

Portland Observer **Family**



**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**St. John's Celebrates With Community Pride Dinner**



Former Gov. Barbara Roberts praises the accomplishments of volunteers.

St. John's Community Pride Dinner at James John Elementary School.

The Feb 15 event was the fulfillment of the vision of school principal Mike Verbout to celebrate contributions that businesses, volunteers, residents and organizations have brought to the neighborhood.

Roberts spoke about some of the past year's accomplishments of these supporters, including the creation of the Portland Relief Nursery, which offers respite care and support for families living in the St. John's area, and the implementation of the SUN (Schools Uniting Neighborhoods) School at the north Portland elementary school.

Roberts said that this type of advocacy and support is typical of the St. John's community, which has a long history of proactive accomplishment. She also credited community

members with being more politically aware and ready to step forward to promote community development.

Roberts has been an active supporter of the relief nursery, modeled after programs in Salem and Eugene.

The SUN School at James Johns seeks to offer a verity of academic, social, health, and recreation programs for youth and residents this fall. Already, over 215 children have participated in before and after school programs, while some 50 adults enrolled in evening ESL (English as Second Language) classes. SUN School co-manger CJ Doyle, presented a slide show that identified the support from a variety of businesses, schools and community organizations. Entertainment was provided by 4th and 5th grade students from James John, who sang and also performed a reader's theater.

Former Gov. Barbara Roberts addressed a full house of over 200 St. John's supporters and activists at the First Annual



Multnomah County Commissioner Serena Cruz are guests of honor at the St. John's Community Pride Dinner.

**Census Shows Blacks More Educated and Affluent**

African Americans are better educated, more likely to be employed and have higher household incomes than ever before, according to data released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

African Americans now represent 13 percent of the total U.S. population, up from 12.3 percent in 1990. They spend \$572.1 billion annually on consumer goods, or roughly \$270 billion more than they spent a decade ago.

That means African Americans now represent two out of every three dollars spent by minorities, making them the largest buying power group, according to DiversityInc.com's Business Case for Diversity.

The census information provides further insight into this increasingly affluent and educated group. For example, the median income of African-American households has been on the rise and topped \$27,910 in 1999. Moreover, 51 percent of married African Americans reported incomes of \$50,000 or more compared with 60 percent of whites. However, single-family households are more common among African Americans. Of the 8.7 million African-American families recorded in 2000, single women headed 44 percent and single men headed 8 percent. Roughly 47 percent of all African-American households owned their own homes.



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