

Portland Observer  
**Opinion**

Opinion articles do not necessarily reflect or represent the views of The Portland Observer

**The Portland Observer**

USPS 959-680

Established 1970

**STAFF**

EDITOR IN CHIEF,

PUBLISHER

Charles H. Washington

EDITOR

Larry J. Jackson, Sr.

BUSINESS MANAGER

Gary Ann Taylor

ASST. PUBLISHER

Michael Leighton

COPY EDITOR

Joy Ramos

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Paul Neufeldt

4747 NE Martin Luther

King, Jr. Blvd.

Portland, OR 97211

503-288-0033

Fax 503-288-0015

e-mail

news@portlandobserver.com

subscription@portlandobserver.com

ads@portlandobserver.com

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes

to

Portland Observer

PO Box 3137

Portland, OR 97208

Periodical Postage

paid in Portland, OR

Subscriptions are

\$60.00 per year

**DEADLINES**

FOR ALL SUBMITTED MATERIALS:

ARTICLES:

Monday by 5 P.M.

ADS:

Friday by noon

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and cannot be used in other publications or personal usage without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. © 1996 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

The Portland Observer—Oregon's Oldest Multicultural Publication—is a member of the National Newspaper Association—Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York, NY, and The West Coast Black Publishers Association • Serving Portland and Vancouver.

**Letters to the Editor**

**Equal Opportunity a Lie**

Employers of the State of Oregon say that everyone has an equal opportunity for work. This is not true; it's a very good lie.

For a black, 43-year-old ex-felon with work experience, there is no job opportunity from the employers of Oregon.

I have experience for all the jobs that I have applied for, and if there is something that I don't know, I'm willing to train for the job.

If there is equal opportunity why are so many people unemployed? Don't just say you're an equal opportunity employer; prove it by giving willing people a chance to work.

James Carr Jr.

**Where is the Diversity?**

I am writing to request some information.

First, I would like to know what is the percentage of minority to non minority workers in Local 201 of Operating Engineers?

Second, what percentage of these minorities are Afro-American, and, how many of these workers are currently employed?

Also, are there any contractors that ask for minority quotas to be filled with Local 201 workers, especially in Portland's enterprise zone?

Herbert Harris

**Non-Discrimination Act Overdue**

The AFL-CIO strongly urges Congress to pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," an important civil rights bill that will take the long overdue step of prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

A current federal law bars employment discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, or disability, but—unfortunately and unfairly—not sexual orientation.

Since no federal law prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation, it is currently legal to fire or refuse to hire working men and women in 38 states because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. As a result, working people are now being denied employment on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work.

The AFL-CIO strongly believes that discrimination based on sexual orientation is inconsistent with the principles of equal opportunity and equal employment that our movement has fought for so long.

We are proud to join with a wide array of civil rights organizations, religious institutions, responsible employers, and bipartisan political leaders in urging Congress to enact the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

John J. Sweeney, AFL-CIO President

**Charge Against Nurse Dropped**

continued ▲ from Front

she turned her own son into authorities to get him off drugs is the highest testimony to her personal commitment. Mariah is one person who should never have been turned away from visiting a prisoner."

Blumenauer said health care workers, including doctors, nurses, and even veterinarians, routinely fail the electronic scans because minute traces of drugs they work with are on their hands.

He said other federal correction facilities routinely is-

sue waivers for health care professionals, but this has not been the case in Sheridan.

While Taylor is licensed to write prescriptions for drugs, she said she doesn't handle the drugs themselves and doesn't store drugs at her clinic for security reasons.

Thursday, Yamhill County District Attorney Brad Berry said that Taylor would not be prosecuted.

He said his decision was based partly on her involvement in the community and the fact that she does not have any criminal record.

**SOMEBODY OUGHT TO SAY SOMETHING**

BY LYDIA K. BASS



**The Dollars and No Sense of a Missed Education**

It's a well-known fact that children who do not complete high school will have more difficulty getting jobs than those who do.

It's a well-known fact that children who do not complete high school will have an average annual income that is less than half that of high school graduates.

It's a well-known fact that children who do not complete high school are often ill equipped to provide for themselves and will require more social services than those who do graduate.

It's a well-known fact that children who did not complete high school now make up nearly half the prison population.

For society, the annual cost of providing for youth who fail to complete high school and their families is \$76 billion—or approximately \$800 for each taxpayer. The impact of high school dropouts however, is not limited to just economics. The collective effects of the educational and personal aspects that lead to dropping out, influences an individual's self-esteem and the way they view the world.

What may not be well known is the fact that these children face significantly more problems as children, long before they ever approached high school.

With the national dropout

rate as high as 28 percent, a survey asked dropouts under 19 years old, to tell about their lives BEFORE they decided to leave school. They shared the hardships of both their personal and schools lives:

- 12 percent ran away from a dysfunctional or abusive home.
- 8 percent spent time in a juvenile home or shelter.
- Nearly 46 percent reported having depressive symptoms.
- 71 percent were less likely to take a positive attitude toward themselves.
- 9 percent reported having an inhibiting disability, handicap or chronic disease.
- Almost half missed at least 10 days of school, one-third cut class at least 10 times, and one-quarter were late at least 10 times.
- Almost 20 percent were held back a grade, and almost half failed a course.
- Close to 31 percent did not get along with one or more school personnel.
- One-third were put on in-school suspension, suspended, or put on probation, and more than 15 percent were either expelled or told they couldn't return.
- Nearly 25 percent changed schools two or more times, some for disciplinary reasons.
- Nearly 40 percent had a child or were expecting one.
- 71 percent reported using alcohol, marijuana, crack, cocaine, heroine, speed or downers.

- 11 percent had been arrested.
- In 1999-2000, Oregon had 10,363 dropouts out of 164,554 students.

The metro region holds the highest numbers: 4,269 students or 41.2 percent of all dropouts statewide. Many of the factors influencing the decision of Oregon's children to dropout, mimic many of those nationally surveyed. Other factors included working more than 15 hours a week; needed at home to take care of family members; not speaking English well or at all; homelessness and falling to far behind to catch up.

Now, has all that data captured your attention to the dropout/pushed out dilemma, and the economic and social development retardation that comes with it? Have you yet asked yourself what you can do to stem the tide of these statistics? The dropout problem is a complex one and since the causes are rooted in the community, families and schools, so from must come the solution. These are kids that need our help and a different kind of reassurance. They're kids that know they can't go back. Perhaps the ultimate question is will we help them move forward?

It would appear that the dropout rate is a better index of youth misfortune rather than school effectiveness.

Announcing  
the continuation of the  
"Y-WE CARE"

**AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**  
Serving Grades 3, 4, 5

brought to you by the Northside YMCA

in cooperation with:

**We're Here... We Care**

For information please contact the Northside YMCA

**503.288.3355**



We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.

**WILLPOWER.**  
ON SALE RIGHT NOW AT WEIGHT WATCHERS.

Funny thing about willpower: you have a lot more of it on a full stomach than an empty one. That's why Winning Points is so effective: you get to eat the foods you like, so you stay satisfied, stay with the program, and lose. It's that simple. This special offer won't last, so join now!

**WINNING POINTS**  
18 days/21 meals

**NORTHEAST PORTLAND**

<b>Gilman St. Baptist Church</b> 10401 N.E. Gilman Mon. (enter parking lot side) 7:00 p.m. Wed. (enter parking lot side) 7:00 p.m.	<b>Tillamook Park Bldg.</b> 2108 N.E. 41 <sup>st</sup> Ave. MON 7:00pm TUE 7:00pm WED 9:30am 5:00pm 7:00pm THUR 9:30am 5:00pm 7:00pm FRI 9:30am SAT 9:30am
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
1319 N.E. 7<sup>th</sup>  
Tue Fireside Room 12:00 noon

**TIMBERLINE DODGE**  
2510 N.E. Sandy Blvd.  
Thur Conf. Room 12:00 noon

**NORTH PORTLAND**

**Northminster Pres. Church** 2823 N. Portland Blvd. Wed Downstairs 4:45 p.m.

Join any meeting! For more information Call weekdays 8:30 am to 5:00 pm  
**(503)297-1021 (or toll free 1-877-297-1021)**  
www.weightwatchers.com