

News Around Town

PCC and High School Counselors Discuss Dropout Prevention

"Keeping Kids in School: Options for Counselors, Choices for Kids," was the provocative title of a workshop that brought 30 high school counselors together with PCC staff at the Rock Creek Campus to discuss strategies for reducing the high school dropout rate.

The workshop coincided with a report in "The Oregonian" on Department of Education figures that show a 27 percent dropout rate in Oregon.

Jim Van Dyke, executive dean of PCC's Rock Creek Campus, talked about dropout prevention in the context of the predicted worker shortage in the 21st century.

Based on the US Department of Labor report "Workforce 2000," Van Dyke noted 75 percent of the workers in the year 2000 are already in the workforce, which will be predominantly composed of minorities and women in the future. The average person can expect to change jobs three to four times in his or her career.

Van Dyke described the educators' dilemma of keeping pace with rapidly changing technology, while not knowing what specific skills the future workplace will require. "We must guarantee every student the training, education and skills needed to be successful."

Barbara Ross, director of Governor Neil Goldschmidt's Student Retention Initiative, is concerned by a lack of local consensus on the school systems; goals.

"We need strong leadership, teacher involvement and strong community support," she said.

She encouraged counselors to ask more questions about what their schools; goals are and what is being done to achieve them; to support people who are doing things right; and to build partnerships within the community.

The workshop also featured a panel of three students who had dropped out of high school but were completing their education through PCC's high school completion program. The students discussed why they had left high school, what perspectives they had gained, what advice they would give to other students considering dropping out, and why the PCC program met their needs.

Local educators spoke about successful high school-PCC partnerships that are currently offering students alternatives to dropping out of school. Betty Simon, a counselor at Aloha High School, described a program the Beaverton high schools and PCC started last fall for students who were not succeeding in a traditional academic setting and were not achieving up to their potential. By next year, she anticipates 75 students will enter the program and will show high rates of success.

PCC Associate Dean Sherry Robinson described the Portland Area Vocational Technical Education Consortium (PAVTEC) as another opportunity for students who are not in college-preparatory tracks. In the 2+2 program, students stay in school but can earn both high school and college credit. PCC and the 27 high schools in its district currently have 60 letters of agreement, enabling students to earn 783 credits last year.

COMMUNITY POLICING LEGISLATION

PORTLAND--State Representatives Bev Stein, D-Portland, and Mike Burton, D-Portland, joined Mayor Bud Clark and Police Chief Dick Walker in announcing the introduction of legislation creating a statewide grant program for community policing demonstration projects. The bill receives its first reading in the House today.

Clark brought a proposal for a community policing demonstration project for the City of Portland to the legislators in early April. House Bill 3498, introduced by Stein, Burton and others creates a state grant program available to cities interested in instituting a community policing program.

"This is one of the most exciting new ideas for addressing crime in neighborhoods I've heard about in years. I am extremely optimistic about community policing and the impact it will have on crime in our cities," Stein said.

Clark said community policing is one of his top priorities because he believes traditional police methods aren't working.

"Community policing is part of our overall campaign to restore order to our streets and revitalize the livability of our neighborhoods. It will work hand in hand with the regional drug initiative, neighborhood re-

talization, and the safer city plan," Clark said.

Burton, Co-sponsor of the legislation, said he thought police departments needed a new tool to deal with crime.

"The 1970's brought a degree of alienation of police departments with some segments of our community. The people and the police became distanced with one another. At the same time, the crime rate grew in Oregon. The police are holding the line, but just that. We need to offer a proactive opportunity for the people to attack crime, and the community policing concept offers that opportunity" Burton said.

Clark and Walker said the city would apply to the grant program if passed by the legislature. The city is well on its way to implementing community policing and is currently holding public meetings to get citizen input, and explain the program. Clark said he had talked to other Oregon mayors about Portland's plans to adopt community policing.

"Community Policing is new to Portland, but not to American cities. Cities from Madison, Wisconsin, to Houston have begun using community policing in one way or another, and there's a lot of interest out there among Oregon mayors," he said.



CITY COMMISSIONER DICK BOGLE (right) and Geneva Jones (left), president of the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center Board, accept a check for \$31,000 from Wayne Pierson, treasurer of the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust, and Marty Lemke, senior program officer with the trust. The money is the first installment of a three-year, \$78,000 grant to the IFCC for theater audience Development. About 1500 Portland area students will see a production of "The Meeting," a fictional meeting between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, and will discuss the play both before and after seeing it.

Statement From State Representative Margaret Carter

As the Urban League of Portland embarks on its annual membership campaign, I want to express my support for the organization and the invaluable services it has provided.

Since 1945, the Urban League has helped the young, the old, the poor, and the homeless by offering many beneficial services to the community, including employment referrals, senior service programs, youths services, emergency interven-

tion programs, shelter for the homeless and a learning center for 7th through 12th grade students. They also work with many other agencies in the community and are advocates for the people.

Now more than ever, the Urban League needs our support. I would urge everyone concerned about the future of our community to become members of this fine organization and give it their generous financial support.

CHURCH BELLS TO ANNOUNCE ARRIVAL OF TWIN TOWERS

On Thursday, May 18, three downtown churches will ring their bells to celebrate completion of the steel framework for the Oregon Convention Center's twin towers. The chimes will peal when the second tower is "topped" with its 110-foot spire and upper tower section, bringing it to a height of 250 feet.

Barring unforeseen delays, the topping is expected the morning of May 18. The first tower is scheduled to be topped on Friday, May 12.

"The people of the Portland area have been watching the convention center take shape since work began a year ago," Metro Executive Officer Rena Cusma said, "and since the towers are such an important new landmark, we want to publicly welcome their arrival with the bells."

The towers, which will be sheathed in glass, will allow light into the center's 22,000-square-foot lobby. As part of the convention center's 1 Percent for Art program, a pendulum will be suspended above a gilt starburst in the atrium of one tower. The convention center public art committed is seeking a sponsor to commission a project for the other tower.

Construction and operation of the Oregon Convention Center, which is scheduled to open in September 1990, is managed by Metro.

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