

# At The Oregon Department of Transportation We Share The Dream

When Martin Luther King gave his infamous "I Have A Dream" speech, he invoked a vision of what America could become and his vision inspired millions of Americans to work together to produce positive, constructive change in our society.

Martin Luther King's voice awoke the conscience of our nation. The speech he so eloquently delivered on that August day in 1963, will be an enduring legacy for generations to come because it expressed the heart and soul of the American dream as a land offering opportunity for prosperity to all its citizens.

We at ODOT are pleased to join with others in honoring the birthday of this great American leader with a Special Edition of this publication. We feel an even greater honor to his legacy are the programs and activities at ODOT that are helping to give young minorities an opportunity to pursue their dreams, and in doing so bring the American dream closer to reality. Below we describe a few of those programs.



Khvong Vihh Ho, Mario Rodriguez, Jorae Hernandez, Alteha Moroene & Joe Ball.

## Minority Student Summer Engineering Institute

For the last two years, ODOT has supported a program, together with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), and Portland State University in support of a program that targets minority students interested in an engineering career.

The Minority Student Summer Engineering Institute is entering its third year of operation. Seventeen minority high school students participated in a five-day workshop at Portland State University during the summer of 1988. An expanded two week program for 35 junior and senior students is being planned in 1989.

The program exposes students to a variety of engineering fields and includes formal presentation, laboratory tours with "hands on" work, site visits, and group project activities.

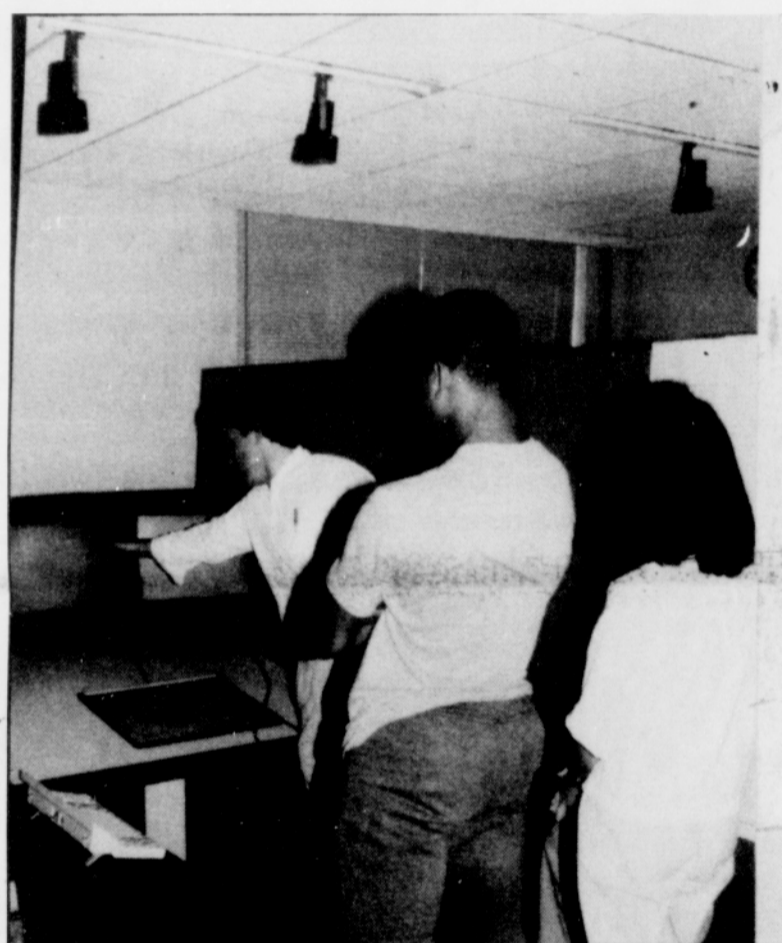
The students have been particularly impressed with being able to meet with practicing engineers in a work environment.

## Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement Program

Rochelle, Chau, and Toi were all participants of the MESA Program. ODOT has worked with the MESA program for several years. MESA is a program designed to attract minority middle and high school youth into careers in sciences, engineering, math and technology.

MESA students participate in a variety of activities including: study groups, science labs, technical site visits with hands-on activities, speakers, design contests, math and science competitions, and mentorship and internship opportunities.

Portland MESA is a joint venture between the Portland State University School of Engineering and Applied Science and Portland Public Schools. The MESA program is open to all students at participating schools, but its missions is to encourage minority students to enter careers in math, science and engineering.



## High School Summer Intern Program

The Oregon Department of Transportation continues to assist minority and female high school students through summer employment programs. These programs provide opportunities to gain skills and experiences that can lead to a successful career in the field of transportation.

In 1988, six high school students throughout the State were employed on engineering, surveying, and maintenance crews. Three students worked in Portland. The response from both students, and supervisors was overwhelmingly "thumbs up", "let's do it again next year".

Rochelle Watson, a Benson High School student, worked on Paul Hailey's Design crew. Rochelle worked in an office setting that provided her a good learning experience. She assisted with the coloring of maps, performing survey work, checking mathematical calculations on projects, and provided basic engineering and office support. Rochelle stated she enjoyed working with the survey crew and designing her "own" parking lot. Rochelle plans to follow her dream of becoming an engineer. "The self-esteem she has gained from a job well done will help her achieve that dream," said Hailey.

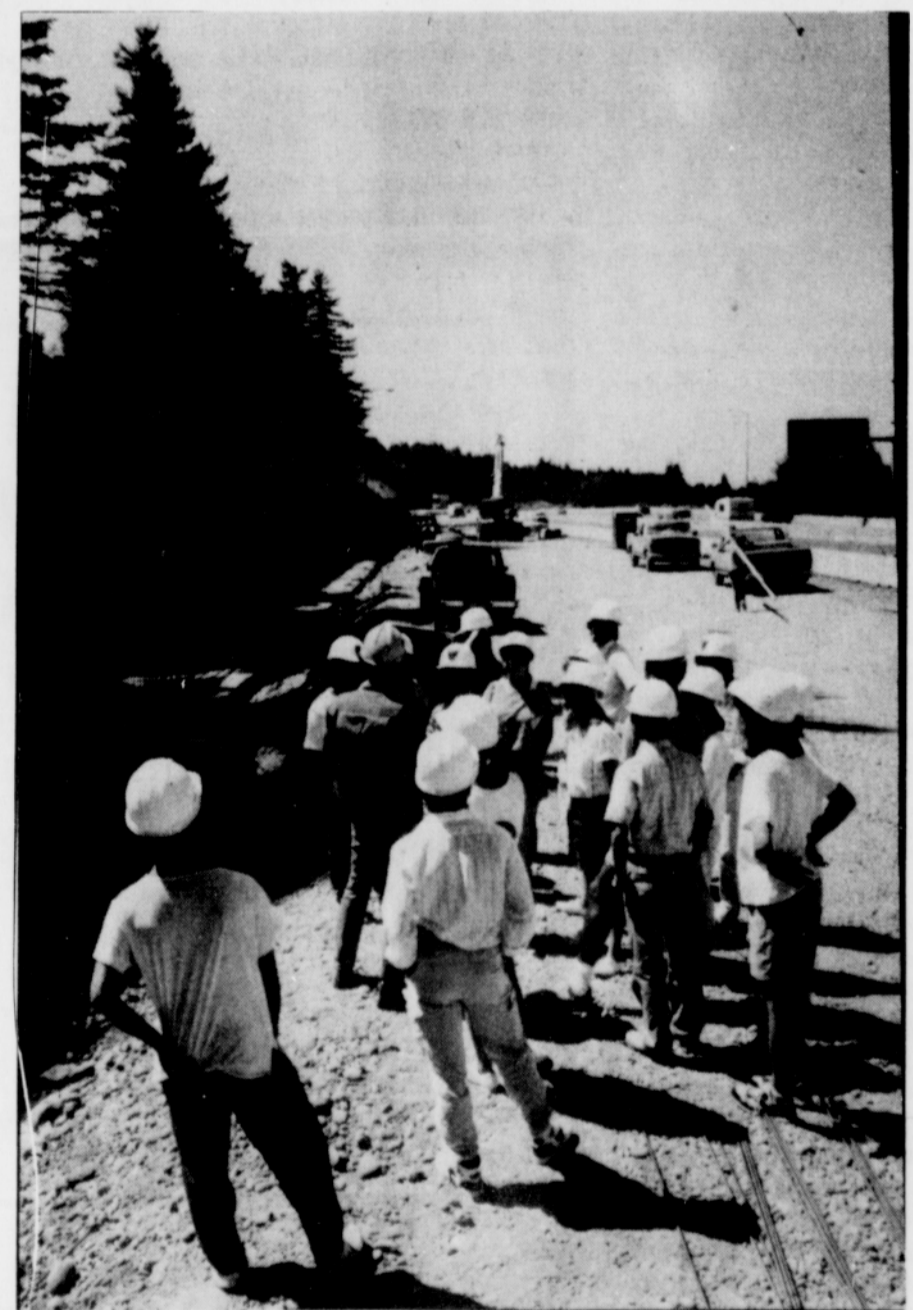
Bob Schalk hired Chau Pham, another student at Benson High School, to work in his Design office. She was responsible for examining location of road improvements. Chau

used a computer drafting system to lay-out various locations and designs of road construction projects, performed math calculations to help determine the costs of her designs, and spent time in the field performing survey work and seeing first-hand how her designs would be built.

Larry Olson, Utility Specialist, told Chau, "If you tackle your studies with the same enthusiastic challenge you showed in working for the Highway Division you will do well"....."You are talented, hardworking, and courteous, you have a bright future."

District Maintenance Supervisor Dave Willhite, employed Toi Lim of Franklin High School, on Maintenance crew in the Portland area. Toi worked with construction plans and permits. She assisted with inspection, reviewing of construction plans, and removing of traffic signal heads. Toi was also given the responsibility of answering the telephone and fielding questions whenever possible. Toi has a better understanding of road work the Highway Division operations regarding permits and plans. Dave stated Toi was an added plus to the office.

Toi was able to "continue her dream" by learning to expand her horizons. Toi stated, "I can do anything I want to do." Toi indicated the most challenging experience faced was learning to read maps. She indicated the hands-on experiences required her mental abilities as well as physical abilities.



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