

Mary Anderson, Executive Director of Oregon's Chapter of the Black United Fund. Photo by Richard J. Brown

Black United Fund Seeks Community in Fundraising

"We need the community support in making this an issue in their companies. We (the Black United Fund) urge Blacks to go to their managers at their place of employment; tell them they would like to contribute to an organization like the Black United Fund (BUF)."

The above quotes were made by Mary Anderson, Executive Director of Oregon's Chapter of the BUF. It's an affiliate of the National Black United Fund, a non-profit, tax-deductible organization founded in 1974 by a group of Black leaders in Los Angeles.

The mission of the BUF is to raise funds for Black charitable organizations. The BUF's national headquarters is located in New York

Anderson said it is imperative that the entire Black community throughout Oregon support the BUF through contributions and by requesting that they include the BUF in their payroll deduction pro-

"Although charitable organizations make contributions to organizations serving Black communities, usually the amount of funding allocated is insufficient to the many needs of the Black community."

Anderson was asked whether she thought charitable organizations such as the United Way in Oregon are meeting the needs of Oregon's Black community. She replied "The BUF commends the United Way in terms of what they are trying to do. The problem is that the amount of services that is needed in this state is so overwhelming that one agency like the United Way cannot begin to meet all those needs.

She said there is a need for another organization to fill the void and act as an alternative source of funding, especially to meet the many needs of the Black community. "Some of the United Way's lowest priorities in terms of funding are often the highest priorities in the Black community. For example, one of their lowest priorities is basic education. They define that as an intention to either decrease funding or terminate funding entirely for those programs. In terms of the Black community, the education of our children is one of our top priorities. Our children are dropping out of school at an alarming rate, the suspension rate of Black children is very high, and illiteracy rates are alarmingly high.

Anderson said one of the main reasons Black charitable organizations don't have enough resources is because they rely too much on special events to raise money. "Although special events do generate funds and are good, the most effective and efficient way to raise funds historically have been through payroll deduction," she said.

She said so far the BUF hasn't made too much of an inroad with corporations in the state in order to put the BUF on their list of charitable payroll deduction programs. "This is because they have had a long-standing working agreement with United Way for over 40 years. The only places we can get payroll deductions in Oregon is from federal

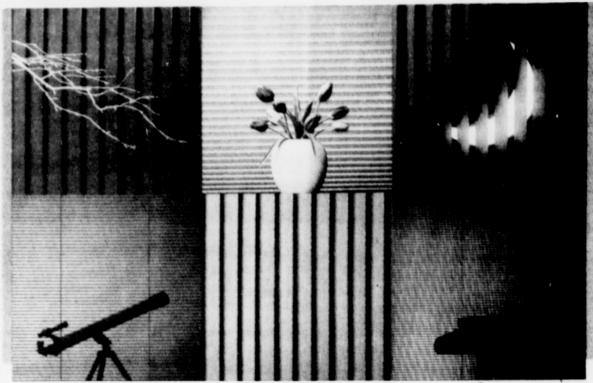
employees and school district em ployees," Anderson said.

Anderson said she wants the community to know that the BUF is a community based organization and it's for the Black community.

"We as Black people have a responsibility to assist in our own growth and development. We must support programs we believe are important for our survival.

Anyone who needs information about getting the BUF on a tax deductible payroll list at their place of employment or would like to make a donation, can write to: Mary Anderson, Executive Director, BUF, P.O. Box 12406, Portland, OR 97212, or they can drop by the BUF office at 3802 NE Union Ave., Room 302.

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