



Health/Education

PABJ extends students scholarship deadline

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Portland Association of Black Journalist has pushed final call to Aug. 31. The Portland Association of Black Journalists, are planning to award up to four \$2,500 student scholarships later this year, recently extended the application deadline to Aug. 31. Applicants previously had to submit their entries by June 30. We wanted to stretch the time a little to get more word out about this great opportunity," said PABJ president Shareefah Abdullah. "Now we can

further expand the pool of applicants before we announce the recipients in September."

The scholarship program awards funds to African-American and Latino students pursuing media-related degrees. Though PABJ will change some of the eligibility requirements for the scholarships it will award next year, the current rules will apply through the end of August 2000. The future changes are a part of PABJ's new 12-month strategic plan for the period ending June 30, 2001. Students can get additional information and an application for the scholarship at the group's Web

site, www.pabj.net. Also, they can contact Abdullah at 503/233-0100. Applications must be postmarked by Aug. 31. Corporate sponsors have helped fund the scholarship program. PABJ's major sponsor, Hewlett-Packard, donated four printers and money for computers for scholarship winners. "Hewlett-Packard's support, has been integral to our scholarship program," Abdullah said. "And others such as State Farm, The Oregonian, Kaiser Permanente and the former U.S. West - now Qwest - also helped us reach our goals." PABJ wants to ensure it helps future communication professionals.

Education crisis team holds parent rally for support

• Parents must get involved to save their children from academic failure

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Many parents, some of them Education Crisis Team members, have been surprised to discover that good grades don't necessarily reflect academic success. They have seen A's and B's on report cards all year, only to find out that their child is two, three or more grade levels behind in reading and/or math State and District achievement tests. Unless there is immediate action to change what happens in the classrooms they attend, these children will be doomed to the lowest paying, least jobs in our society.

Parents have more power than anyone to hold schools accountable for successfully teaching their children does. In addition to reviewing grades on report cards, parents can ask teachers what those grades are based on. Then, they can ask whether or not their child is meeting state and local standards in core subjects, and what kinds of tests are being used.

Parents can find out more about how to make a difference for their children by attending a PARENT RALLY on Tuesday, August 29th at Self Enhancement, Inc, 3920 North Kerby, starting at 7:00 p.m. The Education Crisis Team is sponsoring the rally to provide recent statistics on school achievement, information on testing and test scores, and questions that parents can ask School District for immediate, comprehensive changes will also be available for parents to review. Plans will be made for a "Parent Visitation Day" to children's

possible boycott of schools. In the face of continued failure by the District to outline plans that would address the low achievement of minority and low-income students when classes start in September, Education Crisis Team members have met weekly throughout the summer. Crisis Team Leaders have continued to talk with PPS administrators, and demonstrations were held at school board meetings during the spring. Two nationally known education reform experts, Katie Haycock and Jeff Pratt, visited rapid changes in low achieving schools. Despite all these efforts, nothing has changed for the children whose basic skills are years behind their white and wealthier counterparts. The District has nothing different in place to raise achievement levels. Children who are behind will face a bleak future if action is not taken NOW. Parent action is urgently needed.

Growth at Portland Community College soared last year

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Portland Community College, Oregon's largest post-secondary school, got considerably larger last year; Enrollment jumped 8.2 percent, setting a record for growth. For the 1999-2000 academic year, 96,869 students took classes at PCC.

"We continue to serve an increasing number of students each term," said PCC President Dan Moriarty. "However without additional resources to keep up, we cannot continue to keep the doors wide open for the demand that is clearly there. Growth was expected, but frankly not at this magnitude. We're stretched to the limit.

This fall, Portland Community College goes to the ballot to ask voters to help ease the strain on filled classrooms, on technology that is dated and on buildings that need upgrading and repairs. The college has placed a \$144 million bond measure on the ballot for the November general election. The cost per thousand will average 11 cents for district property

owners, approximately \$16.50 a year for a house assessed at \$150,000.

The ballot measure number is 26-7.

"The bond is critical," "The college will have to pull money from its already taxed instructional budget without added funds." "In May, PCC proposed the same measure, and it was narrowly defeated. The measure won approval by more than 57 percent, but the voter turnout was 49.6 percent, a fraction of a percent short needed for approval. In Oregon, in all but general elections, money requests require a 50 percent approval and 50 percent voter turnout for passage.

In June, the 17 state community colleges requested \$16.4 million from the Legislative Emergency board to help ease crowded conditions, but received only \$1.9 million. Of that amount, PCC was given \$438,000. "The one-time money certainly helps, but given our growth, it cannot begin to meet the need," said Moriarty. "It doesn't speak to any of the issues covered in the bond, and only inadequately to our operational costs."

Local mentor makes impact in youth's life

CONTRIBUTED STORY
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Portland Impact is a non-profit social service agency in Southwest Portland. Portland Impact partners with the community in providing services to decrease the effects of poverty in our communities. Along with the national Mentoring and Volunteer Initiative (Colin Powell's America's Promise), Portland Impact began an in-school mentoring program for grade school children in Southwest Portland.

Peter Cairney is a volunteer mentor. He has devoted one hour each week to meeting with his student mentee,

Jake. Jake and Peter meet after each week when school is in session and also with Portland Impact programs during the summer. Peter has taken his time to become a role model and social support for child who does not have enough role models in his life. Since they began meeting last school year, Jake and Peter takes time out of his busy life to spend time with Jake hanging out, playing games, helping with school work and talking about what may be going on in each or their lives.

The goal of the Portland Impact mentoring program is to place a meaningful role model in as many

students' lives as possible. Grade school staff refers children to the program who need extra social and/or academic support. The agency carefully matches local volunteers who have been screened, interviewed and trained to meet with children throughout the school year. Mentors commit one year to meeting with their mentees, and matches may continue past that time if willing.

Three are very few mentoring programs in the Portland Metro area, and there are many children who need them. Volunteer only need to spend one hour a week with a child to make a difference in their life.



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