

Education

'Schools of Merit' honored

Ten Oregon schools with high numbers of students from low-income families have been recognized as "schools of merit" by the Oregon Department of Education. The schools posted high scores on state tests and provide students with exceptional learning opportunities.

Three schools will be forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education as nominees for National Title I Distinguished Schools status. They are Huntington School, Independence Elementary School and Barnes Elementary School in Beaverton.

The other seven recognized schools are Woodlawn Elementary School, Portland; Blanco Middle

School, Langlois; Washington Elementary School, Medford; Scott Elementary School, Salem; Mosier Elementary, and Mid Valley and Pine Grove elementary schools, Hood River.

These schools receive federal dollars through the Title I program to help boost the academic skills of children.

"Our test results show that good things are happening in these schools," said State Schools Supt. Norma Paulus. "All Oregon schools can learn from them."

Barnes Elementary provides a wealth of learning opportunities for students for whom English is a Second Language. Technology support

for these students and expansive business and volunteer partnerships reinforce student success.

Huntington School, with innovative instruction and career development and jobs exploration programs, maintains outstanding test scores on the state assessment.

Independence Elementary, with a strong parent volunteer program, effectively involves Spanish-speaking parents in their children's education and meets English literacy goals for students through a variety of instructional approaches.

All ten schools will serve as models and receive state assistance in sharing their success with other Oregon schools.

"Who's Who" honors student excellence at MHCC

Thirty-five students from Mt. Hood Community College have been chosen as outstanding campus leaders by the national honors program "Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges". The students will be presented in a prestigious publication by the same name.

Students are nominated based on their academic achievement, service to the community, leadership in extracurricular activities and potential for continued success. They join an elite group from more than 1,800 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states, the District of Columbia

and several foreign nations.

Outstanding students have been honored in the annual directory since it was first published in 1996. The Mt. Hood Community College students to be included in the 1997 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges" are:

Jonathan E. Aho, Trevor J. Bodine, Matthew R. Brown, Karin R. Deeke, Carlos M. De La Rosa, Melissa R. Durr, Yvonne R. Gardner, Margaret C. Goodsell, Jeffrey W. Hanks, Amy A. Hirsh, Aaron L. Hodges, Sara T. Holden, Rebecca L.

Hollen, Gregory J. Judkins, David E. Laughman, Gregory J. Lind, Vanita B. McConnell, Christine G. McGettigan, Yonaira Martinez, Nancy M. Miller, Stacey Nelson, Laura L. Norcutt, Gayle L. Parker, Kathryn L. Sheppard, Kimberly M. Short-Southern, Linda S. Smith, Keri L. Stone, Lori A. Sweeney, Karl Lee Swope, Patricia A. Thomas, Sonya C. Trammel, Michael R. Turley, Amy M. Viceroy, Natsumi Watanabe and Paul R. Zeller.

The honors program selects students each fall. In nominating second-year college.

High school dropout rate dips

Oregon's high school dropout declined slightly last school year. The Oregon Department of Education reported that 7.2 percent of all Oregon students in grades 9-12 dropped out during the 1995-96 school year, down from 7.4 percent 1994-95. The one-year rate translates to 26.6 percent four-year rate for the Class of 1996.

"I am pleased our dropout rate is headed in the right direction, but it

remains totally unacceptable," said State Schools Supt. Norma Paulus. "A school system must question itself when more than 25 percent of its students don't complete the process."

Oregon students who dropped out last year cited irrelevant course work as the number one reason for leaving.

Paulus said the state's improved economy is luring high school students," she said. Noting that the State Board of Education set high

academic standards last fall for the Certificate of Initial Mastery, Paulus said, "Schools need to beef up their curriculum and give students hands-on experience in the workplace."

Scott Mutchie, superintendent of Bend-LaPine School District which has a dropout rate of 4.2 percent, agrees.

"We're changing our high schools to create more opportunities for kids to meet success," said Mutchie.

Portland residents named distinguished sophomore

Nili Schiffman, a resident of Portland, Ore., we recently named a Distinguished Sophomore by Boston University's College of Arts and Sciences. The top 40 students in the College's sophomore class, which includes more than 1,500 students this year, are selected for this honor on the basis of the outstanding grade point averages they achieved during

their freshman year.

Schiffman is majoring in art history and religion. She is a Trustee Scholar and a student in the University's Honors Program. She serves as the educational programmer for the Hillel Student Board and sings as a member of Kol Ehad, a Jewish cappella chorus. A graduate of Lincoln High School, she is the

daughter of Charles and Marsha Schiffman of Flanders Street.

Boston University is the third-largest independent university in the United States, with an enrollment of nearly 30,000 students in its 15 schools and colleges. The College of Arts and Sciences, which is the core of Boston University, offers degrees in 100 different disciplines.

Ebonics: The hidden issue is about teacher certification

BY DR. KEITH ORLANDO HILTON

Let's put to rest the debate about Ebonics being a language, a dialect or slang. Empirical studies have been done to support the fact that it is indeed a functional language.

Bigger issues regarding Ebonics are: 1) teacher certification and 2) expanding the public education definition of bilingual education and/or ESL—English as a Second Language.

Approximately 90 percent of public school teachers are white (European American) and while many may grumble silently about faculty development and Ebonics as a part of getting a job, who do you think will resist? The many whites and

other non-Black teachers who dominate the ranks.

So it is much easier to question Ebonics than discuss greater issues of human empowerment and resources for African children, parents and teachers.

Did you know that English is a borrowed language comprised of Arabic, Latin, French and African languages while Ebonics is as old as humankind?

We suspect that the issue of Ebonics will be discussed well into the 21st century. In fact, I have a 1986 article by Dr. Ernie X. Smith titled, "Ebonics and the Standard English Barrier" that I periodically

cite. This is a 10-year-old article!

Also, during the Christmas/Kwanzaa holiday I went into my personal library and came across two related books that I have had for over 20 years, "Black English" by J.L. Dillard (1972) and "Black American English" by Paul Stoller (1975).

Yes, this issue has been around for sometime and it has ramifications beyond Oakland, California.

Now, about Jesse Jackson and Maya Angelou! In some ways their immediate responses to Ebonics were similar to those of some critics of the Million Man March.

Remember how some in the white

media quickly found African critics of the march such as Angela Davis, Julianne Malveaux and Manning Marable? And in some cases it didn't take much looking.

Yes, critics are important to discourse and often provide invaluable insight to a topic, however I am hard pressed to think of too many instances when the white media collectively endorses African re-empowerment issues.

Sometimes, however, it is just better to say, "I don't know or let me consult with some other with more direct knowledge or just let me have some time to reflect on the issue."

Jackson didn't do that initially and as a result some wondered if he flip flopped for some other "shake-down" reason instead of looking at the issues beneath the surface.

According to Dr. A.S. Diamond of the British Supreme Court, in his 1962 book, "The History and Origin of Language," "It might seem likely that we should find the clearest evidences of the origin of speech near the areas where man arose. To the present author the evidence seems to indicate as the birthplace of man the areas around the great lakes of East Africa."

Smith in his paper also takes the position that "archeological evidence

is irrefutable that the original man is the Asiatic Black sounds."

Smith further notes that, "Black sounds then, [Ebonics] always were and always will be. Hence, in the deep structure of Black speakers, there is a cognitive process and deep phonology that is not the same as that of non-Blacks."

Dr. Aisha Blackshire-Belay, a linguist and chair of African Studies at Indiana State University also noted that "Ebonics represents the oral tradition of African people. We speak American English but we also have another language, which is our own language—Ebonics. It is indeed our first language."

What would W.E.B. Du Bois have to say about 'Black English'

by Sidney E. Morse

When the Oakland, California School District sanctioned so-called "Black English" as an official language, its stated justification for this controversial move was to "negate the stigma" placed on African-American students who come from communities that have developed their own dialect.

Sometimes, in order to strategically understand where we are going, it is beneficial to intellectual of the 20th century, attended both Fisk University and the University of Berlin before becoming the first person of African descent to obtain a doc-

torate from Harvard. Throughout his life, both his vision and scholarship emphasized education as a key to improving the standard of living for African Americans nationwide.

Dr. Du Bois, seemingly wise beyond the years, anticipated the ramifications of change and positioned himself on "the cutting edge" as the period ruled by agriculture gave way to the "Industrial Revolution" in the late 1800s. If he were alive today, in his wisdom, he would see similar dynamics occurring as we witness the age of information taking control in preparation for the arrival of the 21st century.

In the summer of 1906, W.E.B. Du Bois would give a now famous speech, "The Hampton Idea", assailing the reliance of Hampton Institute and others like it on the delivery of practical education in an effort to prepare the then considered "less capable" African American for jobs; a perception I might add, that has since been changed. He would go on to use these same themes across the country to warn African Americans of the dangers of this ideology and how it would not only result in handicapping of intellectual ambition, but it creates a comfortability with "second-best" status in society as a

whole.

In the debate, Dr. Du Bois would astutely observe that as was true at the turn of the century, the power and ability of a people to move up the socio-economic ladder in America is profoundly impacted by its ability to read, write, interpret and calculate.

So, as this rather surprising issue reappears, it is apparent that what we are really talking about here is literally, Dr. Du Bois would have most assuredly declared that the promotion of "Black English" as an official language is to say that illiteracy is "Okay" for African Americans.

He would also strongly denounce it as a condition that it unacceptable in the context of our struggle. He would not retreat to a secondary language that would imply in any way, form or fashion that we cannot compete with any measure of intellectual prowess.

Just as he did then, today, Dr. Du Bois would recognize that English is the verbal currency of commerce the world over. He would have grave concerns about Ebonics because he would also know that so-called "Black English" will not be the contextual language of the near 60 million people now using the Internet to

create a new venue for a global economy.

No, in the end, William Edward Burghardt Du Bois would not be happy to see an investment in regression, occurring at the very dawn of progress he foresaw and hoped would be realized in his own lifetime. He would promote a language that stimulates growth, opportunity and participation in an ever expanding socio-economic universe. Let us completely forget our common sense, contemporaries concerned about African-American progress and that of the nation as a whole, would be wise to do the same.

Ramaley leaves Portland State

Judith A. Ramaley, whose emphasis on community service learning, curricular reform and urban initiatives helped Portland State University gain national accolades, is leaving PSU to become the 24th president of the University of Vermont, in Burlington, Vermont.

Ramaley was appointed today by the University of Vermont's Board of Trustees, according to an announcement by University of Vermont officials. Ramaley was one of two finalists for the position.

Ramaley, 56, begins her new post July 1. She will remain at Portland State until about mid-June, she said.

Joe Cox, chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education, said he will begin meeting with Portland State constituent groups next week to consult and discuss the search process and time frame for Ramaley's replacement.

"Judith Ramaley has had a remarkable tenure at Portland State and has taken the University a quantum distance," Cox said. "She leaves behind an institution of 10,000 students (undergraduate and graduate), 1,000 faculty and nearly 2,000 staff members. Major issues that include stagnant state funding and

enrollment, and attracting a more diverse student body. She will succeed Thomas Salmon, who is retiring. Ramaley will earn \$157,000 a year at Vermont. Currently, she receives an annual salary of \$130,000.

Ramaley said she was proud of Portland State's accomplishments and honored to have served the state of Oregon.

"Portland State University is a very special institution and it has been a privilege and an honor to serve as president of this fine university for seven years," Ramaley said. "We have faced numerous challenges with spirit and integrity, and have responded to the grateful for what I have learned here and for the constant generosity and courage that I have witnessed every day among our students, our faculty and staff, our graduates and our community partners."

Ramaley said she was drawn to the Vermont position because of the opportunity to be in a unique leadership position, particularly as the university transforms itself into a stronger research institution.

"The University of Vermont has always placed a strong emphasis on undergraduate education, while at the same time developing a full ar-

ray of graduate and professional programs that reflect the needs of the state of Vermont and the Northeast," Ramaley said. "The University of Vermont has many of the advantages of a private institution, combined with a land-grant mission and a strong commitment to serving the public good. I believe Vermont can lead the way in reinterpreting the land-grant mission for the 21st Century."

Ramaley said she will continue to be active in leading PSU during the next five months. Of particular attention will be the seeking of increased state support for PSU and higher education in the upcoming session of the Oregon Legislature.

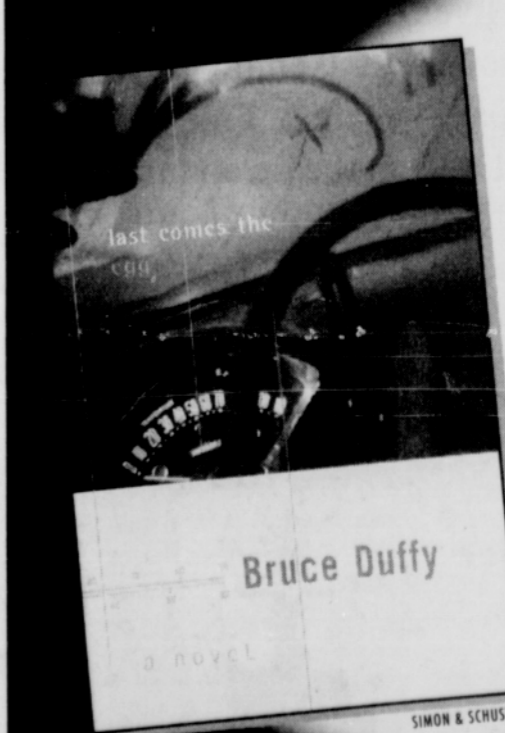
"I still have goals to accomplish here and I intend to devote my full time and attention to Portland State over the next few months," she said. "My immediate priorities are to prepare for the legislative session ahead, and to continue to work with the faculty, staff and students to build our award-winning undergraduate curriculum and to identify and develop the many opportunities in graduate education, research and community partnerships that await Portland State as a national model of the urban university."

Portland residents earn Concordia degrees

The Rev. Dr. Chris J. Reinke, a Lutheran pastor from Anchorage, Alaska, Alaska received an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws for his work in establishing the Alaska Road Ministry. Reinke was also the commencement speaker.

Founded in 1905, Concordia University has been awarding bachelor's degrees since 1980, three years after its successful transition from a junior college. Its 1,100 students are enrolled in one of five colleges: Arts & Sciences, Business, Education, Health Care Administration, and Theological Studies. The University offered its first graduate level degrees in June 1996 with the introduction of three master's degree programs in the College of Education. Unique baccalaureate degree programs include: Environmental Remediation and Hazardous Materials Management, Health Care Administration and Business Management and Communications, a degree completion program.

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In Last Comes the Egg, Bruce Duffy manages the incredible. Here is an American novel that brings into uncanny focus the mysteries of life, death and lunar weirdness of adults—all as seen through the X-ray eyes of a kid. The kid's name is Frank Dougherty, and when he's twelve his extravagant mother fails him in the most profound way possible: she dies. In her wake, she leaves a new T-Bird his family can't afford and a host of troubling questions. Yet, perversely, Frank feels more alive than ever. And, in all innocence, he fights back.

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