

The Portland Observer 25¢

Teens Say Respect Key To Solving Inner-City Problems

This summer, Portland, Oregon was one of three sites across the nation for an exciting, new venture to continue Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) services to third-year high school students. STEP services are offered on a collaborative basis between The Private Industry Council and local school districts throughout Multnomah and Washington counties. Funding is provided by the federal government through the Job Training Partnership Act.

STEP offers low-income youth the opportunity to participate in summertime classroom and work experience programs designed to give youngsters the skills they will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow's workplace. Traditionally, STEP has been offered to 14- and 15-year olds with clearly-defined classroom activities during the morning and work experience in the afternoon. An advocate assigned to each student works to effect a smooth transition between the two activities and to provide ongoing support during the school year.

In this exciting new program made possible by an additional grant from the Northwest Film Center's Video/Filmmaker-In-Schools program (a statewide artist residency outreach program funded by the Oregon Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts and Metropolitan Arts Commission), Kristy Edmunds, artist-in-residence, worked hand-in-hand with STEP instructor Amy Mitchell to integrate work experience and classroom activities in the context of assisting students in the production of a 10-minute video.

For seven weeks, seven students from several high schools located in Northeast Portland made the psychologically long trek to Portland's affluent Southwest downtown area to utilize the filmmaking facilities at the Portland Art Museum's Northwest Film Center.

To begin their summer-long assignment, students (Trina Alexander, Charles Denis, Darryl English, Mario Jackmon, Nokita Merriweather, Karl



Pavelic and Jeffrey Brown) were asked to decide on a theme for their video. By brainstorming a number of topics, the students decided to incorporate the ideals of respect (for self, other youth, adults and community), a need to return to values and the need for role models into their film. Thus, the birth of "Quick to Come Up and Slow to Respect."

During the course of the following seven weeks, students worked long hours (in many cases far and above the number of hours they were being paid), as they began to take on real ownership of the project.

In the first two-and-a-half to three weeks, the youth worked to identify the message they wanted to convey in their film, who their audience was and what format the film should take (ie: drama vs. documentary) to most effectively convey the message. Once the students decided upon the format of a documentary, they then needed to identify who to interview and what scenes to film. Most poignantly, the students decided to film scenes from their own neighbor-

hoods in Northeast Portland even though in doing so the students were aware they were risking the danger of reinforcing the very stereotypes they were attempting to dispel.

Over the course of the next several weeks, the students hauled heavy and cumbersome video equipment in some-time 100+ degree temperatures to capture what they termed "moments of disrespect": broken glass, graffiti, theft, prostitutes working the streets, young children left alone to watch babies on the porches of their homes. These are the images these young people have grown up with...the reason these and other youth have been "quick to come up."

Out of the disparity, however, these young filmmakers wanted to convey a message of hope. To counter the bleak images of the first half of the film, the students interviewed a number of their peers as well as prominent members of the community to define for themselves what a positive role model is.

In the process, these seven young people left a real and lasting impression

on the many lives they touched. As Kristy Edmunds noted, these young people have empowered themselves, their mentors in STEP program and at the Northwest Film Center and they subjects they interviewed to take responsibility for their community. As Ellen Thomas, Education Director of the Northwest Film Center, commented at the premiere of the film: "(these young people) will amaze you and give you great confidence in our future."

This project was funded and supported by The Private Industry Council, Portland Public Schools, Public/Private Ventures, the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, the Portland Leaders Roundtable and the Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center.

The Private Industry Council is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote individual self-sufficiency and a skilled workforce by eliminating barriers to productive employment.

Portland Assoc. Of Black Journalist present awards

The Portland Association of Black Journalist (PABJ) has selected two outstanding journalism students to receive the PABJ Scholarship for African-American Journalism Students for 1992.

PABJ is an affiliate of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ). Proceeds from the NABJ 1991 Regional Conference in Portland established the first annual PABJ Scholarship Fund.

High school and college recipient award categories were designated by the chapter to provide funds for education in the field of journalism or related careers. Qualifications for the award were based on academic achievement, a writing sample and letters of recommendation. The awards are for \$500 each.

This year's high school student award went to Stacey Givens, 1992

graduate of Parkrose Senior High School. Stacey intends to enroll at Portland State University in the Fall and would like to prepare for a career in magazine journalism or television news reporting.

The outstanding college student award went to Glenn Harris, a student at Portland Community College. Glenn has been active on the student newspaper, The Bridge at PCC. Some of his work has also appeared in The Scanner Newspaper. He would like to continue his work in the print media.

"We've extended an invitation for these award winners to become student members of PABJ," said Ken Boddie, chapter president, "we hope to provide them with support and assistance on a practical level, too." The students will receive a certificate of award at the next PABJ chapter meeting in October.

PCC Construction Trades Program Announces First Graduates

PCC students graduate from two nationally recognized trades programs. Many have overcome great personal obstacles and now have hopes of securing high-paying construction trades jobs and bettering their lives.

From Monday Aug. 24 to Thursday, Sept. 3, students are working on job sites throughout the Portland-metro area. Sites include Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue Training Facility, City of Tigard, Washington County Community Action and Scouter's Mountain Boy Scout Camp in southeast Portland.

B-West (Building Workers Entering Skilled Trades) Regional Workforce Training Center, a six-month intensive training program to help the unemployed and those working below their ability, will graduate its first class on Friday, Sept. 4 at the Rock Creek Campus in the Pioneer Room, Building 3, 17705 NW Springville Road.

The ceremony begins at 11 a.m. and the public is invited. In addition, the college's non-traditional training program for women, B-FIT (Building Futures in Industry and Trades), will graduate its sixth class.

Fifty-one students will participate in the ceremony. The program includes guest speaker Quint Rahberger, director of Apprenticeship and Training for the Bureau of Labor and Industries; B-WEST student speakers David Ponce

and Tammy McLeod; and B-FIT student speakers Cathy Andrew and Suzanne Scheans.

B-WEST and B-FIT were both designed with these workforce changes in mind. The programs recruit and train people for jobs in construction, mechanical, electrical and masonry trades.

In addition, The B-WEST program provides program-development materials and training to high schools and community colleges and other organizations in the region. It also offers free consultation and workshops to employers in industry to help them prepare for the changing workforce.

Karla Talley, 34, is currently enrolled in the B-FIT program and will graduate on Sept. 4. The northeast Portland resident has long-term plans to become a journeyman plumber.

An African-American, Talley was looking for a trade which would "help me use my natural mechanical abilities and eliminate the boredom. I have always been awed by those who could take lumber, nails, wires and pipe and build something both useful and beautiful."

"I applied for the plumber's apprenticeship program, I was interviewed and was accepted. There's no question, I will succeed," said Talley. For more information, please contact Dick Burchell at 244-6111 ext. 7474.

NAMCO And Black Contractors Picket Emanuel And Legacy



Top: Irving Robinson, Lyles roofing, Joins Picket of Baugh Construction at Emanuel Hospital



Bottom: Families come out to lend support

"No Jobs - No Peace," is amongst the slogans of Sing Welding Pickets who gathered at a construction jobsite in north Portland beginning last Monday. The pickets are demanding contracts and job for local area businesses and residents.

The Emanuel Hospital and Health Center mob, now under construction, is located at the southwest section of the Emanuel Hospital campus. The three block area will house a six story pored concrete building and accompanying four story parking structure consisting of 425 parking stalls. Baugh Construction Company of Beaverton, Oregon, is the general contractor on the multi-million dollar project.

According to a flyer being circulated by the informational protesters, "Emanuel Hospital, a member of Legacy Health System, has lied about community economic reinvestment. They continue to build and expand in northeast Portland and around the city. After years of promising to provide jobs and contracts and to include residents, African-Americans in northeast Portland are again left out."

Baugh construction, the flyer alleged, "is contributing to this problem because they accepted the prime contract and neglected to provide jobs and subcontracts to African-Americans living in the heart of the construction activity." Pickets claim that no blacks are currently working on the project.

James Posey a spokesman for The Coalition of Contractors and unemployed construction workers headed by The National Association Of Minority Contractors Of Oregon (NAMCO), said that the picketing ac-

tivity is the culmination of efforts to the Emanuel officials sensitive to the needs of the African-Americans community prior to extensive expansion activities.

"After several years of trying to get them to realize that they need to give more than lip service to the idea of community reinvestment, they intend to expand their operation while excluding local area workers and community-based contractors from participation," Posey said.

The project in question was made possible thru land acquisition by the hospital some twenty years ago. "Many of the families removed through this urban renewal process," according to one bystander, "we're black homeowners." Some of them were driven to being renters instead of home owners because the prices paid were well below market value and they were unable to afford comparable housing in other areas of the city. Likewise, acquisition of surrounding properties also meant the demise of black-owned businesses which once formed a cultural business hub along Williams Avenue and Russell Street.

Nathan Proby, former NAMCO President, said he had contacted hospital officials as early as October of 1991, and expressed an interest in insuring that north and northeast community based contracting firms receive contracts during construction phases of the expansion program. "NAMCO received bid documents, had minority business participation language written into an addendum, and encouraged its members to submit bids." Some NAMCO members bid the project but

were not able to negotiate contracts with Baugh who said there were no low bids received from minorities.

Both Posey and Proby have discussed the deficiencies with Emanuel and Baugh Personnel over the past few months. In an August 12, 1992 letter addressed to Larry Hill Director of Corporation Real Estate, Posey addressed the broader issue of the developing of a strong contract procurement inclusion policy for community disadvantage business and suggested that Hill set up a meeting between Legacy and NAMCO representatives. No response was ever received, thus the picket.

"What we expect out of this is to bring them to the bargaining table to hammer out a long term binding policy of inclusion for jobs and real contracts," Posey said. He pointed out that Emanuel Hospital is just the tip of the iceberg. Many large corporations operate in our community and traditionally, reinvestment to them is to provide token efforts, providing free space to non-profit organizations, and the annual donation to a local civil rights agency along with circus tickets are examples of such gestures. "We mean business and are seeking the support of all concerned citizens and organizations," Posey said. Those interested are urged to come to the picket line and grab a sign. "If people are serious about economic development in the black community they will come and a help us in this effort" he said. Meaningful reinvestment comes with jobs and contracts and this does not appear to be the case with Emanuel Hospital, which as a large African-American clientele.