

BLACK HISTORY

The Portland Observer

The Asantehene and the Cloth That Speaks

BY AVONIE BROWN, AN NNPA CORRESPONDENT

Two magnificent images dominate the Point of View Gallery in the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. The first is a majestic photograph, circa 1926, of Asantehene Agyeman Prempeh I, King of the Asante nation in Ghana (1888-1896). The other is a foundation for the story that unfolds in the exhibit, "King

Prempeh's Royal Cloth."

Education specialist Leasa Farra Fortune, curator of the exhibit, said choosing to focus the exhibit on King Prempeh I was based on the fundamental recognition that a work of art is a very special historic document. She explained that the work, some of which is over 100 years ago, was chosen because much is known about the cloth and its owner's critical role in the history of Ghana.

"We initiated the Point of View Gallery for just such exhibitions, so that we can focus on one compelling work of art or several compelling works of art that addressed a certain theme. In this instance it turns out to be one work of art which in and of itself is so rich that I decided to tell the whole story that has to do with the cloth," said Fortune.

At the age of 16 Agyeman Prempeh I was "enstooled" as the

Asantehene. The enstooling of the new King is one of the Asante's most important ceremonies. It takes place before the Golden Stool, the state most revered symbol, believed to possess the soul, power and strength of the Asante nation.

Prempeh inherited a nation riddled with internal unrest as well as external pressures from Britain, who was keen on controlling the wealth of the region. His response to

this political turmoil was profoundly simple. In addressing internal rifts Prempeh believed that the good of the nation took precedence over the needs of the individual. Similarly he was committed to resisting Brit-

ish control and maintaining the Asante nation's sovereignty. Prempeh's insistence on the autonomy of the Asante is indicated in his May 7, 1871 refusal to Britain's offer of a treaty of protection.



MULTNOMAH COUNTY

Proudly Salutes

Black History Month 1997

WORKING TOGETHER

Multnomah County is actively working with minority owned businesses to enhance participation by M/W/ESB firms on county contracts. We are collaborating with other jurisdictions in an attempt to bring consistency to governmental procurement and contracting processes.

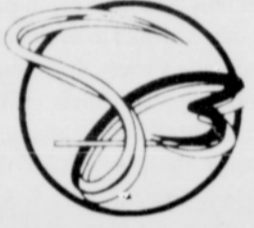
- For recorded information on contracting opportunities with Multnomah County and Metro call the Hotline (503)797-1933.
- To contact our M/W/ESB Program Office call (503) 284-5429.
- Or visit Multnomah County's web site:
<http://www.multnomah.lib.or.us/purch>

Where Temporary Employees are Permanent Satisfaction



Brooks Temporary Services

(503)284-7930
FAX (503)284-7977



INNOVATIVE PROGRESSIVE VALUE DRIVEN

If you are seeking a career opportunity with an organization that offers challenge and opportunity, consider Southwest Washington Medical Center. Located in Vancouver, Washington, just minutes from most points in the Portland Metropolitan areas, we are a growing dynamic acute care medical facility.

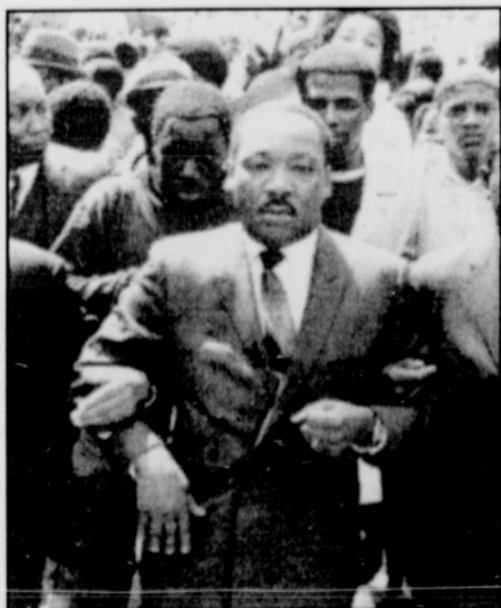
We are seeking individuals who are highly guest service oriented, creative, and team players in a variety of areas and specialties. From Physical Therapists to Food Service Workers, Radiology Technicians to Registered Nurses, Respiratory Therapists, Speech Pathologists and Housekeepers, opportunity and challenge await.

We offer competitive salaries and an excellent benefits package. For more information about our openings please contact our Job Line at

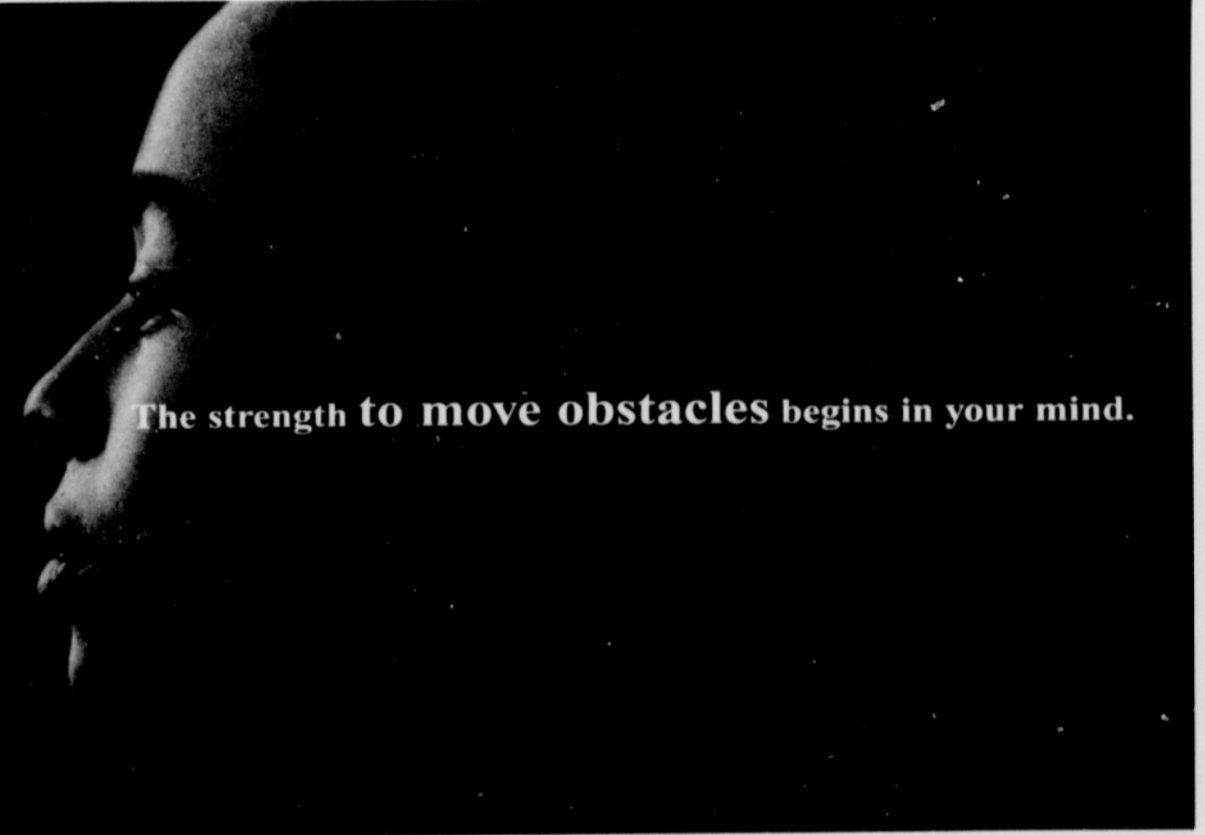
(360) 256-2268
1 (800) 455-4443

Doug Williams, Human Resources Specialist at

(360) 256-2269 V
(360) 256-3244 TDD



Equal Opportunity Employer



The strength to move obstacles begins in your mind.

This is the spirit of Black History Month. Its significance is well-rooted in the belief that no obstacle is impossible to overcome through hard work and perseverance. In celebration of that spirit, Bank of America is proud to salute our great heroes and heroines who have conquered infinite odds; and helped to turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones. It's these people who have taught us all that there are no obstacles too large to overcome as long as our heart is willing and our spirit remains strong.



Bank of America

BANKING ON AMERICA®

© 1997 Bank of America NT&SA. Member FDIC.