



Health/Education

Tutoring Center Celebrates Success

The Hollywood Education and Literacy Project, located at 700 N. Killingsworth, held an informal graduation ceremony June 9 to acknowledge the success of the volunteer-based organization.

People of all ages and ethnic backgrounds came together for the celebration.

Johnnie A. Gage, former executive director of House of Umoja, who took a job with the Eisenhower Foundation in February, flew in from Washington, D.C. to act as Master of Ceremonies.

State Rep. Deborah Kafoury and Portland School Board Elect Lorenzo Poe arrived to speak in support of the project and its contributions to the community.

About 40 certificates were awarded to students who have completed courses and tutors who had completed their training. "The HELP Center is a tremendous resource in helping community residents gain a level of independence that

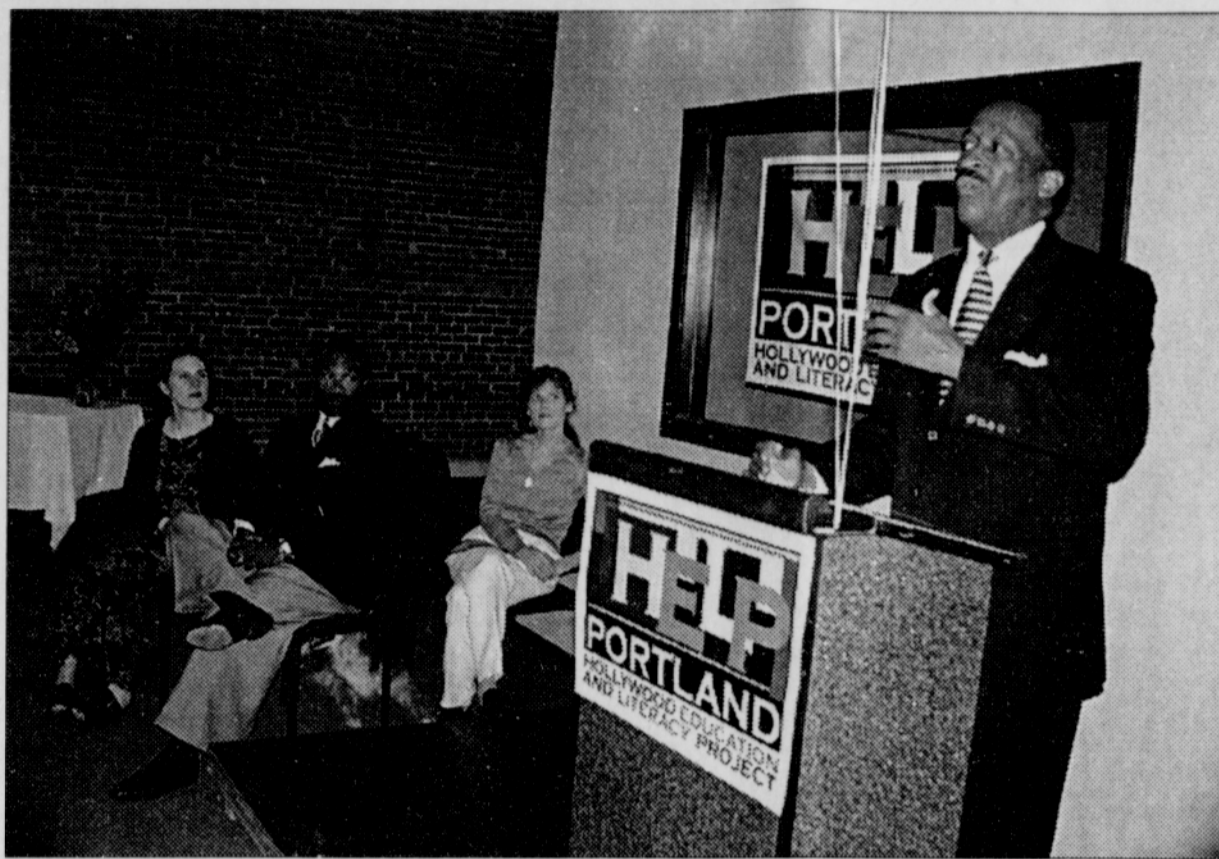


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Johnnie A. Gage leads a graduation ceremony at Portland's Hollywood Education and Literacy Project.

a higher level of literacy," said Poe, who is also the director of Multnomah County Community and Family Services.

months ago merely learning the alphabet and putting the sounds together that make up words. Rep. Kafoury stated

zations and institutions that take from our community. It is refreshing to see an organization like HELP which gives

AIDS Among Minorities Alarm Leaders

(AP) — Black leaders have urged the Bush administration to step up efforts to slow the alarming spread of AIDS among minorities, calling soaring infection rates a national emergency.

The National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS concluded a recent conference by announcing a comprehensive proposal that includes more money for HIV-related housing and new AIDS outreach programs.

"The face of AIDS has changed, and it is now ours," said Donna Christian-Christiansen, the Virgin Islands delegate to Congress and a member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The commission called for more than \$500 million for the caucus' minority HIV/AIDS prevention efforts and asked President Bush to make sure enough federal AIDS money is spent on the racial and social groups that need it most.

"We have to tell him this is not a time to level-fund, which is to underfund," Christian-Christiansen said. "This is not a time to cut back, when people are dying."

The commission's chairman, former New York Mayor David Dinkins, said slowing the epidemic will take a commitment involving black leaders from Hollywood, the clergy, big business and politics.

Health officials are particularly worried about the infection rates among young black gays and bisexuals, saying the stigma in the black community of having HIV or AIDS may be keeping testing rates low.

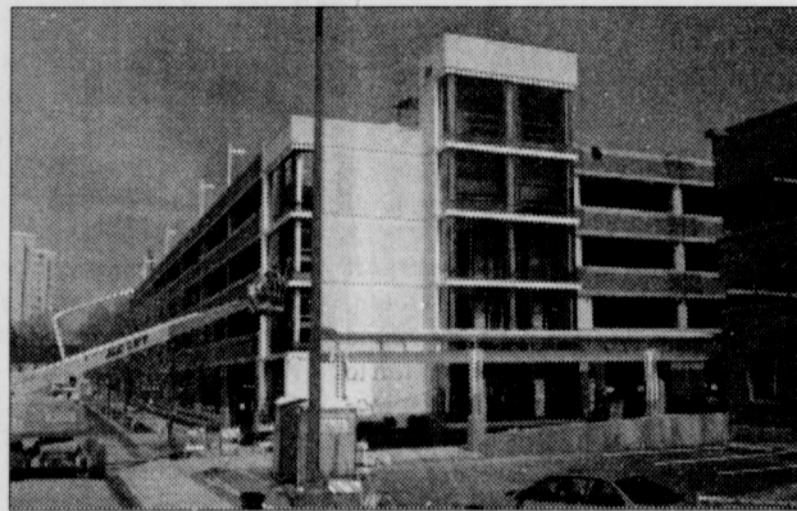
Government statistics showed more than 282,000 AIDS cases among blacks in the United States through 2000 — a figure disproportionately high. Whites accounted for about 324,000 cases.

Even more alarming, figures released earlier this year show

30 percent of young gay black men in major U.S. cities are infected with the AIDS virus.

Coretta Scott King, widow of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., said that eliminating the stigma faced by gay and bisexual blacks is also critical to stopping the disease.

"Let us work together to ensure that homophobia, ignorance and low self-esteem no longer feed the spread of AIDS," she said.



(PHOTO BY DAVE LAWTON)

New Convenience at Providence

A shiny new parking structure rises at northeast Halsey and 45th Avenue for the Providence Office Park, the administrative offices for Providence Medical Center. The five-level structure opened May 17.

GED Test to Change

Changes to the General Education Development (GED) program have state officials hurrying to locate some 10,000 people who began work toward their certificate. Finding those individuals who have started but not yet completed the five tests is proving to be a difficult task.

More than 9,400 postcards were sent out as reminders, and of those 2,050 were returned because people have moved.

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