

# Education

## Portlanders shine at regional competition

### Information highway to success

BY REED E. HUNDT, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

By the beginning of the next century -- in less than 4 years -- 60% of new jobs will require computer skills possessed by only 22% of Americans entering the labor market.

Already, most high-wage jobs require the use of networked computers. On average, jobs that require computer use pay about 15% more than those that do not.

Yet only 10% of the classrooms in America are prepared to train our young people to be technologically literate.

Are the schools in your community prepared? Do they have 21st century classrooms?

If we do not act today, we will live tomorrow in a society of information haves and have-nots.

This is an issue that matters to all Americans, whether or not your children use computers, whether or not you are a small business person in need of trained employees, and whether or not you are yourself a long-time employee of a company, not trained in information technology and concerned for your own future.

We should all want our children to begin the future with the best chance of success. We know that wise use of information technology is an effective tool for improving education. Schools with technology have enjoyed higher test scores and better qualitative results.

We should all want our children to come to school ready to learn, and to find a school ready to teach them.

The business community cares about the quality of education and training; they don't want to have to train every new hire to use a computer. And in every community, there are countless adults who would welcome the opportunity to use a school or library computer training center to learn new skills they may need for a new career. A new law, The Telecommunications Act of 1996 opens the schoolhouse door to new technology.

This new law directs the Federal Communications Commission and state utility commissions to ensure that classrooms and libraries have access to telecommunications services, like the Internet and e-mail, at affordable rates. This new law can provide us with 100,000 hubs of advanced communications spread across every community of our nation.

Today, the FCC is hard at work with our state partners answering questions like what services do schools need -- and how much is affordable.

We have to start answering these questions by November 8, 1996. As a parent, student, a businessperson, or an interested member of a local community, now is the time for you to get involved in this process and help us answer these questions.

You can do this by learning about the new law and the steps being taken to implement it.

You can contact the FCC at the address below or your state regulatory commission. Or you can ask your local school board what steps they are taking to get plugged into the information highway.

The new telecommunications law has been celebrated for the many new opportunities it will offer phone companies and other businesses, but the best opportunity of all may be the one we have to well prepare all young Americans for a bright and promising future.

You can reach me by e-mail at: rhundt@fcc.gov, by postal mail at 1919 M Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20554, by phone at 202-418-0260, or through the FCC World Wide Web at <http://www.fcc.gov>.

Eight area high school students participating in a Portland State University-based program that encourages youth to pursue post-secondary education fared well recently at a regional scholastic competition.

The students, all members of the PSU Upward Bound Program, participated in the 7th Annual Northwest Association of Special Programs Scholars Bowl at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho, earlier this month.

The event attracted nearly 100 students from more than dozen student programs throughout Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Six PSU Upward Bound members captured first place in the Scholars Bowl team question-and-answer competition among other Upward Bound programs.

They were Lorraine Gossett, who will be a sophomore at Marshall High School this fall; Josh Fox, a Madison High sophomore; Jennifer Harry, a Wilson High junior; Geniece Battle, a Madison High junior; Odessa Reilly, a Franklin High junior; and Igwe Waters, a Jefferson High sophomore.



Members of the PSU Upward Bound team included (back, from left): Igwe Waters, Geniece Battle, Rashidah Haqq; (front, from left): Odessa Reilly, Lorraine Gossett, Jennifer Harry, Monique Clay, and Josh Fox. (Portland State photo)

Rashidah Haqq, an incoming senior at Jefferson High, took second place in the speech competition. Haqq spoke on why she would oppose U.S.

government involvement in population control among Americans.

Monique Clay, a Jefferson High junior, placed second in the writing

competition. Clay addressed the topic: "Should students have access to all information on the Internet?"

Coaches for the group were

Reynolds (Troutdale) Middle School teacher Maggie Uehara and Dayton High School teacher Jon Bridges.

Upward Bound is a federally funded program that serves seven Portland high schools. Eligible members must be enrolled in the 9th, 10th, or 11th grade, and must be a member of a low-income family and/or a member of family in which neither parent has received a four-year college degree.

The program includes college preparation courses, tutoring sessions, field trips, sports, visits to college campuses, career guidance and cultural enrichment activities. Most Upward Bound students who successfully complete the program go on to college or post-secondary technical schools, said Peggy Adams, PSU Upward Bound director.

This summer, on the Portland State campus, nearly 50 Upward Bound students are taking courses in such areas as math/science, English, critical thinking, creative writing, and photography.

For more information on PSU's Upward Bound Program, call 725-4010.

## Eight measures impact schools

Eight of 23 measures certified for the Nov. 5 General Election ballot will impact schools.

OSBA's Legislative Policy Committee and Board of Directors will consider the association's position on these measures at their Sept. 20-21 meetings.

The eight measures and the board's positions are scheduled for discussion at the OSBA's Fall Regional meetings set for October.

**Measure 27--Amends Constitution:** Grants Legislature new power over both new and existing administrative rules. Would mean a rule enacted by the state Board of Education, or other agencies, would not

stay on the books unless it was approved by the next Legislative Assembly. (Legislative referral)

**Measure 30--Amends Constitution:** Requires state to pay local governments' costs of state-mandated programs. Voter approval would prevent the state from enforcing laws on cities and counties unless the Legislature provides money for their enactment. School districts, ESDs and community colleges are not included. Could reduce general fund dollars available for schools. (Legislative referral)

**Measure 39--Amends Constitution:** Would require health insurance plans to include coverage of alternatives to traditional treatment, including chiropractors and naturopaths. Would impact ability of current plans to control costs. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 41--Amends Constitution:** Requires public employee compensation to be listed as the total cash value of salary and benefits. Could impact how salaries/benefits are listed in local budgets and are reported to the public. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 42--Amends Constitution:** Requires testing of public school students and public reporting of test results. Would require all public school students in grades 4-12 to be annually tested for math and

verbal skills. Results must be released to parents and students. Because this is a constitutional amendment there would be no choice in implementing and paying costs for this testing requirements. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 45--Amends Constitution:** Raises public employees' retirement age; reduces benefits. Would raise retirement age for public employees to the age of Social Security eligibility, now 65. This is the son of Measure 8, the 1994 public pension initiative recently found unconstitutional. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 46--Amends Constitution:** Counts non-voters as "no" votes

on tax measures. Would require 50 percent plus one of all registered voters in a district to vote "yes" to pass any revenue measure, e.g., bond levies. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 47--Amends Constitution:** Reduces and limits property taxes: limits local revenues, replacement fee. Would cut property taxes to 1994 levels or 1995 levels less 10 percent, whichever is lower, and would limit future increases to 3 percent annually. The estimated loss in revenue to schools and other local governments is \$1.1 billion in the 1997-99 biennium. (Initiative petition)

**Measure 44--Amends Constitution:** Reduces and limits property taxes: limits local revenues, replacement fee. Would cut property taxes to 1994 levels or 1995 levels less 10 percent, whichever is lower, and would limit future increases to 3 percent annually. The estimated loss in revenue to schools and other local governments is \$1.1 billion in the 1997-99 biennium. (Initiative petition)

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## Capitol Hill close up

The Close Up flagship program offers high school students a week-long visit to Washington, D.C., where they learn first-hand about the democratic process.

Included in the curriculum are seminars with members of Congress, the media, lobbyists, and other Washington experts; debates between liberals and conservatives; and workshops that use Capitol Hill and the city as an experimental classroom.

Senators J. Bennett Johnston of Louisiana and Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon were both honored recently at the 25th anniversary celebration of

the Close Up Foundation, the nation's largest civic education organization which brings high school students from across the United States to Washington, D.C. to receive a behind the scenes look into the workings of government.

In recognition of the Senator's long time support for the Close Up program, the Foundation will establish five J. Bennett Johnston fellowships and five Mark O. Hatfield fellowships to be awarded annually, beginning with the 1996-1997 school year.

The fellowship will be awarded to

disadvantaged students in Louisiana and Oregon who otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in the Close Up program.

"Close Up gives young people, educators, and citizens of all ages a practical understanding of how public policy affects their lives and how they can affect public policy," said Johnston.

"Close Up enables public policy makers to enjoy a special relationship with young people that introduces them to the real workings of America's democracy," added Hatfield.

## Bend attorney heads Education Board

Judy Stiegler, a Bend attorney with experience in local education as a parent and board member, will chair the State Board of Education this school year.

Stiegler is a former member of the Bend-LaPine School Board. She served on several district commit-

tees and was the parent representative on site councils of two schools.

"Judy has walked the talk of those she represents," said Bend-LaPine Supt. Scott Mutchie. "I can't think of a better person who can advocate for public education."

Stiegler says her involvement in

local schools gives her a better perspective in making decisions at the state level. "I understand local issues and how state decisions affect schools," Stiegler said.

She wants to see public schools be the top funding priority during the 1997 legislative session.

## Cable in the classroom

Paragon Cable invested more than \$147,000 this past school year into its *Cable in the Classroom* program. Paragon provides free cable service to 179 local qualified schools so that they may utilize the valuable educational programming offered. This includes 100% of public elementary, middle and high schools in Paragon's service area and more than 30 local private and alternative schools.

*Cable in the Classroom* is the cable television industry's \$325 million public service initiative to enrich education. Each month, more than 525 hours of non-commercial, high quality educational programming is available to schools and homes with cable.

"We have seen a shift in how people view cable TV," said Jonene

Zinne, Paragon's Public Affairs Coordinator. "Cable TV is no longer seen as a way to baby-sit children but as a way to teach them. This program gives students an opportunity to begin their journey on the information superhighway through cable."

Before the advent of cable and the VCR, teachers struggled with the limitations of using television. The TV controlled teacher--programs could only be used when they were aired. Now, teachers are in control. They can use as little or as much of the cable programs as they need to motivate their students and enrich their lesson plans. The programs may be used when teachers want, not just because of technology, but also because most have extended copyright clearances.



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## How effective is Oregon's Helmet Law?

Continued from Metro

The increase in bicycle-related injury and fatality rates in Oregon, despite the decline in bicycle riding and increased helmet use, clearly shows that our streets are dangerous.

Cars kill over 500 Oregonians and 40,000 Americans every year; yet, it is illegal in Oregon and most states for communities to lower speed limits below 25 mph on neighborhood streets--even though a pedestrian

struck by a car traveling at 30 mph has nine times greater chance of dying than if the car is going 20 mph.

Furthermore, Danish and Swiss studies have found that the health benefits of bicycling far outweigh the risks (16 to 1 in the Swiss study).

Sedentary lifestyle diseases--heart failure, obesity, diabetes--kill thousands of Americans a year. Decreasing car use (and speeds) while increasing cycling and walking should be Oregon's number one public health goal.

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