

E d u c a t i o n

Success begins at the skill center

BY ED JOSEPH AND ANNETT STANTON

Mark Simpson is one of the Skill Center's most recent success stories. He graduated from the Skill Center December 15, 1996. Mr Simpson was fortunate enough to be employed by UPS in their data service department downloading formation to computers and data collectors, and going to school at the same time. It was a long day for Mr. Simpson but he was able to get through it. When Mark was asked what he did before he was a student at the Skill Center, he replied that he worked as a radiographer technician at Precision Caste Parts where he x-rayed metal castings looking for defects and gas, cracks, dirt and shrinking in metal castings for the aerospace industry. When asked about prior education and training, Mark replied that he had a few years of college at the University of Oregon and that he is a high school graduate. Mark Simpson is 36 years old and has three children. He has been married to the same women for 16 years. Congratulations!



Mark Simpson and son.

David Crosthwait

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

For his outstanding contributions to engineering technology, David Crosthwait (1891-1976) was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in 1975 from Purdue University, the same campus that had awarded him a B.S. in mechanical engineering 62 years earlier.

I first became acquainted with the prolific scientific accomplishments of this innovative genius in the early 1970's when, leaving through an industry publication, I encountered a lengthy article and a striking photograph highlighting our ebony hero. This magazine was a monthly of the Dunham Engineering Company of Chicago, a firm preeminent in the area of heat transfer, ventilation and air conditioning.

Mr Crosthwait developed the control systems and the variable vacuum systems for heating major buildings including Rockefeller Center in New York City. His writings included a manual on heating and cooling with water, as well as guides, standards and codes dealing with heating, ventilation, refrigeration and air conditioning. Many city building codes around the world incorporated his pioneering specifications as skyscrapers rose higher and higher.

In this respect, one is reminded of another Renaissance man of science, Howard L. Latimer, the black electrical genius who was a highly valued member of the "Edison Pioneers." Like Mr. Crosthwait, he, too, set standards for his area of expertise, street lighting systems (in the 1880's and 1890s). Many street lighting systems in America, Canada and Central Europe were of his design and they were installed according to the specifications given in his

manuals. As would David Crosthwait in a later time, Latimer traveled the world to inspect his creations for adherence to the standards he had set.

When I designed and taught the three-semester class "Black Economic Experience" at PSU in the early 1970's, I early on took the students on field trips around the city, pointing out the key elements of urban infrastructure that had been invented and patented by black geniuses. The students were especially impressed when we went to the top floors of Portland's tallest buildings, where we would survey the amenities and facilities for creature comfort.

"Think about it," I would exclaim. "If you agree with me that it is quite a feat to get a drink of water flush a toilet or enjoy the comforts of heating and air conditioning here at the 40 or 50 story level -- then I am sure you will find it mind-boggling to consider that the pioneering patents of the African American engineer, David Crosthwait, 'escalated' the art such that we now have the same smooth-working amenities at the level of the Empire State Building an well above a hundred floors in America, Europe, Japan, Hong Kong -- the world!" Sic transit gloria (How fleeting is fame).

In 1973 and 1974, I had a number of long distance phone conversations with Mr. Crosthwait. To say that they were productive would be the understatement of the century. After all, I was conversing with a man who had been granted 34 U.S. patents and 80 foreign patents, but sadly, not bitterly, he recounted the same difficulties and obstructions I was facing here in Portland he could not make a dent in the "bureaucratic

and racist barriers of the school districts" despite their inspired rhetoric and media displays of "cute little colored children -- good grant bait."

We were in absolute agreement with my often-stated premise that "If the children and youth do not know 'who they are' or the heights to which their fathers and mothers have risen in the sciences and arts and letters, then they will have been denied the most plausible, constructive and documented vehicle for their effective motivation. It is almost as though there are some who see economic or cultural advantage in that they "gang bang" and fight turf wars to control the drugs destroying our communities." This insightful comment was made over 20 years ago.

Crosthwait 'clued-me-in' to where I should pursue my research: "thermodynamics", his forte, the study of the transfer of heat by currents of gas or liquid (convection) or by radiation. How else could one become the world's expert on getting heating and air conditioning to the top floors of skyscrapers? The intent was not to convert my calling to that of an engineer but to further my appreciation of the following black genius who appeared in my book, "Black Inventors of America". And to pass the word along to young engineers.

Norman Rillieux who was sent to the best engineering schools in Europe where by the age of 25 (1828) he was instructor in thermodynamics at the top technical school in Paris. Returning to the U.S. in the 1830's he invented the 'Sugar Refiner' which evaporative process of chemical processing paved the way for a world-wide industry.

Black History Month at PSU

The Black Cultural Affairs Board at Portland State University is sponsoring Black History Month events throughout February, and beyond. For details call 725-5660.

Schedule of events

Thursday, February 20: Discussion: "Brothas and Sistas, Can We Talk?" 5 p.m., PSU Multicultural Center, Room 126 Smith Center, 1825 SW Broadway, Free.

Saturday, February 22: Black History Celebration featuring dance, such as the Pacific Northwest African-American Ballet, solo performers, choirs, oration and plenty of food. Benefits the Bridge Builder organization which improves the lives of young African Americans. Portland Art Museum, Grand Ballroom, 1219 SW Park Avenue, \$25;

call 725-5660.

Sunday, February 23: Film Festival. Short films showing African American experience in and on film. 2-5 p.m., Harrison Hall, 1833 SW 11th, \$1.50 general admission, \$1 for students.

February 24-26: Art Show exhibit by local artists including sculptor/muralist Michael Florin Dente and painter/printer Travis Bonneau. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., PSU Multicultural Center, Room 126 Smith Center, 1825 SW Broadway, Free.

Thursday, February 27: Black Panther Party Newspaper Committee. A talk about development and distribution of the Black Panther newspaper, dedicated to the Party's goals and based on theory and teach-

ings of co-founder and chief theoretician, Huey P. Newton. 7 p.m., Smith Center Ballroom, 1825 SW Broadway, Free.

Friday, February 28: Lecture by Bobby Seale, co-founder (with Huey P. Newton) of the Black Panther Party. Currently Seale is founder/director of R.E.A.C.H., an organization that teaches community organizing techniques. 8:30 p.m. (Tentative). Smith Center Ballroom, Room 355, 1825 SW Broadway, \$5 admission.

Saturday, March 1: Black Cultural Affairs Board Dance. Semi-formal attire: dress to impress. Music provided by disc jockey Mix Masta K.D. 8:30 p.m.-2 p.m., Red Lion Hotel's Maxi's, Downtown, 310 SW Lincoln, \$6.

Linfield class schedule available

Schedules for spring semester courses are now available from the Linfield Portland campus, located in Northwest Portland.

The Linfield program is designed to meet the educational needs of adults who wish to complete their bachelor's degrees or receive more education while continuing to work on a full- or part-time basis. Degrees available in Portland are accounting, management, business information systems, international business, social and behavioral sciences and arts and humanities. In addition, students may complete certificates in accounting, human resource management, marketing and computer information systems. Certificates are geared for those students

who wish to develop skills that can be learned in college level courses but who either already have a bachelor's degree or may not be interested in pursuing a degree at this time.

Registration for spring semester classes has started and will continue through February 24. For registration and general program information, contact Janet Gifford or Pat Kestner, the local advisors, at 413-7166 respectively. Office hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday for Gifford. Kestner's office hours are Mondays from 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. Courses are taught at Linfield's Portland campus, located at 2215 NW Northrup and 2255 NW Northrup.

Linfield's program offers evening and weekend classes, college credit for prior learning based on work/life experience, financial aid, and local academic advising. One of the strengths of the program, according to Rich Emery, director of the Division of Continuing Education at Linfield, is the availability of Gifford and Kestner to talk to local residents about their personal degree goals and to offer suggestions on how students can design a schedule that best meets his or her needs.

Linfield College, through its Division of Continuing Education, offers similar programs in Albany, Astoria, Bend, Coos Bay, Eugene, McMinnville, Salem and Longview, Washington.

The ARC Of Multnomah Announces Scholarship Competition

Portland, Oregon, February 12, 1997 -- The Arc of Multnomah County today announced its second annual scholarship competition for college-bound high school seniors in Multnomah County. Application requirements include submission of a 500-word essay on "Valuing Diversity: How an individual with developmental disability has affected my life." The winner of the competition will receive a \$500 scholarship to the two- or four-year college of his/her choice. Details on entering the contest are available through the counseling offices of high schools in Multnomah County, or by calling The Arc of Multnomah at 223-7279

February is Black History Month

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