

PORTLAND OBSERVER

Introducing ...



Marcus White,
Journalist,
Formerly of Portland,
Now living in
Atlanta, Georgia



James O.I. Ekeji
Member of the Community
Development's Housing
and Community. Mr. Ekeji
is a native of Nigeria, Africa.



Gaylene Bickham
Student, Jefferson High
Watch for her column
"School Beat!"
Coming Soon In The
Portland Observer

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The Future Of African-Americans

(Excerpts from the Congressional Task Force Summary Report
"The Future of African-Americans to the Year 2000")

African-Americans and the American Technological Future
At the most general level, if the future of America is its children, the future of its economy is tied to its future in evolving global technological leadership. And the future of African-Americans may be significantly determined by the extent to which we participate in science, engineering, and technology in the years to come. The National Science Board Commission on Pre-college Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology has indicated that ...⁴²

Already the quality of our manufactured products, the viability of our trade, our leadership in research and development, and our standards of living are strongly challenged. Our children could be stragglers in a world of technology. Science, engineering, and technology represent the leading edge of American industry and employment, and they are not functioning the way that they should to assure the future of this country as a world industrial leader.

The Hudson Institute has reported that the population group from which most scientists and engineers have been traditionally drawn, namely white males, will be a declining element of the total U.S. population and of the workforce that is derived from it.⁴³ To maintain the current U.S. position in science, engineering, and technology, it is necessary to involve more African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and women of all ethnicities in these occupations. It is no longer a matter of justice or morality for African-Americans to be fully educated for participation in the emerging American economy, but a matter of national security.

At the present time, black participation in these fields is substantially below that of European-Americans. According to the National Science Foundation,⁴⁴

- African-Americans, who are about 12 percent of the population, were only about 2 percent of the employed scientists and engineers.

- About 40 percent of black scientists and engineers have fewer than 10 years' experience, compared to 31 percent of European-Americans.

And also as reported by the National Science Foundation⁴⁵, the numbers of new black scientists and engineers in the pipeline are not that encouraging ...

- Though black high school seniors are slightly more likely to claim science or engineering as their probable college majors, black high school students are generally far less likely to take science and mathematics courses than European-Americans.

- Black college and graduate school students are not in fact completing degrees in these fields in the same proportions as European-Americans. Though about 10 percent of all college students are African-Americans, they are earning less than 6 percent of the college degrees in science and engineering. At the graduate level, African-Americans are 5 percent of all enrolled students, but level, African-Americans are 5 percent of all enrolled students, but earn only about 4 percent of the master's degrees and slightly more than 2 percent of the doctoral degrees in science and engineering.

In business development, though there are no comprehensive studies of African-American ownership participation in industries emphasizing science and technology, it seems apparent that there is very little of this kind of activity.

There is a national need to encourage more participation in science and technology by everyone, but especially by African-Americans. The Hudson In-

stitute report, *Workforce 2000*, anticipates that there will be substantial employment opportunities for African-Americans in these important fields which are on the leading edge of the new industrial development. However, unless a far greater proportion of black youth becomes seriously interested in science and technology to the point of successfully pursuing studies in these areas, these opportunities will be taken by other new entrants in the labor force (such as white women).

Racism Continues

It has long been alleged that the United States is a racist society. One of the most memorable instances of this was in the Kerner Commission Report published 20 years ago in the wake of a wave of urban riots and rebellions.⁴⁶

Racism persists in the United States. Though there have been important changes in widely held beliefs and feelings about how African-Americans should be treated and discriminatory practices have been largely discredited, racist attitudes and practices persist, and reinforce the overwhelming subordination of African-Americans in almost all areas of social life.

- Poverty is worse now that it was twenty years ago. More people are poor—both white and non-white. Those who are poor are poorer. Escape from poverty is harder. Overall unemployment in America is twice what it was twenty years ago. And unemployment for blacks is now twice what it was twenty years ago. And unemployment for blacks is now twice what it is for whites.

- The Kerner Report is coming true: America is again becoming two societies, one black (and, today, we can add Hispanic), one white—separate and unequal.

"Elmore Willis: A Community Stalwart"

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

A kind word, an outstretched hand, and a content heart are all expressions that would only scratch the surface in describing this giant of a man.

He had humble beginnings. He was born in Arcadia, Louisiana to Molly Grimes Willis and Richard Willis. He grew up with his two sisters and four brothers, attended Arcadia High School and then worked after he graduated from high school.

He decided to venture out on his own—so, he went to the United States Navy. He served four years in the Navy and received an honorable discharge. After he was discharged, he moved to Washington state where he met and married Jewel Williams. They were united in 1959.

He worked hard to support his family. He worked with construction companies in Idaho, Washington and Oregon. Upon his retirement from the construction work, he and Jewel moved to Portland where they made their home.

"El" or "Willie," as he was affectionately called by most who knew him, was a man who would never turn any one away when they were in need. Even during his illness he was more concerned with his family's welfare and the welfare of others more than he was with himself.

For many years, he would go to Fred Meyer, Safeway and Albertson's stores and take people home who couldn't afford taxi fare or had too many packages to ride the bus.

He had no misgivings about helping people. If a person needed a helping hand, he was there.

On September 19, 1988, the Lord called Elmore Willis home, for a well needed rest. The funeral services were held at the Killingsworth Little Chapel of the Chimes at 11:00 a.m. The officiating minister was Dr. James



Elmore Willis

April 1, 1910 - Sept. 19, 1988

E. Martin, pastor of the Mount Olivet Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Jewel; two children, Travis Bailey Willis of Sierra Vista, Arizona and Yolanda Ann Willis of Portland, Oregon; two sisters, Mrs. Irene Foster of Arcadia, Louisiana and Mrs. Pella Foster of Ruston, Louisiana; four brothers, Earl Willis of Arcadia, Louisiana, Clinton Willis of Grambling, Louisiana, Gladney Willis of Dayton, Ohio and Joe Cephus Willis of Beaumont, Texas; in-laws Willa B. Micna, Marguerite, Effie, Bessie, Sammie Lee Buckhanan, Mildred Champion, A.B. and Herman Williams; many, many cousins, nephews and nieces, a host of many, many dear friends.

He will be remembered by many, many people in the community. His willingness to help others and the unselfish love that was so characteristic of him, shall never be forgotten.

A man of very few words, he went about doing good as one of God's chosen, should. He lived to serve.

Creed Of The Black Press

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from social and national antagonisms when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color, or creed, full human and legal rights. Hating no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

Portland Observer's Special Commentary

by Leon Harris, General Manager

Northeast Portland residents may have been surprised recently to notice the introduction of yet a third Black-owned newspaper to the community. Competition among businesses, when well spirited, can be profitable for all but only if those profits are shared in some fashion with the community.

The two senior media outlets in the community (the *Skanner* and *The Observer*) have demonstrated a firm and heavy commitment to Northeast Portland through property acquisition, and employment of area residents.

Factually speaking, the two businesses proudly boast a work force comprised of 98% N.E. Portland residents. The third and newest Publication has no investment in the community, can boast of no employee from the community, and in fact, is headquartered in Seattle, Washington.

This means profits reaped in Oregon are earmarked for deposit and investments out of state.

The economic plight of North and Northeast Portland mandates every available dollar be earmarked for the resurrection of economic development in the area, and employment of area residents. To accommodate or support businesses that do not em-

brace this philosophy would serve no useful purpose.

The Publisher of this third newspaper that is being introduced to Portland, has demonstrated through the operation of his existing downtown business, what little regard he has for local talent or businesses in North, Northeast Portland. His termination of Portland area residents and transplanting Seattleites to replace them, coupled with his no-credit and Cash only policy for advertisers in North and Northeast Portland sends mixed signals to this community.

Neil Goldschmidt was elected Governor of Oregon due largely to his Oregon comeback plan. In it, he strongly emphasized investing in Oregon and buying from Oregonians. This is an economic strategy that has proven successful and to distract from it now would render the plan ineffective. This community would be ill advised to endorse and support a new out-of-state venture, when the Parent organizations has responded to area economic concern with almost utter disdain.

The *Observer* says NO to this new business and any other that shows a lack of faith in the areas of Economic Development efforts.

NEWSMAKER OF THE WEEK



Samuel Brooks

our capabilities."

In 1986, Mr. Brooks became the first westerner to be appointed to the National Advisory Board and will serve the final year of his three year term as its elected chair. Brooks have long been active in the Oregon small business community. Besides managing his own small business—a consulting firm—he acts as the executive director of the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs. He has served for five years on the Oregon SBDC Network Advisory Committee, stepping down as state chair in June of this year. Mr. Brooks currently serves on the Portland Chamber of Commerce board of directors and is a commissioner for the Oregon Convention Center.

The *Portland Observer* salutes Mr. Brooks as its' Newsmaker of the Week and as its Citizens of the Week. We are proud of his latest accomplishment and his continuing contributions to Portland's African-American community.

Mr. Samuel Brooks, President of S. Brooks & Associates Inc., has been elected Chair of the National Advisory Board of Small Business Development Centers, effective October 1, 1988.

Mr. Brooks is the first African-American in the country to be elected to the position.

The National Advisory Board is comprised of private sector business leaders, and advises the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) program. The SBDC program, which operates over 600 centers in 45 states, provides business counseling, information and training to America's small business operators. Oregon's SBDC network of 22 small business centers is managed through the Oregon Economic Development Department.

"I am very excited about what has happened" Mr. Brooks said. "My election of Chair is not only good for the African-American community in Portland ... it is good for the State of Oregon. That I am the first African-American to be elected as Chair of the National Advisory Board is a reflection of the tremendous talent that exist in Portland's African-American community."

"My job as Chair is to make the best use of the unique talents of the people on the board in the interest of Small Businesses," Mr. Brooks continued. "We hold meetings all over the country and it really draws attention when people learn I'm from Oregon. It gives me an excellent opportunity to talk about what Oregon has to offer business and to promote