

Kid Drinking Confronted

First Lady Sharon Kitzhaber dedicates underage drinking exhibit at OMSI

First Lady Sharon Kitzhaber called upon Oregonians today to make the prevention of underage drinking a statewide priority.

The First Lady's comments were made at the dedication of a new exhibit on underage drinking at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland. She was joined by Nancy Stueber, OMSI president, Barbara Cimaglio of the Department of Human Services, and Pamela Erickson, Oregon Liquor Control Commission director and past chair of the Oregon Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking, to declare April, Alcohol Awareness Month.

"The extent of alcohol consumption by children ages 9 to 15 is alarming. Preventing underage drinking must become our prior-

ity," said the First Lady. "Drinking alcohol should not be a rite of passage to adulthood."

According to research, the early use of alcohol can impede a child's healthy physical, mental and social development. And, a substantial number of children who begin drinking before the age of 13 will develop alcohol dependence at some point in their lives.

Sharon Kitzhaber is co-chair of the National Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free.

Her remarks referred to recent findings from Oregon's Healthy Teen Survey 2001 by the Oregon Department of Human Services. The survey indicates that 43 percent of the state's 11th graders are likely to consume alcohol in the next month.

"Oregon's collaboration is working under the same umbrella, 'Wise up - Straight talk about alcohol.' We want people to understand that alcohol is a dangerous drug that is threatening the health of our youth," said Nina Robart, executive director of the Oregon Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking. "Right now, kids are saying it's easy to get alcohol. The best way to reduce underage drinking is to keep alcohol away from young people within our homes and communities."

For more information about what adults and youth can do to prevent underage drinking, visit www.ocrud.org or call 1-800-923-HELP.

Work Begins on Native American Center at PSU



Gary Cumpston (from left) of Bank of America, PSU President Daniel Bernstine, and students Francene Ambrose, president of American Indians Science and Engineering Society, and Damion Barnett, coordinator of United Indian Students in Higher Education, celebrate the ground breaking for PSU's new Native American Students and Community Center.

PHOTO BY BRENT SCHAUER/PSU

Portland State University recently broke ground on the construction of the Native American Student and Community Center.

"This project represents an important cultural and educa-

tional asset for our community," said PSU President Daniel Bernstine at an April 5 groundbreaking ceremony. "It has been extremely rewarding for Portland State University to be involved with elected offi-

cial, students, private donors and the Native American tribes in making this project a reality."

The center will stand as a symbol of PSU's commitment to goodwill, diversity and community pride, according to Donald Sampson, the center's campaign chair.

"The center will serve as foundation for other programs and enrich Portland State, the city and state of Oregon. We will see its benefits far into the future," Sampson said.

The Center will be the only one of its kind in the Portland metropolitan region, home to 14,000 American Indian and Alaska native people.

The site will serve as a cultural home for native students, supporting their enrollment at PSU and enhancing their academic studies.

The center will also provide a resource room equipped with computers for students, classrooms, meeting and conference spaces, and an opportunity for all who visit the Center to learn about Native American traditions and historical and contemporary issues of importance to indigenous people.

Health Service Providers Merge

Consolidation serves North/Northeast African Americans

Two local mental health providers have joined forces to serve area residents with mental health and substance abuse services.

The Center for Community Mental Health, a 28-year-old organization with a special commitment to the African American community, has merged with Tualatin Valley Centers.

Locally, Tualatin Valley Centers has been providing services at McCoy Academy, Self-Enhancement, Inc., Columbia Villa, James John Elementary School, and the Center for Community Mental Health. It is a participating member of the Northeast Rescue Planning Action Committee and a founding member of the Leo Ni Leo and African American Gambling Treatment programs that were part of the Center for Community Mental Health.

"Reaching this important decision has been a careful and deliberate process by both of our boards and management staff. It has been important to both agencies that any affiliation be based

on shared vision and mission that preserves and whenever possible, expands the services of both organizations to reach even further into our community," said Mary Monnat, president and chief executive officer of Tualatin Valley Centers. "After much consultation and review, it was concluded that, in essence, we are stronger together than either one of us could ever be standing alone."

Agency officials said while the name "Center for Community Mental Health" will be going away, Tualatin Valley Centers will maintain programs familiar in the community, including the Conquest Center, Project for Community Recovery, the Leo Ni Leo program for African American male youth with addiction and/or mental health issues, and the Nickerson Center for early childhood and adolescent day treatment.

Rose Festival Ambassadors Begin Tour

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outstanding women who were selected from 14 Portland-area high schools by their respective student bodies. Each member represents her school throughout the months of May and June at many community events, including meetings with business leaders, visits to hospitals and meetings with a variety of civic groups.

To qualify for the court, young women must be full-time students, members of their graduating classes, have grade point averages of at least 2.75, demonstrate good citizenship and have good attendance records.

The candidates are evaluated on character, communication and presence. The court members were elected over the past few weeks by vote of their respective student bodies.

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What is REACH?

A **community action plan** to decrease Cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the Oregon African American community. The program, "A Healthy Community Starts with You: Community-Driven Strategies to Lower Risk Factors for CVD", addresses the root causes of the **CVD disparity**.

WHY?

In Oregon an African American is **twice as likely** as a white American to **die** from a stroke and almost one & 1/2 times as likely to die from a heart attack. African Americans have a **higher incidence of premature death**, diabetes, stroke, heart attack and high blood pressure.

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