free of the system and prove they can continue to be contributing members of the community even after minor infractions of the law.

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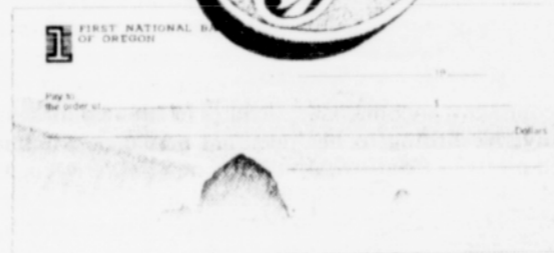
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