

Allowance: The Sum Is Up To You

by Gaylene Bickham

Many times, I think of what Portland truly has to offer youth, especially African-American Youth. And, I find that the proposition is of great capacity, and, because of this, I am inclined to believe that 1989 can hold great promise; a great promise of opportunities, unlimitedness and the power to place our feet on the ground, jump as high as we can and get on it!

There are opportunities for those who wish to excel, such as Math Engineering Science Association (M.E.S.A.), The Self Enhancement Program, Upward Bound and Brothers Gaining Equality Through Excellence. All these programs are designed to help us become the best that we can be. As for finding out about scholarships other than the ones mentioned in announcements, there is the Post High School Opportunities Resource guide. This guide can be picked up in your High School Counselor Office. There are also programs designed to assist students in understanding lessons in an even better way: the Whitney Young Learning Center. There is the Private Industry Council that can place you in a job or a great youth program. Through all this, it is clear that there are organizations inclined to help students make good decisions and clearly this means that you are not all alone. It is important to keep in mind that Portland may be a small city, but it has plenty to offer. I mean, have only named a few of the great programs compared to the tremendous amount there are here in Portland. It is because of this that there is no reason why there should be any stopping/sojourning in anything you do.

African-American youth--as with other youth, the opportunity begins in the class room. Now based on the information given by the Enrollment Report of Portland Public Schools Oct. 1988, we have 8,176 African-American Students enrolled in Portland public schools. In the schools, as well as at home, we are often told that the key to success is education, and keep in mind that, we will be faced with a challenge. So as students we must do the best that we can.

PEER PRESSURE

However there is a flip side to that. There are some African-American Youth who are given the Power created for themselves by themselves to someone else. They do this by peer pressure or by joining Youth Gangs. Both of these things are put into act by students who feel less than. Now, it is not as if only African-Americans are the only ones who have THESE PROBLEMS, but we do have a small percentage of people compared to other races and the last thing we need is a degeneration in our population.

Peer pressure is a serious matter, especially for youth. I remember a time when I was in the 5th grade and there were these black knee high boots and these Jet-Set bell bottom pants that I had. My mother bought these two items thinking that I would really like them but I didn't. These two items would sit in my closet day in and day out. until finally, my mom realized this and made me wear them to school. At this point, I thought it would be the worst day of my life. But, I thought I knew a way to fix that: I would sneak some clothes in my book bag. When we arrived at the school, my mom asked to see my book bag, and then busted me for sneaking the clothes. So, I had to wear this nice jacket and sweater with these ugly bell bottoms and boots that I hated. It was terrible. I sat in my desk the whole day. I didn't eat lunch and I didn't even go out to recess to play kick ball with my best friend. I didn't even go to the bathroom until 3:30 p.m after school. When I think back, I laugh, but then again, I am glad I am not like that today, because peer pressure causes people to do things they would never do under normal circumstances--such as sneak clothes to school or what ever else. But, many students feel that they don't fit in if their clothing is not up to par, or if they don't have what the other people around them have. If there was not so much emphasis on clothing, a lot of this would not happen. What needs to be kept in mind is that people make clothing, clothing doesn't make people.

I recently spoke with a gang member. We will call him Taylor. "I first asked what does a gang do for him."

He then replied "They are my homees and they are there when I need them."

Before I could even ask he then went to tell me that he joined a gang because he once was beat up by the opposing gang so that led him to join.

"Taylor what is there to do in a gang for fun?"

"We kick it."

"Can you be more specific?"

"We wear our colors, go to parties and chill."

"Taylor how do you feel about being Black?"

"I'm proud to be Black."

"How can you be proud to be Black when it is the activity that you are involved in that is causing a degeneration in the Black population?"

"Well if someone messes with me,

I mess with them, it's an eye for an eye."

"Well if it was an eye for an eye every one would be blind. But even still it makes no difference to you?"

"Nope."


"Well through what you have just told me, it seems to me since you can just sit and say that you will mess with anyone who messes with you meaning even when it is that of your own kind rather than tell them what's right, means you really don't care or feel anything about the Black race, let alone are you able to feel proud?" He said nothing.

I discussed many more issues as far as his gang activity is concerned which will appear in an article later to come.

We as a public must keep the gang

violence from spreading. As of now the gang toll is much smaller than what we believe. At one point I thought there were hundreds of gang members when in reality according to the Police Department there are only 152 active youth gang members here in Portland. All of this, as far as youth joining gangs, can be considered as ignorance. Ignorance to the opportunities, ignorance to knowing how important school is and all the advantages or it can be the ignorance of the parent to make the child aware. But who knows? Well, next week you will and I will to.. In the mean time, keep in mind that as far as allowance is concerned, the sum is up to you.

Gaylene Bickham is a Junior at Jefferson High School She is also the recipient of a scholarship award from the Portland Observer.



Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.
A finely-detailed
porcelain portrait bust.
by **Olvero**
Height: 10 Inches
Width: 8 Inches
Ebony Color
Weight: Including Solid
Walnut base is 2 Lbs.,
8 Ounces

Please Allow 5 Weeks
For Delivery

This attractive porcelain is yours for only \$75.
Oliver Tracy, Box 14265, Portland, Oregon 97214
For more information please call (503) 235-0481

**Come See What's
New At Your...**

NEWLY REMODELED

Union & Ainsworth

**Growing To
Serve You Better!**

SAFEWAY



DELICATESSEN

Designed for people on the go, your Safeway Deli Shop is a full-service deli that offers you a vast array of tantalizing deli favorites, both hot and cold. Cheeses, imported and domestic, deli meats sliced to order, freshmade sandwiches, ready-to-bake pizza, and carefully prepared hot foods are just a few of the offerings to be found.

For a quick and delicious dinner treat, try our deli-cious fried chicken available in dinner boxes with salad, roll & honey...or in chicken pack boxes.

Also featured in our Deli Shop is our take-out Salad and Soup Bar. Choose from over 40 fresh ingredients at our salad bar where you can create your own fresh salad or try our tasty coleslaw, bean and pasta salads for a change of pace.



Jeff Bates
Safeway's
Deli-Shop
Manager

**COME, CHECK OUT THESE
SPECIALTY DEPTS. TODAY!**

- New Bakery with French Ovens
- Full Service Seafood Market
- Open Service Produce Area
- New Frozen Yogurt Machine
- New Frozen Vitari Machine
- New Fresh Squeezed Orange Juice Machine
- New Full Service Deli
- New Soup & Salad Bar
- New Full Service Floral
- New Pharmacy
- New Decor

Be Sure To Look
In Your
This Week
MAGAZINE
for your Safeway
Shopping Guide for
a complete list of
specials on sale this
week at Safeway!

SAFEWAY