

Affirmative Action Wasn't All That "Firm," Was It?

By Prof. McKinley Burt

Several weeks ago I called these 'Equal Opportunity' programs an "Endangered Species" and so far there have been no reports in the media to modify this viewpoint. New and bitter metaphors are being bandied about. At the Womens Gathering in Washington D.C., we hear, "Not only is the 'Glass Ceiling' still intact, but the 'Steel Shutters' have been slammed shut."

At the end of last week's article on this subject, I commented on the hundreds of jobs I created (opened up to) for minorities and women in the 1970's while teaching at Portland State University. I have a very important and relevant reason for bring-

ing this up in these new, chaotic times. And that is to emphasize how important it is to move beyond the 'obvious' and the 'temporary', and to move forward -- exploiting every aspect of as perceived opportunity, and carrying current successes to new heights. The 'window of opportunity' does not stay open very long. It, too, can be quickly closed and those 'steel shutters slammed shut.'

For that reason, let us call this week's article an exercise and lesson in "Creative Job Development."

My peripatetic Affirmative Action Course and Job Bank began in the early 70's when City Commissioner Charles Jordan introduced me to a Mr. Jettie Wilds who was then Director of Civil Rights for the U.S.

Forest Service. Quick-thinking Jordan informed this sharp African American that I had written a book on Black Inventors demonstrating that blacks had the same technical and cognitive skills as other Americans....Mr. Wilds offered me a contract on the spot--to travel the Northwest and Alaska for his huge agency, holding workshops for supervisory and personnel people with concrete and documented proof of the abilities of minorities. And did it ever work!

Like I've said, the "window of opportunity" does not stay open long and within 90 days I had restricted my on-campus teaching to three days a week in a manner that would give me back-to-back days for Air Or-

gon or Forest Service helicopter trips for my "Flying University" trips to remote locations, Klamath Falls, Spokane, Puyallup, Pendleton, Oakridge, Lincoln City, Wenatchee Smith River, California, Medford, Islands off Alaska, Etc.

I soon ascertained that my audiences of Forest Service personnel were very desirous of getting some more college credits in their personnel files so I worked out an accreditation procedure with the school administrators (there were not many regional Community Colleges at the time). As soon as my "Affirmative Action Workshop" class appeared in the school catalogue with appropriate listings and credits in Personnel Administration and Social Studies,

there was a rush to register from the entire Tri-county metropolitan area; from industry, public agencies, foundations and from the conventional student body who asked, plaintively, is there room for us? Who's doing these things now?

The result was evening sessions and my creation of slots for teaching assistants drawn from professionals in the field. Many minorities and women discovered that, just by being in the classes, they were rubbing shoulders with and taking breaks with the very personnel people who did the actual hiring in the 'real world'. I soon began planning and scheduling "get-together" sessions where all could meet to further

exploit the opportunities afford. I particularly remember the most productive interaction produced by the City of Portland's Affirmative Action Officer and by the Personnel Manager of United Parcel.

As I said last week my original concept put hundreds to work in new and broadened opportunities to earn a living. Many I meet today say they are still with the organizations, advancing and prospering. But what are we doing today on a parallel level (except moaning and wailing). I guess I'm going to have to do it all over again. I've got some equally new and innovative ideas. I'll stop to give Charles Jordan a ring.

Students Launch 'Operation Dress-A-Child'

Jeans and shoes, coats and clothing in large sizes.

Those items top the list in "Operation Dress-A-Child," a community-wide clothing drive sponsored by Portland High School students.

The month-long drive, which began May 1, is designed to restock the PTA's Clothing Center, housed at the school district's child services center.

Students of all ages who are in need of clothing can obtain clothing from the center during the school year.

Donations can be dropped off at the office of any Portland high school and the Vocation Village at 8020 N.E. Tillamook.

Clothing carrying advertisements for alcohol or tobacco products will not be accepted.

Organizers of the project are students who participate in school professional/technical clubs that focus on future careers.

Dogs Fill Shelter To Capacity

Some dogs are two-to-a-kennel at the Oregon Humane Society because the shelter has reached capacity and then some. A large influx of dogs over the past couple of weeks has added to the crowded conditions.

Officials said adoptions have decreased while dogs have continued to be brought to the shelter. There is no apparent reason for the sudden increase in incoming dogs.

The Oregon Humane Society is asking people who have been considering adding a pet to their family to stop by the shelter and take a look at the many available dogs.

Some of the dogs are from the Vicki Kittles animal abuse case and the society also has just accepted several from Seaside Animal Control that are in need of adoptive families.

"While it's tough on the staff and the animals when it's crowded here, it's good for people selecting canine companions; they have an excellent choice," said Karen Brittain.

The society also asks people who can possibly do so, to wait a few days if they need to bring in a dog.

"This will allow us a little time to find homes for the animals here and make room for newcomers," Brittain said.

The Oregon Humane Society is located at 1067 N.E. Columbia Blvd. and is open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For adoption information, call 285-7722, extension 215.

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New Handy Directories Published

A new community resource is putting some of the convenience of small town living into Portland neighborhoods.

Local Touch, a division of U.S. West, has just completed it's inaugural year of publishing a series of handy neighborhood telephone and advertising directories for 10 regions in the Portland metropolitan area.

The smaller directories focus on goods and services in the immediate vicinity of your home.

They are designed around what consumers and small businesses have told researchers they want to see in a neighborhood directory.

"There's a niche here," explained Ernest Sampias, Local Touch president.

Sampias said while the large U.S. West and GTE directories have wealth of information, they lack advertising from small community businesses and the information people wanted on neighborhood activities.

Focus groups were used to measure how satisfied people were with their current telephone directories,



Ernest Sampias oversees the publication of new telephone directories targeted to Portland neighborhoods.

Sampias said.

He said the research found that people want the large directory when shopping for big ticket items like appliances, cars and legal services, but want to stay within 3 to 5 miles from home for small purchases and

services like hair cuts, shoe repair, video rental and recreational activities.

"We hope to prove the research was accurate," Sampias said. "So far it's been very positive."

The neighborhood directories are designed to be easy to use.

Because they are small, the production costs are less and advertising costs less.

Portland and Seattle are the first cities in the county to get them. And success here, will likely lead to the expansion of the service nationwide, Sampias said.

In the Portland area, directories have been published for northeast, southeast, southwest and east Portland; Gresham, Beaverton-Aloha, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie-Gladstone-Oregon City, Tigard-Tualitan and Hillsboro.

Local Touch has a sales staff of 25 people working out of the Portland area. The directories are distributed free to all residents and businesses in each region.

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- Reflections - Owners: Coffee, flowers, books and gifts
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