

## Rebecca J. Black, Portland, Oregon Nominee For Professional Services, 1993 NCLC Lewis Hine Awards

"You've gotta pray for the dead and work like hell for the living." These words are Rebecca Black's inspiration.

Five years ago, Portland suffered its first gang-related shooting. Shortly after this tragedy Becky Black moved to Northeast Portland, a neighborhood experiencing the reality of gang violence. She volunteered to establish an information and referral desk at a neighborhood center to assist youth in the inner-city community to find jobs or enter school. She discovered that few resources existed for those who had dropped out of school, or who were court or gang-involved. To fill the void, in 1988 Black created Oregon Outreach, Inc. (OOI) as a non-profit organization; she serves as executive director. During its first two years, the organization operated with a total annual budget of \$18,000 and countless volunteer hours for Black, an outreach worker and a clerical person as permanent full-time staff.

Since 1988, Black has demonstrated the incredible gains that are made when agencies link together to provide services, and she has seen clear evidence that, given the opportunity, young people will "do the right thing."

In 1989 she formed a construction crew made up of opposing gang members, "Bloods" and "Crips." She contracted with a Portland construction company and put her crew to work building the Portland House of Umoja, a residential treatment program for gang members. This project enabled the crew to earn money and learn job skills. It also assured that both groups could claim the program as their own because each had a hand in its construction.

In 1989, in an effort to find positive outlets for younger children (12 and 13 years old) who could not be legally employed, she created a garden project by utilizing a volunteer from an older worker's program and requesting and receiving donations of land, rototilling services, seeds and fencing. While the time of young people was involved in positive activities, they were also learning about gardening and providing fresh vegetables for their families.

The following summer, with a small self-help grant from the city and the donation of an overgrown lot by a church, she obtained donated electricity and water and had several of the

garden beds raised, creating the first handicapped accessible garden project in Oregon.

As work continued in the community, Black met many young people who were heavily gang involved. Through contact with State Juvenile Parole, she was assigned every gang-identified youth returning from state incarceration. She discovered that these young men did not want to live a life of looking over their shoulder, knowing they might be dead by morning. By providing a spark of hope, she maintained contact with them until she could develop a program. The local schools would not accept youth with violent behavior history. Most had been expelled from existing alternative schools. After trying for three months to have these youth entered into regular or alternative schools, Black recognized the futility, and created an Oregon Outreach, Inc. alternative school. Since then, Black has opened two additional schools in Northeast Portland. The three schools are fully accredited by the State of Oregon. One is for gang youth, one for youth with drug/alcohol problems and one for middle-school students who have been expelled.

In 1990, through a contract with the U.S. Forest Service, she organized a crew of emergency fire fighters, primarily African-American youth, from inner Northeast Portland. In 1992, at the end of their second year as emergency fire fighters, the crew members were presented certificates of achievement from Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts for their contributions to the state. Most of these youth had left gang life behind and were reaping the benefits of their first positive accomplishment.

Following the Los Angeles riots in Spring 1992, numerous community leaders collaborated to develop a proactive employment plan for Portland youth that would increase prospects for employment, especially for African-American youth and those whose families are just over the income level for entrance into the subsidized work program funded through JTPA.

OOI was selected to administer the program. The Portland Chamber of Commerce and the Association for Portland Progress became active partners by recruiting job opportunities from

employers. Local businesses and governmental agencies provided funding for the project. The program linked community-based youth-serving programs and private sector employers, with Black's office as the hub for youth referrals. Some of the placements were into subsidized jobs through The Private Industry Council, but most were placements with private employers.

The goal was employment for 300 youth; by the end of six weeks, 450 young people had been placed in jobs through Black's office. Some 700 youth were helped to acquire documents necessary for employment (birth certificates, photo ID, food handler cards and work permits), work clothes and bus tickets. A pre-employment program provided instruction in on-the-job behavior. The average cost per student was \$18.00.

Oregon's Governor presented Black and OOI with a donation on behalf of the state for their effort to keep peace through the summer. The program was acknowledged as an outstanding cooperative effort, proving that business, social agencies and government can provide better services by working together.

Besides ongoing year-round employment assistance, Black has implemented:

A tool lending library where community members may borrow the tools they need for a job until they have funds to purchase their own;

A "free" store where clothing is available to community residents who are interviewing for a job or do not have sufficient clothing for work;

An environmental education program offering inner-city youth opportunity to live and work in the wilderness;

A teen hot-line where parents and youth can get information concerning employment and services.

Becky Black's innovation will continue. As she says, "Every day, when I talk to young people, I see past the colors, the language and toughness. I see children who need us to do something now. If old methods do not work, we must dare to make fools of ourselves by trying new things, which may or may not work. Our youth have not been lost to us; they are just waiting for us to help."

## With The Name Allah The Road To Self Mastery

The self Master must find the road that leads to God (Allah), study the truth that is locked up in the Bible's signs and symbols, study the pure truth from cover to cover in the Holy Quran, study nature, identify the inner and outer workings in nature.

The self Master must submit himself or herself only to God (Allah).

(The truth that makes all things plain).

The Self Master must always give thanks to Almighty God (Allah) and his most gracious gifts, divine wisdom, knowledge and understanding. The Self Master must always be conscious of the battle that is going on for his or her mind to distract us away from God (Allah), our salvation. In this battle, the enemy uses as his tools of war color consciousness, one of the greater crimes committed against God (Allah). Satan uses this, forcing us to be more conscious of our skin color as opposed to our consciously being aware of Almighty God (Allah). Examples: Media being one of the co-conspirator of this unaccepted mentality, uses statements like "New York's Black mayor" or "the United States now has it's first Black woman in the

Senate. The latter example is another subtle but brutal effort to distract our minds to trivialities. The correct statement would have been; God (Allah) has blessed our nation with its' first person of color etc.. To be a self Master requires total honesty with ones self; we have to choose that which compliments and promote human qualities, which brings us to another example of media's crimes that go for the most part unnoticed by the victims (the innocent masses). Prime Time recently did a documentary on the Nation of Islam and a gay top ranking official in the armed forces. It appeared as Prime Time went to great lengths to discredit the Nation of Islam while at the same time win the sympathy of it's audience in favor of the top ranking gay official in the United States of America's armed forces. Thus promoting homosexuality, however on the other hand, condemning what may be a major break to be subtly suggesting that regardless to how immoral it is, if the act is coming from persons housed in so called "white body", it should be accepted. However, if a moral attempt is made to rid the world

of self destruction from a person housed in a "black body", it is discounted as worthless before being given a benefit of a possibility.

We must be careful about what we're buying from the media, or else we may find ourselves falling victims to the beast who's mark is in his head (Satan). Once we accept, believe and act out his suggestions and are carrying his mark on our hands (meaning that we're unaware of doing Satan's bidding), the self Master must be aware of jealousy and envy, and unjust suspicion within themselves. These urges and tendencies act as a destructive force against his or her human fiber.

The Nation of Islam offers the best opportunity for proper defense against psychological (tricks) played on the masses, which in fact, if accepted, renders us unfit to be called civilized, cultured or for that matter, a well informed people.

You are invited to come and learn self discipline and self mastery at your local Islamic facilities.

May Allah grant us all proper direction in our quest for truth.

ABDUL HASAN

### Toy And Joy Makers Need Your Help Now!!!!

Donations are down 30% from last year and many Portlanders need to know now is the time to check the family toy box. If you have some toys for us that are in like new condition just drop them off at any Portland fire station, or when you are out shopping for your own children, pick out one extra present to leave with the Toy & Joy Makers.

If you would like to send money, just send it to:

Portland Fire Bureau  
c/o Toy & Joy Makers  
55 S.W. Ash  
Portland, OR 97204

Last year over 14,000 children in Portland benefitted from your help and support. 4,600 families were under federal guide lines for low income.

Dean Johnston says, "we are expecting approximately a 33% increase in families who are calling in for help on our request lines which are 823-4550 and 823-4551."

## Compassion, Safety, Comfort And Convenience: The Genius Of The Black Inventors

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

Before I continue with my recitation of the great ones whose innovations were inspired by compassion for their fellow human being, let me present an African American engineer par excellence, David Crosthwait, 1891-1976. Famous around the world (in industry circles), Dr. Crosthwait wrote many of the code books and manuals that are standard in the fields of heating, ventilation, refrigeration and air conditioning.

Both a craftsman and an innovator, this mechanical engineer dedicated 62 years of his life to the design and installation of building systems that made possible the expansion, comfort and convenience of our big city infrastructure. But, let me quote from a past writing:

"Without his inventions and engineering technology in the field of heating and air conditioning systems and controls for skyscrapers, modern man could not inhabit buildings over 12 stories tall anywhere in the world. He gave us the concept of the "Intelligent Highrise", highlighted by his design and installation of the computerized control heating and variable vacuum process in such building as the Rockefeller Center in New York City (34 U.S. and 80 foreign patents).

Before his death in 1976, I spent many hours talking with this brilliant African American about the incredible potential and resources possessed (but not used) by our group. Our conversations usually began on a "high note", with general discussions of pioneering and seminal technology developed by blacks from 'day one'.

His favorite genius was Normand Rillieux, the black engineer from Louisiana whose "Triple-Stage Sugar Evapo-

lator" (Patent No. 4,879, Dec. 10, 1846) not only made the United States the world leader in sugar refining technology, but that the German industrialists used his developments in Thermodynamics to become world leaders in the area of the chemical and dye industries (The United States Department of Agriculture did pronounce Rillieux's patent, 'The greatest invention in the history of chemical engineering'.

On the downside to this story, there, again, is a gross failure of African Americans to realize and exploit the resources and genius for learning that we possess. Dr. Crosthwait complained bitterly that though he offered time, money, knowhow and patent trusts (for foundations) to the black community and school in the Detroit area, he was rebuffed and blocked at every point by the "traditional" black organizations and "closed incestuous power groups (tell me' about it)."

There is no "avenue to the people" he would say; few people (blacks) seem to understand the importance of our technical contributions to our motivation, self-image or career development. In our almost weekly long distance conversations he would sound so very sad and defeated as he cited failures in this respect, even at his alma mater, Purdue University. As he would say, "Our great technological abilities must be seen as a critical and effective tool of intervention--unemployment, family dissolution, crime and street gangs are growing and growing," and this was 20 years ago.

I will always remember a statement by Dr. Crosthwait; "Other cultures in the world honor technology; the Japanese even have a term; hari Kuyo; for a shrine where broken sewing needles are put to rest after a 'life of service'."

Our next black inventor was truly the most able contributor to the "human dimension". How much more care and compassion can be involved in inventions than in the innovations of Garrett A. Morgan (1877-1963). During his long life he gave the world the "Mine Rescue Mask", Patent No. 1,113,675, Oct. 13, 1914; And the "Automatic Traffic Signal", No. 1,475,024, Nov. 20, 1923. The mine rescue mask, through continuous improvements, reigns today as a premier safety and rescue device around the world. All firemen and emergency crews use equipment based upon Morgan's original design.

In 1914, Mr. Morgan set up the "National Safety Device Company" to manufacture and sell his "Safety Hood". Through exhibitions and demonstrations around the country his invention sold very well (The military adapted his device to become the standard army gas mask). Things did go very well indeed--that is until a racist establishment discovered that the great inventor was a black man. Orders from fire departments, industries and municipalities decreased to a trickle, Morgan turned to politics and advocacy, founding the Cleveland, Ohio, "Call and Post" newspaper.

The situation with the "Automatic Traffic Signal" went much better, at least financially, for he sold the device to the General Electric Company for a very tidy sum. Perhaps our compassionate inventor had learned a valuable lesson about "free" enterprise in America. At any rate millions around the world undoubtedly have owed their lives to this electrical arbiter of our motor vehicular traffic. Or is it that they are indebted to Mr. Garrett A. Morgan for their lives?

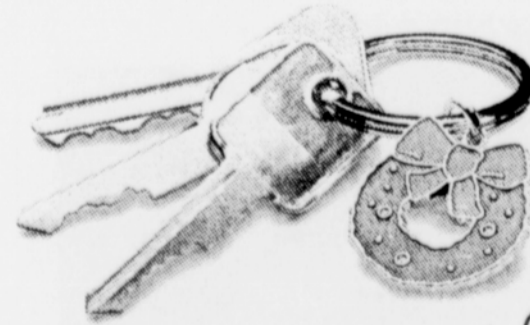
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## A reminder that the holidays are a time of giving.



Designate a driver. It's the thoughtful thing to do. **Miller**

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