



PHOTO BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A city parking garage like this one would be run by an alliance of minority chambers of commerce if the group can mount a successful bid.

Alliance Competes for City Parking

continued from Front

cess is both open and fair.

"We want to make sure there are economic opportunities for everyone," Jay said. "Not just a few."

The city has consistently awarded the contract to the Portland Business Alliance for the last 20 years, and they in turn have normally subcontracted with City Center Parking to operate the downtown Smart Park garages.

"We're talking about \$11 million annually that no one has ever questioned," Jay said.

The alliance, which includes the African American, Filipino and Hispanic chambers of commerce, is asking for full disclosure of public information regarding operation of the garages, including renewal and approval documents and names of individuals instrumental in approving the contracts.

"We want to see every document, receipt and canceled check," Jay said.

The alliance requested the documents four weeks ago. Jay said documents that have come

trickling in suggest that some expenses look excessive.

He pointed to a \$30,000 expenditure for a Christmas tree lighting ceremony, \$124,440 for the services of two janitors over six months and \$193,000 forked over for two bike-mounted security guards in the same time period.

"This is not a time for elaborate spending," Jay said.

The Bureau of General Services will look for City Council approval this month to invite interested bidders to compete for the contracts. In addition to the alliance, Bureau Chief Ron Bergman said a handful of other groups also have expressed interest in the management contract.

"This is a chance for city council to open up the process," Jay said.

Whatever the outcome, Jay is convinced he is heading a good fight.

We have nothing to lose," Jay said. "We want to bid. We intend to tag team with other operators and individuals that want to be a part of a strong marketing and garage program that will make the city a profit."

"We want to make sure there are economic opportunities for everyone - not just a few."

— Roy Jay, president of the African American Chamber of Commerce

Multicultural Healthcare Fair Set

Students from Pacific University's Physician Assistant Studies program will sponsor a multicultural healthcare on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 20, in the Nordstrom storefront area at Portland's Lloyd Center, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

There is no cost for members of the public to have their blood pressure, blood glucose, and blood

hemoglobin checked to screen for hypertension, diabetes, and anemia. Therapeutic foot massages also will be available, as will information about a variety of health topics including cancer awareness and prevention, foot care, diabetes education, self-breast exam instruction, and heart and lung health information.

"Pacific University's Physician Assistant Program celebrates Dr. King's birthday by remembering his

work and his dream," said first year PA student Julio Maldonado. "Our mission statement calls for students to care for a diverse population in a changing health care environment, so hosting this fair on Martin Luther King Jr. Day seems like a perfect way to serve the public and to reach out to the underserved members of our community."

For more information, call 503-352-2898.

Housing Assistance Requests Steady

continued from Front

The need for assistance far exceeds AMA's ability to help all those who apply. Ramiz estimates that 80 to 85 people are applying each month, significantly more than usual. Among those who apply, only 10 or so will receive funds.

"The majority of them we won't be able to help simply because we don't have enough money,"

Ramiz said.

But that didn't stop Lionel Lampkin from waiting over two hours in the cold for a chance at rental assistance. Lampkin was laid off when the Renaissance Financial Center in the former Renaissance Market at 905 N. Killingsworth, was downsized.

"With the economy like it is, it's just been tough finding employment," he said.

Lampkin has received unemploy-

ment since March but it has only amounted to \$57 a week of disposable income.

With one child at home and three other children visiting every weekend, Lampkin is working small jobs here and there and is waiting to be received into a painter's apprenticeship program.

Still, Lampkin feels grateful there are still those willing to help.

"There's so many people in the same predicament," he said.



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