

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

"Bridging Portland's Communities"

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

Trail-blazing cultural achievements bring praise to local African Americans

Six local African American residents were honored recently with special Black History Month tributes from the Portland Trail Blazers.

Bobbye Brown, Kevin Modica, Geneva Jones, Karanja Crews, Joseph Malone and Willie Ward received the honors at Blazer home games during the month-long celebration.

The selections were based on outstanding achievements and contributions to the community.

Each of the honorees was awarded a \$500 contribution to a charity of their choice. A section of tickets on each night of the honors also went to several Portland area youth groups, schools and civic organizations.

Black History Month is held each February as time for Americans to reflect on both the history of teachings of African Americans whose contributions are still too little known. It is the month in which we bear witness to the progress, richness and diversity of African American achievement.

### Brown Speaks for Human Rights

Bobbye Brown is an outspoken human rights activist, volunteer and child advocate.

Brown travels throughout the Northwest visiting schools, youth groups and civic organizations teaching human rights, African history and art while holding down her full time job in human relations at Portland General Electric.

Her bead presentation describes the life of slaves before and during the Civil War, as well as teaching African history and culture.

She has become a driving force behind PGE's volunteer program, organizing fundraising drives and volunteer opportunity for nearly 2,600 co-workers. She is most passionate in her work with children and has often said that children are the community's most precious resource.



Portland Trail Blazer and NBA great Scottie Pippen congratulates Bobby Brown on her service to the community.

### Community Service Vital to Ward



Trail Blazer Ruben Patterson (from left), community service honoree Willie Ward and Blazer Community Ambassador Nick Jones are introduced at the Rose Garden.

Willie Ward retired from working more than 21 years ago, but he never really quit working, he just stopped getting paid.

Retirement for Ward meant he stopped going to this job and started volunteering, everyday, five days a week.

The L.I.F.E. Center, or Low Income Families Emergency

Center on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, was the lucky recipient of Ward's dedication. His daily routine means picking up used furniture, clothing, food, bedding, household goods and appliances for families in need.

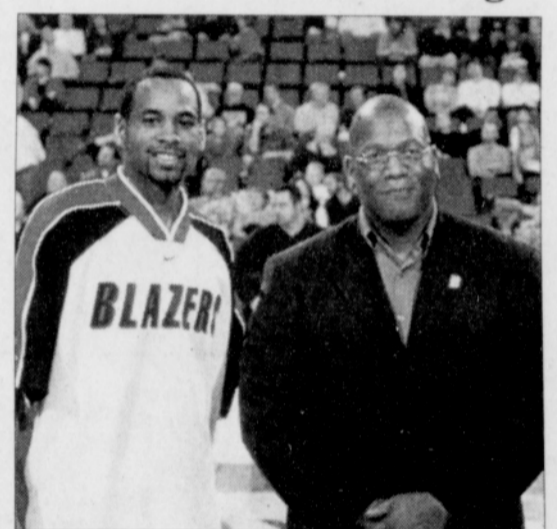
Ward says there are more and more families in need everyday.

### Modica Works for Positive Change

Lt. Kevin L. Modica has dedicated his life outside the Northeast Precinct to advocate for change in his community, working with many groups, civic organizations and youth sports programs.

He is best known for his work on the NE 14th Place Neighborhood Reclamation and Traffic Calming Project, where drug deals and drive-by shootings were commonplace. Now children ride their bicycles, play games on the street and residents feel safe.

Modica spends time on many boards, including Gang Resistance Education and Training, Police Activities League and the Blazers Boys & Girls Club. He has been the recipient of the Jackie Joyner Kersey Volunteer of the Year Award in 2000, Blazers Boys and Girls Club Volunteer of the Year in 1999, Dennis Darden Officer of the Year award in 1999 and the Distinguished Service Medal 1993 for outstanding contributions to the community.



Police Lt. Kevin L. Modica (right) with Blazer Derek Anderson are introduced during a special ceremony in recognition of Black History Month.

### Children Vital Focus for Malone

Joseph Malone, the principal of Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School and Early Education Center, has become an inspiration for the school, students and parents.

Malone is often seen on the playground, in the classroom, or serving lunch in the cafeteria.

"I love going to school everyday," said Malone. "The children make all the difference."

A native of Tennessee, Malone has dedicated his life to the education of children and has been involved in the administration of three Portland Public Schools.

Students, teachers and parents say he is available at all times to solve problems and help those who need it.

His leadership has helped King Elementary create and maintain valuable partnerships with local businesses and community organizations, including SMART, the Touchstone Project, the I Have a Dream Program and Friends of the Children.



Blazer Assistant Coach Caldwell Jones congratulates King School Principal Joseph Malone.

### Geneva Jones Works to Empower Women and Entrepreneurs

Geneva Jones is especially known for her work empowering black women and entrepreneurs.

She has decades of service with groups such as the White Shield Center, Portland Police Sunshine Division, Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center and the United Negro College Fund.

Jones is recognized for her nearly 30 years of cooking expertise on local shows such as KOIN Kitchen and AM Northwest.

Her behind the scenes contributions are many, including service on the Oregon Board of Agriculture and involvement with LINKS, a national service organization of concerned and committed black women.



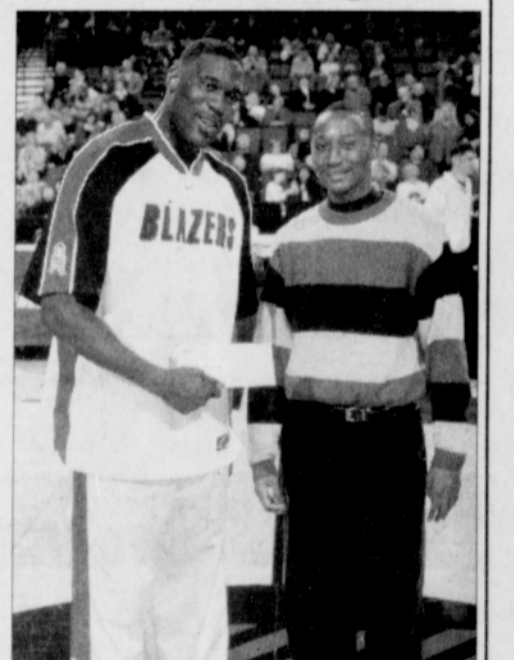
Geneva Jones accepts an honor for lifelong community service with her son, Blazer executive Nick Jones.

### Karanja Crews Has Eye on Education Achievement Gap

Karanja Crews is a minority-education advocate who conceived and planned a Teaching with Purpose conference last summer to help educators narrow the achievement gap in Portland.

The conference brought in national speakers who have a proven ability to raise achievement levels in schools with a large percentage of minority children.

Crews is a Portland State University student and future teacher. He has worked to help solve some of the issues that face the Portland School District and Education Crisis Team. He eventually became a mediator and communicator between the groups.



Trail Blazer Shawn Kemp presents a Black History Month honor to Karanja Crews, a Portland State University student working to better the education of Portland's minority kids.

## Community Calendar

### Red Cross Blood Drive

The American Blood Cross is having a blood drive on Friday, March 15, from 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Church of Scientology, 2636 NE Sandy Blvd. Call Vicki or Barbara at 963-8121.

### Friends of Trees

Friends of Trees' Branching Out program will give away 6 to 12 foot tall yard

trees, including a variety of fruit and nut trees and native deciduous trees, in addition to native conifer seedlings. The giveaway will be on Saturday, March 30, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Friends of Trees, 3117 NE MLK, Jr. Blvd. and on April 20, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at Environmental Middle School. Call 282-8846, ext. 17 or go online to [www.fridnssoftrees.org](http://www.fridnssoftrees.org).

### New Seasons Market

Want to learn which foods are best for you and your growing baby? Come to

the New Seasons Market and learn how to optimize your food choices for a healthy pregnancy. The free Saturday educational presentation will be at the New Seasons Market, located at 5320 NE 33rd, on Saturday, March 16 at 1 p.m. Call 288-3838.

### Men's Gospel Music Workshop

For all male youths and adults who can sing gospel, the New Hope Baptist Church, located at 3725 N. Gantenbein, will be having a gospel music men's work-

shop choir on March 21 and 22 at 7 p.m. and on March 23 at 10 a.m., followed by lunch at 1 p.m. A New Hope Church free concert is scheduled for March 25, 6:30 p.m. Call 281-0163, 698-5447 or send an email to [newhope@jps.net](mailto:newhope@jps.net).

### Neighborhood Association Summit

At the 3rd annual Neighborhood Association Summit, several workshops will be held with small group discussions and a field trip in town. The summit will be held on Satur-

day, March 16, from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Cleveland High School, 3400 SE 26th Ave. Call 823-4519.

### Gardening for Wildlife

The Hoyt Arboretum, located at 4000 SW Fairview Boulevard is having a class on gardening for wildlife on Saturday, March 16, from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. Learn to use habitat plantings and structures to attract birds, butterflies, and other desirable wildlife to your garden. To register, call 228-TREE.