

## The Portland Observer

## MED Week

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SECTION B

## MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WEEK

▀ We should be proud of him because of his commitment to his workers and his community. ▀

—African-American business leader Paul Knauls on local entrepreneur Jack Chung

## BUILDING A BUSINESS EMPIRE

## Jack Chung embraces community as he expands reach

BY LEE PERLMAN/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The open space in front of the adidas store at the corner of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street is called Harry Jackson Plaza and is dedicated to the popular black police sergeant.

However, the name also says much about the man who brought the store to the site and still owns the property: Korean-American Jack Chung.

Chung rejected the advise of African-American estate agent Fred Stewart's hat he name the space "Jack's Place" after himself.

"I told him no, I've done nothing for MLK," Chung said with his characteristic modesty. "I didn't want it named for a mayor or someone with a big title. I wanted someone who did work in the community. Then I said, 'Why not Harry Jackson?'"

The commercial development is typical of Chung in another respect — it's a positive influence on the community.

Chung bought the property, then a warehouse, in 1987, when other businesses were not exactly clamoring to locate on the boulevard. However, he rejected cash offers from, among others, Fantasy Video, a sex-related business, to establish outlets there.

"I wanted it to be something good," he said.

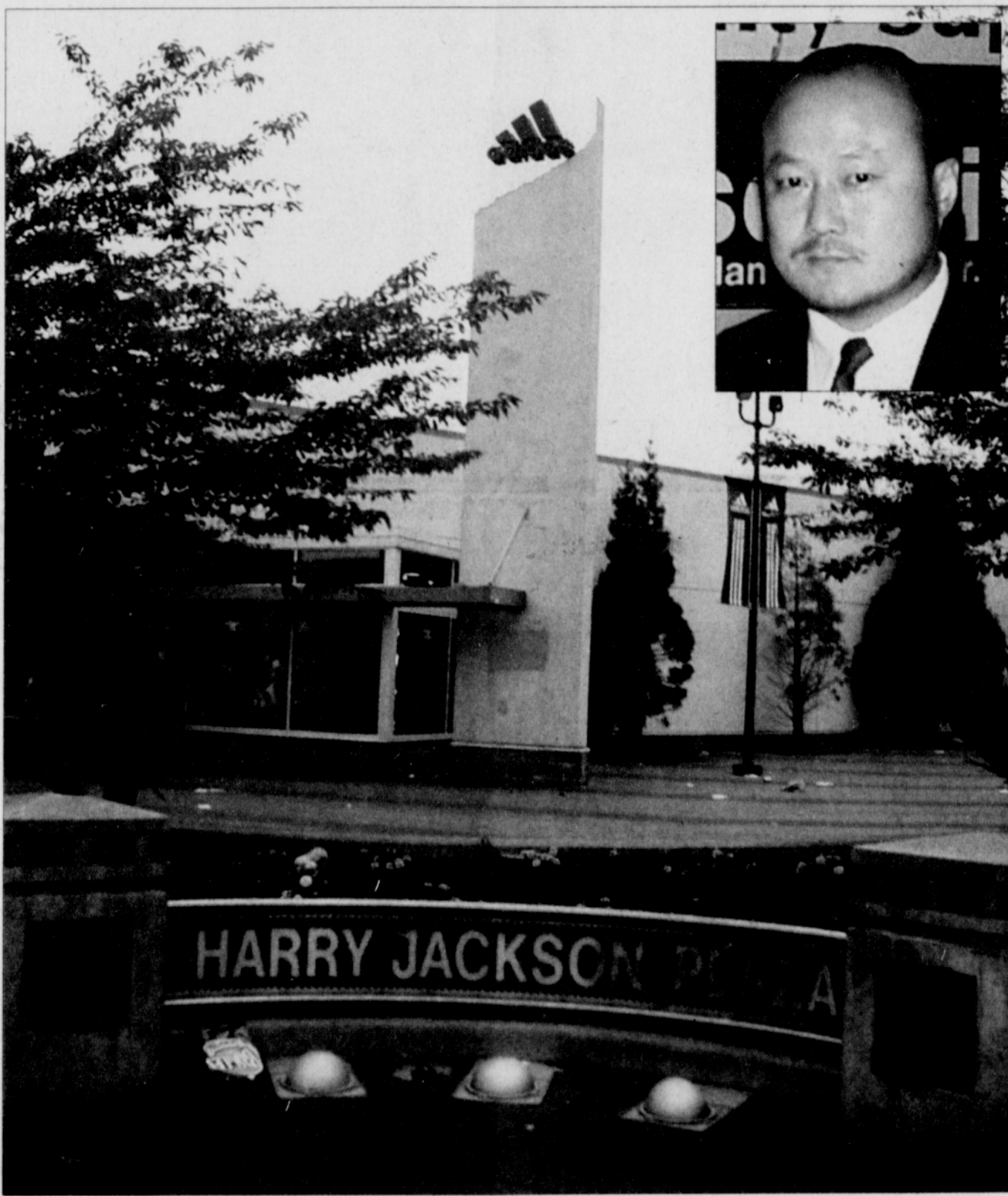
Today, Chung is pursuing businesses that are good for the community on several fronts.

He is replacing his Alberta Street Market, which he has owned since 1987, with a new two-story structure. It will contain a new, revamped market, a new edition of Northeast Broadway's Yuki sushi restaurant, a beauty salon and several other commercial services.

He recently purchased the Shamrock Tavern on Interstate Avenue and Skidmore Street, renamed it the Interstate Bar and Grill, and performed a major renovation.

"I wanted to clean it up," he says. "I changed the paint, the pictures and the bathroom."

A grand opening for the establishment in August drew the likes of longtime African-American business leader Paul Knauls and mayoral candidate Jim Francesconi.



Harry Jackson Plaza anchors the northeast business corridor on the corner of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street. Korean-American entrepreneur Jack Chung developed the site and named it in honor of highly regarded community servant Harry Jackson, an African American police officer.

▀ I'd always wanted to own a restaurant and bar, so I picked up the classified ads and saw that this place was for sale. It's right on the new MAX line and a busy intersection

—Jack Chung on the opening of the Interstate Bar and Grill

He recently purchased the Formosa Restaurant, an establishment with some history of public safety issues, at 7410 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., and here too, he plans a total renovation and a name change. The long-time restaurant near the intersection with Lombard

will be the Moon Star Bar and Grill.

"It will be beautiful," he promises.

Knauls notes that Chung will soon be proprietor of three liquor outlets: Interstate, Moon Star and Yuki. Recalling his own days as proprietor of Geneva's nightclub he quipped, "Jack's going

to be the new Paul Knauls."

Chung earned his success the hard way. He came to the United States from South Korea at age 19 in 1977. He worked for three years as a spot welder at Tektronix before being laid off and endured 10 months of unemployment.

Then a friend offered to let Chung have his job, as a distributor for Mary Jane's Bakery, in exchange for Chung's house.

"It wasn't for sale, but it was hard to sell a house at that time," he recalls. "I thought it was a good trade."

In 1987, he acquired the Alberta Street Market and the warehouse at Martin Luther King, the latter for just \$8,900 down.

In 1996, Stewart called to tell him that adidas wanted the property.

"I thought Fred was just talking, but they were serious," he said. "I met with the president of adidas. What the company wanted was to make the property their first fully-owned retail outlet anywhere."

Ray Leary, an African-American business leader who participated in the negotiations as an adidas executive, said, "Jack is very direct, but he also understands that successful business deals are made by people, not just corporations. You establish a relationship and that endures long after the ink is dry and the deal is complete."

To hear Chung tell it, he acquired the Shamrock out of boredom. He was already planning the renovation of the Alberta Market.

"I knew it would take time, and I couldn't just sit around waiting," Chung said. "I'd always wanted to own a restaurant and bar, so I picked up the classified ads and saw that

this place was for sale. It's right on the new MAX line and a busy intersection."

Then he stumbled on the Formosa, also up for sale.

"I saw an opportunity," he says. "I hear that 45,000 cars a day pass by there on Martin Luther King alone! I couldn't just let that go. I said, 'Let's do it!' Sometimes you just get lucky."

To many observers, Chung's success is not luck, but years of positive effort paying off.

Knauls says of his management of the Alberta

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### Development Good for Business

Michael Martin of Portland oversees the demolition of World War II-era housing at Columbia Villa.

See inside, page B12



### County Honors Minority Enterprises

Proclamation of the week of Oct. 13-17 for Minority Enterprise Development Week.

See inside, page B10



### Unflagging Dedication

Troy Kyles has been a member for Local Laborer's Union 320 for 15 years. He has worked in the construction industry for 20 years.

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