

Entrepreneurs Sponsor Coffee and Issues Forum

Quiet footsteps of economic recovery outlined

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Despite the record joblessness, cuts to health care and education and comparisons to the Great Depression, state and federal politicians are pointing to quiet footsteps of economic recovery for the state.

The news was delivered Friday by Marty Brantley, executive director of the Oregon Economic and Development Department and by U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., at the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs "Coffee and Issues" forum.

Women and minorities in small businesses were on the agenda, but the conversation burgeoned into a pep talk to small business owners as the senator outlined a plan for economic recovery.

Wyden, a longtime OAME supporter, promised the crowd con-



PHOTO BY JAYMEE R. CUTI/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. (left) meets Woody Broadnax of the Juneteenth Association Northwest during a Friday forum at the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs.

tracting opportunities for his proposed transportation bill.

"I will not rest until people from this room get a fair measure of busi-

ness from this project," Wyden said.

He also addressed Oregon's health care crisis and promised to work with President Bush to secure

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— U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. at a forum sponsored by the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs

federal funds for two of the state's priorities: education and health care.

"If you can get \$100 billion to rebuild Iraq, then you can get money for health care and education in this community," Wyden said.

Brantley introduced the idea of a workforce bill to better train workers for large companies, but his focus was on promoting Oregon's tourism industry. He discussed marking Oregon-made products such as wine in the direction of Idaho's potatoes and California's raisins.

Tourism came as encouraging words to Woody Broadnax of the Juneteenth Association Northwest.

Broadnax said he would like to attract tourists to Portland for Juneteenth celebrations.

The local resident said he has got support from Wyden for making Juneteenth, the day the last slaves in the United States were freed, a state holiday.

Broadnax will present the proposal to the State Legislature on June 19.

For some attending the forum, Wyden's very presence brought them hope.

"The visit said that we're still on his radar screen," said Faye Burch-Wilson, owner of a small consulting firm, who attended the forum.

Wyden said, "The people in this room have the talent to build a better Oregon. I'm going to make the federal government a better partner."

Community Invited to Join in the Juneteenth Parade

Celebratory march will take place on June 21

The annual Juneteenth Parade will take place on Saturday, June 21 and all members of the community are invited to design a float or display with the theme 'Living the Dream' to drive in the parade or walk with business, church, school or historical freedom banners.

The parade, which leaves from the Bethel AME Church at 5828 NE 8th at Jarrett at 2 p.m., will also feature bands, drill teams, vintage cars and other festive marchers.

Those wishing to join the parade should assemble at the church at 9 a.m. where there will be a Juneteenth Extravaganza Raffle. For more information, call 503-335-0855.

The Juneteenth celebration will kick off on Thursday, June 19 at Legacy Emmanuel Lorenzen Center from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and at the Multnomah County Library on Killingsworth at 6 p.m.

On Friday, June 20 there will be a carnival at 6 p.m. at Vancouver and Russell with live stage performances, the Red Cross Mobile Museum, and food and vendor booths. The carnival will continue on Saturday and Sunday from noon to dusk with a jubilee beginning at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

African American Chamber Leaders Applauded

The African American Chamber of Commerce had a lot to do with the city's recent decision to award a five-year, multi-million dollar public parking contract to Star Park, a parking company in partnership with three local minority business associations.

Officials said the contract set a milestone as the first time in Oregon's history that a government agency awarded a contract of this size that included ethnic minorities without a minority set-aside program.

The African American Chamber of Commerce launched an intensive investigation into the public "Smart Park" contracts last fall and used their professional resources to initiate the joint venture.

"The African American Chamber of Commerce wrote the book on this one," said a local government employee. "They demonstrated that they had the imagination, determination and the professional consideration to also include the Hispanic and Philippine American Chambers of Commerce."



Members of the local African American, Hispanic and Philippine American Chambers of Commerce are celebrating a partnership that led to the awarding of a multi-million dollar contract to manage the city's downtown Smart Park garages.

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