

## Program Encourages Minority Students to Seek Health Careers

CORVALLIS--Hector Faccio may not be the "typical" Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) student, but he's an example of what the program aims to nurture - academic success.

HCOP has helped Faccio overcome an initial college experience outside OSU that he called "negative and discouraging." Some "growing up" on his own, combined with HCOP's thorough advising and introduction to the OSU system, has helped Faccio successfully pursue pre-medical studies while working full-time as an emergency room technician in Eugene.

"They've been very supportive (in HCOP)," he said. "I think it's a great program."

HCOP is an academic support program designed to encourage minority and low-income students to seek health care careers. It combines a Summer Science Institute for entering freshmen and transfer students with an intense advising, tutoring, counseling, academic enhancement program through their college careers. The goal is to see the students graduate and go on to a professional medical school, said program director Thurman Holder.

"The odds are tremendously against them," said Holder. Language, cultural differences, absence of role models, no family tradition of college education - all these factors and more combine to pose a big challenge to minority students.

Through what Holder calls "basically a good support system," HCOP helps to even out the academic challenges. "Out of last year's group, we didn't lose anyone." That compares with a 25-30 percent dropout rate for all students and a 50-60 percent rate for minorities.

"They've made us feel like we can make mistakes and still make it through

college," said Tami Nguyen, Beaverton, a sophomore in pre-med.

Becoming acquainted with the campus during summer "wasn't so hectic," said Brenna Ferguson, Portland, a freshman considering a pharmacy career. She also appreciates the study skills, computer and writing classes, in addition to the chance to meet "a lot of friends so I didn't feel alone."

HCOP fills a definite need in the health-care field, Holder said.

"Traditionally, minority and rural populations are greatly underrepresented

**"Traditionally, minority and rural populations are greatly underrepresented in the health professions," said Holder. A very low percentage of health career graduates are from minorities.**

in the health professions," said Holder. A very low percentage of health career graduates are from minorities.

"I believe there is one Native American dentist in the entire state of Oregon," said Holder. "And the first Native American dentist in the country is still alive." Health careers just are not an option automatically pursued by minorities, he said.

The obstacles are formidable, Holder said. For example, a large percent of Native American students in Oregon drop out of school before they graduate from high school. That leaves few to even try to enter college, let alone specialize in a health-related field.

Economics can be an imposing factor. Some of the students have to contend with the effect their attending college has on the rest of the family.

"They know that what they're doing is, in the long run, going to help their families, but it's the short-term they worry about," Holder said. The long-term benefits are very hard to see when short-term

needs are critical and immediate.

"It's so much more attractive to take a job driving a logging truck before they even graduate from high school," Holder said.

Most of the students are the first person in their families to attend college, "so once they get here, their families have no idea what they're doing or why it's taking so long. There are just so many places for them to fall out along the way."

Some of the students also must overcome culture differences, especially as they apply to careers in health care.

"Many Native Americans practice traditional medicine and there is very little tolerance in academia for traditional healing practices," Holder said. "The Native Americans put more emphasis on the spiritual or metaphysical approach to healing."

Others must overcome religious differences that set them apart from mainstream students.

While many students dislike dorm food, "for some of these students, it's really different," Holder said, and the problems go beyond food selection and preparation. "Many minorities emphasize mealtime as a family time. Dorm food time is so opposite, it's very impersonal," Holder said.

That's why the HCOP program organizes retreats and other social events to help the students find a slice of home while they're at OSU.

The counselors "make you feel like you're worth something and that there's somebody here who cares for you," Nguyen added.

To Faccio, it's made the difference between struggle and success.

"If you work and are interested, they give you the guidance you need to channel your energies toward a goal."

## AIDS Is Not Race, Nor Ethnic Based, Experts Say, It's Caused by Behavior, Urge Parents to Inform Young of Dangers

by Chester A. Higgins, Sr. (Special to NNPA)

### AIDS! America's fastest growing and most deadly disease.

Unknown to medical science before 1980-81, the deadly virus is fast becoming one of the nation's biggest and most relentless killers.

Where did it come from? What group is at greater risk of contracting the disease? Is it racially or ethnically based? Is there a cure? How can we protect ourselves and families from this terrifying scourge?

Questions abound; myths soar and often, so does public confusion.

To address this escalating welter of fear, myth and confusion, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Public Health Services are all striving to provide factual information on which the public can then act intelligently. The Centers for Disease Control, for example, is targeting seven of the nation's principal cities -- New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Houston, Miami and Puerto Rico, where sexually active teens (2.5 million each year are infected by sexually transmitted diseases), African-American women and Hispanic women appear to be HIV infected at ever increasing rates.

Dr. Helene Gayle, a medical epidemiologist in CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS, told NNPA: Since 1981 there are more than 100,000 diagnosed AIDS cases. Approximately 60 percent of these are gay men. Although Blacks and Hispanics are only 20 percent of the U.S. population, they comprise 40 percent of those infected--26 percent Black; 14 percent Hispanic. Children less than 13 years old are only two percent of this total, but about 75 percent of these, the overwhelming number, are Blacks or Hispanics. Over 18,000 of the total of HIV infected are young adults (20-29 years old).

A savvy African American scientist, Dr. Gayle declares that one of the fastest growing groups of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infected are the IV (intravenous) drug users. The number of

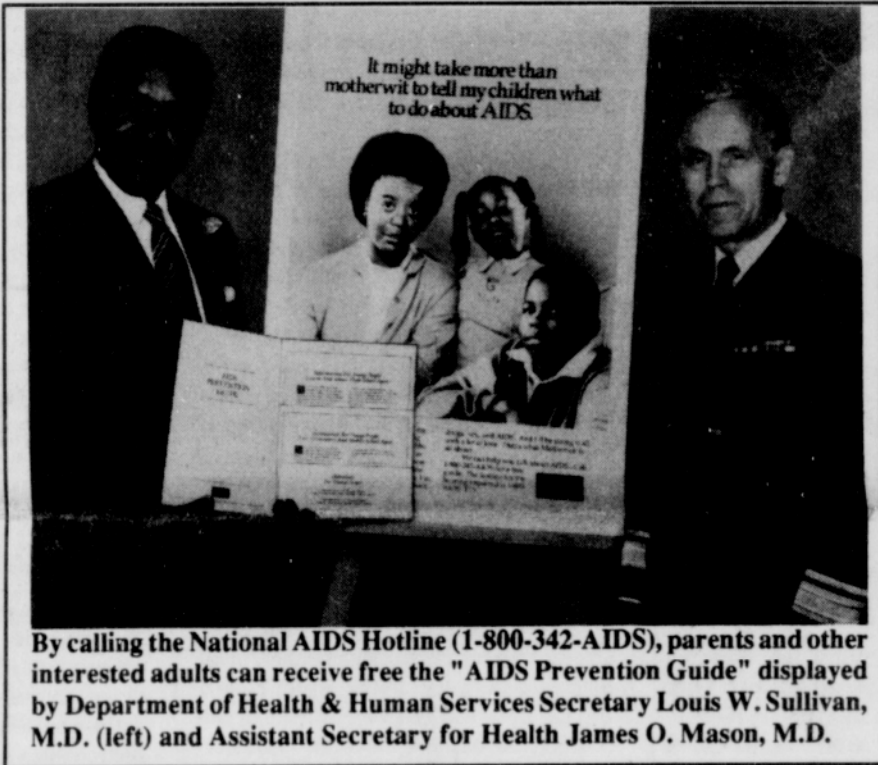
Black inner-city women infected with HIV is also increasing rapidly. Most of the women are IV drug users or the sexual partners of men who have become infected through IV drug use. Another important group to consider is young adults between the ages of 20-29 who comprise approximately one in five AIDS cases. Since AIDS infection has a 7- to 10-year incubation period, this means that many of the young adults were probably infected in their teens. Dr. Gayle says, many teenagers are already sexually active.

Over 59,000 have died since 1981--more than the total number of young men who died in combat in Vietnam. Syphilis, a sexually transmitted disease with a two- or three- week incubation period, may be an indication of the occurrence of unprotected or risky sexual behavior. The incidence of syphilis in the Black community is now increasing numbers of HIV-infected people may be expected in the future."

According to Dr. Carnes, "we need to make it clear that 1) the AIDS virus is not

easy to contract (for instance, you can't get it by kissing--even French kissing; and mosquitoes don't spread it, either); and 2) there is no one group of people more susceptible to contracting the virus than any other. It is not racially nor ethnically transmitted. It's due strictly to behavior. A gay man, a Black woman, a Hispanic man -- all are no more likely to get AIDS than a wealthy, white, heterosexual man or woman living in a mansion in Southern California."

Both Drs. Gayle and Carnes emphasize that parents



By calling the National AIDS Hotline (1-800-342-AIDS), parents and other interested adults can receive free the "AIDS Prevention Guide" displayed by Department of Health & Human Services Secretary Louis W. Sullivan, M.D. (left) and Assistant Secretary for Health James O. Mason, M.D.

But how does a parent address, say, a 16-year-old (or younger) who thinks he or she has heard it all about sex?

Talking with your children about how to avoid becoming infected by this deadly disease need not be an unpleasant experience, Dr. Gayle says. It can be an ideal opportunity for parents to reinforce values and coping skills, which are essential to helping youngsters make sound life decisions.

Dr. Sullivan cautioned that "the parent who does not take the time today to teach his or her child properly could end up later in a hospital room watching that child die."

Dr. Carnes, who with Dr. Gayle, forms a formidable African-American CDC-AIDS science-information team, said, "We estimate there are between one million and 1.5 million people now carrying the HIV virus.

should talk "simply" and often to their children about the dangers of contracting AIDS, but not create an atmosphere of hysteria or fear. They said urging "abstinence is the one fail-safe way of avoiding the disease while the youngster awaits development of a single, more mature, responsible and enduring relationship. However, messages about safer sexual practices are important for the young adult who currently, or in the near future, plans to engage in sexual activity." And most importantly, they say, Black people -- and others -- must begin to arm themselves with factual information with which to combat this deadly disease. The Centers for Disease Control, through the National AIDS Hotline (1-800-342-AIDS), is one of the principal sources where concerned citizens can receive this information, they stress.

## Black Women, Where Are You?

by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.  
Increasingly, I am interacting with more Black males through my professional-civic endeavors who ask the same question, where are the single, college educated, professional Black women in Portland?

These Black males range anywhere from 27-40 years old and earn between \$29,000-\$500,000 annually. All are college educated, sound intellectually, sexually responsible by their definition, flexible, have bright economic futures, and would prefer nothing better than to build a future with a progressive sister. These Black males talk about their willingness to plan, grow, and commit to a sister. However, all agree that they do not need a dependent. It's helpful if a sister "brings something to the party" as one brother mentioned.

Many of these Black males relocated here with a major corporation or took their first job out of college in Portland. They come from all over the United States. Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Chicago, rural Mississippi, Atlanta, St. Louis, and a host of other places. In listening to some of the experience some of them have had with Black females, they talk about how materialistic, ruthless, politically unaware, and bitter some of the Black females are from their encounters with Black males. Yes, it does work both ways.

These Black males attend church/civic functions, take out personal ads for dates, volunteer time with non-profit groups, hang out at the airport to catch a "sister" just off the plane, and attempt to coax "homegirls" out to Portland with hopes of convincing them to relocate. Few are successful.

Based on what I gathered and from personal experiences, if a "sister" has any ambition, she usually departs for college and never looks back. Eastern and Southern Black communities are generally the ones

that benefit from these types of career moves. Very few come back to Oregon.

Sure, there are some excellent Black women in this city. However, as one brother noted, they do not stay on the market long and when or if you meet up with her again, she is bitter from the relationship just departed, has any number of children, or desires her same sex. Again, the same principles apply to Black males. They carry some of the same baggage. Children are

agreed that they meet more white professional women than Black. Almost all agreed that they would not date a Black woman for the sake of dating a Black woman.

Then, there is the problem of Portland being so small and full of "cliques." Simply put, many brothers are discouraged at dating those who are from the city. One brother called it the "Bell Network." He said that your business gets home before you do in many instances. He referred to having lunch with his company's auditor, a white female, and got accused of messing around. By the way, he is an accountant for a big five firm. During lunch, he was spotted by an aunt, two cousins, and the brother of the girl he was dating. Mostly all the brothers agreed that they would prefer someone

from someplace else. Someone not affected by local poison, old relationships, lovers, family, etc. . . . a person willing to trust, keep the faith during pain or dark moments. Many agreed that Black women, ones encountered, want the same things they want but they want it NOW. Whatever happened to working and building together? Immediate gratification seems to be the general attitude among sisters according to the majority of these Black men.

Well, there you have it, Black women. A feel for what Black professional men go through day in and day out in their quest to find a sister who is responsible. According to the wife of a friend of mine, her single friends sit around and complain the same way. To her surprise, she never thought that Black males sit around, go bowling, play basketball, ski, and complain too! Where do we go from here and how do we ever get together?

We have to get together. Our survival as a race depends on it . . .

If you as a Black male or female have any suggestions, please write: c/o Brothers & Sisters, Portland Observer Newspaper, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208.

### On Women And Women On Men

KATU's Town Hall will feature a two-part series on male-female relationships and address some of the problems associated with marriage, dating, trust, and honesty. The first show, composed of all men will talk candidly about women, and in the second show, Jack Faust will talk with a group of women about men. The show with the men airs Sunday, Jan. 14th at 6 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21st at 6 p.m. will be the air date for the women.

another issue. Many of these Black males want a family and desire to help stabilize existing Black families. However, it's hard to convince a woman with a family, to have one or two more for his sake or worst, attempt to raise a "ready made" family with negative influences from the biological father. The question remains, where are the "sisters?"

Multi-racial dating is another sensitive subject among Black females and Black males. One Black male suggested that it is much easier to date white women because most of them are not looking for commitment, only a good time at mostly their expense. He planned to hang out with white women until he found the right sister. He also suggested that white women, knowing that there is no commitment involved, take being "dumped" lightly. Sisters take it personally brothers, too.

Other Black males contend that they will date only Black women. In accepting this stance, one brother accepts periods of being alone and lives to travel with his job which takes him consistently to Black cities. It's all about the race for him. Some

## Newspaper Publishers Group Appoints Chief Executive Officer

NEW YORK--Archie Colander, Jr. recently was named Chief Executive Officer of Amalgamated Publishers, Inc. (API), the marketing representative for 87 national Black newspapers.

"This is a major step in our plan to strengthen the marketing, sales and admin-

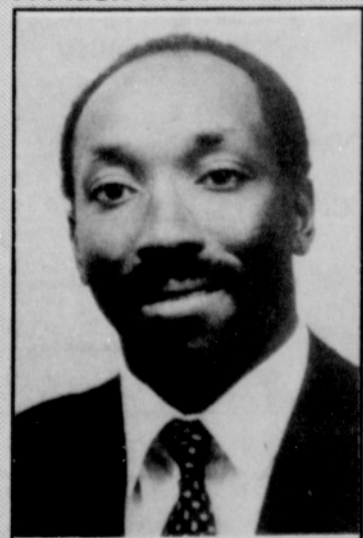
istrative services offered to our member companies," said Garth Reeves, president of API and publisher of the Miami Times. "Colander brings over fifteen years of marketing, management and sales experience from some of the country's most respected private and public sector organizations."

Serving most recently on the national staff of the NAACP, Colander helped administer the NAACP's Economic Development and Operation Fair Share programs, fostering business and employment opportunities for African-Americans with major corporations throughout the U.S. He served as one of two NAACP negotiators for the recent Chrysler Motors Agreement.

Colander says he "clearly recognizes the challenges that face the Black Press" and plans to implement "innovative marketing" programs for API and its member papers that make sense in today's new competitive environment.

During his twelve years with the Planters Division of Nabisco Brands (RJR Nabisco), Colander's accomplishments included the development and introduction of dozens of popular snack nut products under the "Mr. Peanut" label. His national experience in sales, production and marketing with this Fortune 100 giant will serve as a valuable resource to API and the industry.

### A Flash From The Past



Johnnie Davis  
Turn to the Locker Room  
on the Sports Section.



Archie Colander, Jr.  
Chief Executive Officer

Colander received his Bachelor of Science degree from Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. He served with his wife and two children in South Orange, New Jersey and is very active in the community as a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, The Black United Fund advisory board and numerous church and civic committees.