

Agency Mergers Helps Mental Health Clients



Lindsay Grant and her two service dogs take a break on the campus of Concordia University in northeast Portland. Grant is a mental patient and Concordia student who is recovering from her disability.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

By SEAN P. NELSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A merger of three Multnomah County agencies serving mental health is meant to help people like Lindsey Grant of northeast Portland.

Grant, 47, was diagnosed with depression, then manic depres-

sion or bipolar disorder in 1996. Despite difficulties arising from her disorder, she will graduate from Concordia University in northeast Portland with a Bachelor's Degree in social work next December.

Grant praises portrayals of people with mental illness such as

that of the schizophrenic mathematical genius (Russell Crowe) in the film, "A Beautiful Mind," which won the Academy Award for Best Picture this year.

"A Beautiful Mind" was a good film because it showed that there are people with mental illnesses that are actually high functioning. They are not just people drooling in their shoe," Grant said.

Married to an abusive alcoholic for a number of years, Grant often dealt with his problems other than her own. After she was diagnosed with depression, doctors initially put her on an antidepressant called Zoloff.

Doctors discovered this was the wrong medication when Grant drove her car to Los Angeles in 16 hours during a manic episode and was hospitalized for suicidal ideation, visualizing her own suicide.

Other manic behaviors included painting her house by hand in two weeks, alphabetizing her videotapes and racing thoughts, or flight of ideas, Grant said.

"There were other things, like how generous I was being with my money. I put the house up for sale at a bad time. That was kind of

strange. I did bizarre things and justified them to other people," Grant recalled.

She decided to return to school, where she got grant money because she wrote good essays. As part of her degree requirements, she studied at the Unity New Mezzanine Center in Southwest Portland.

The center serves meals, pro-

vides a milieu for visiting and offers a safe environment for mental health clients to get out of the house because they think they are alone. They are not.

"Many people think mental patients are just the people that the police shoot because they go crazy, but they actually can be productive individuals in society," Grant said.

The new mental health merger will add new programs, including walk-in clinics at Southwest 12th and Stark, downtown; in Gresham at Southeast 43rd and Division; and on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between Fremont and Skidmore. The last is run by Tualatin Valley Centers.

REACH

A PROGRAM OF THE **AFRICAN AMERICAN HEALTH COALITION**
2800 N. Vancouver Avenue, Suite 100, 97227; 503 413-1850

Sponsored by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and made possible in part by Legacy Emanuel, PSU-RR1 and CareOregon.

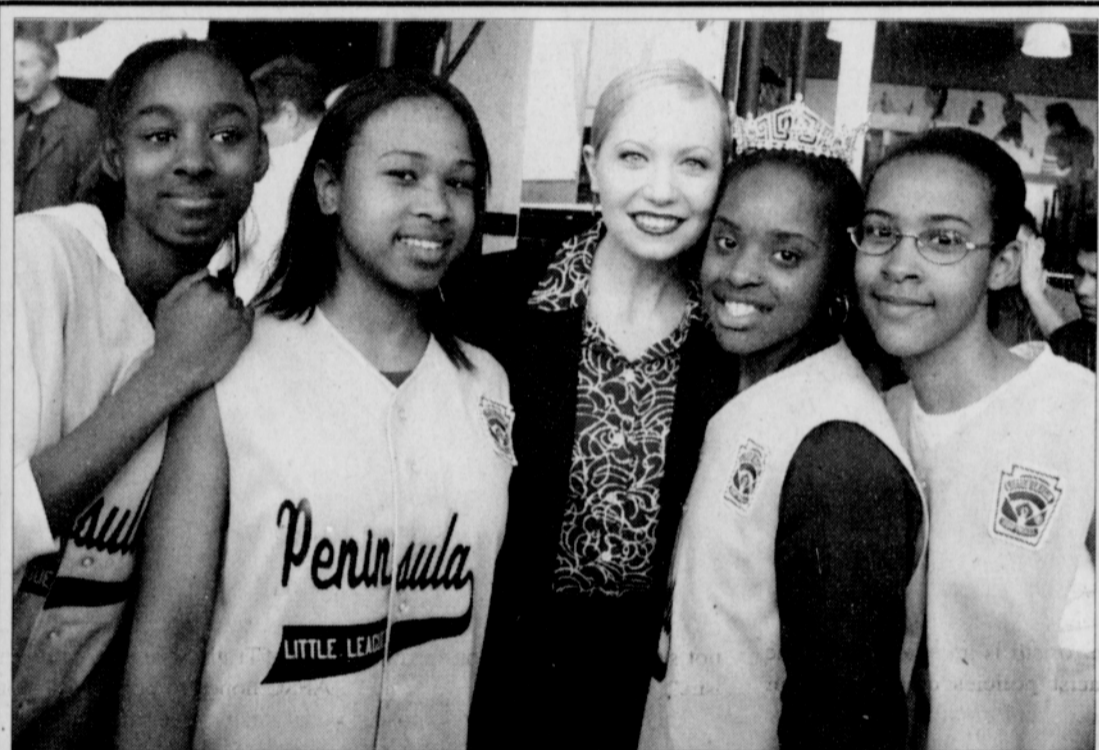
REACH stands for **Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health.**

WHAT? It is a **community action plan** to decrease Cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the Oregon African American community.

WHY? In Oregon an **African American is twice as likely to die** from a stroke and one and one-half 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.

STAY TUNED... For more information programs such as **HOLLA** (youth peer education) and **Lookin' Tight Livin' Right** (beauty and barber shop based education) to **decrease the disparity** of preventable chronic diseases.



Achievements Celebrated

Peninsula Little Leaguers Shay Washington (from left), Celeste Tillman, Sedrice Millage and Adore Butcher meet Miss America Katie Harmon (center) Monday at the Nike Factory Store on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Nike presented grants of up to \$5,000 each to 11 community-based organizations that serve north and northeast Portland, including Peninsula Little League, CASA for Children, For Us Northwest, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization/Asian Family Center, Open Meadow Alternative Schools, Peninsula Children's Center, Portland Council PTA Clothing Center, Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April, Rose City Soccer Club, Schoolhouse Supplies and Youth Opportunity Center.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

HEAD START PRESCHOOL

IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

FOR FALL

Children must be 3 1/2 or 4 years old
By September 1st

Serving:
North
Northeast
Southeast

Within the Portland Public School Boundaries

CALL TODAY FOR AN APPLICATION AND MORE INFORMATION
503 916-5724

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HEAD START COMMUNITY

Home Compost Bin Sale

Get those grass clippings, leaves and kitchen scraps out of the trash. Turn them into rich compost with the Earth Machine.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 11

North Portland Portland Community College - Cascade Campus
705 N. Killingsworth

From I-5: Interstate/Portland Blvd. exit (exit 304), turn east onto Portland Blvd., turn right on Albina, follow signs

East Portland Tri-Met Gateway Park & Ride
Northeast Pacific and 99th

From I-205 or I-84: Glisan/Stark St. exit or Halsey/Gateway exit, follow signs

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, May 12

West Portland Portland Community College - Sylvania Campus
12000 SW 49th Ave.

From I-5 South: Capitol Hwy. exit, turn right, go through five signals to college
From I-5 North: Haines exit, turn right at stop sign, turn left at four-way stop, follow signs

Special price
Unlimited supply
\$25
\$80 retail value

Sponsored by Metro and your local governments.

METRO
PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

Bins also sold at Warn Industries, Mt. Hood Community College, Tigard High School and Epson Portland, Inc. on May 11 only.