

METRO

The Portland Observer



High School Basketball All Stars
Jefferson Coach Marshall Haskins and seven of his players lead all-city honors
See Sports, Page B6

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Reunion Watch

Former students and faculty of Girls Polytechnic, James Monroe and Washington-Monroe high schools have the 66th annual all-school dinner at 5 p.m. Monday, April 12 at Our Lady of Sorrows School, 5239 S.E. Woodstock Blvd. Tickets are \$15. For more information, call 503-236-6557.

Packy Turns 40

Packy, the Oregon Zoo's elephant which became nationally renowned as the first Asian elephant born in the Western Hemisphere in more than 44 years, celebrates his 40th birthday with a cake stomp from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 14. Come by to sing happy birthday to Packy, and have a piece of cake for yourself. For more information, visit www.oregonzoo.com.

Honor Political Women

The Oregon Historical Society presents a program honoring the accomplishments of women in the historic 1970s legislature (including Mayor Vera Katz) in conjunction with Women's History Month. Conversations are at the Historical Society, 1200 S.W. Park Ave. from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 18. For more information, call 503-222-1741.

Trees Need Friends

Friends of Trees will plant trees and shrubs in the Hillsdale/Markham and Beaumont-Wilshire/Concordia neighborhoods on March 13. If you want to be a help to your community and environment, call 503-284-TREE or visit www.friendsoftrees.org.

Wellness

The second annual Holladay Park Plaza Community Wellness Fair is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, March 19 at 1300 N.E. 16th Ave. For more information, call 503-280-2221.

Minority Business Boost

A Small Business Economic Development Conference hosted by HUD is designed to help minorities and female business owners participate in federal government contracting prospects. The conference is at the Doubletree Hotel in Jantzen Beach, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. March 18. Pre-registration is \$35. For information, call 877-741-3281 or visit www.hud.gov/washington.

Stick Up for Seniors

Elders in Action is sticking up for seniors with a Web Evaluator Training from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, March 31 at the PCC Southeast Center, 2305 S.E. 82 Ave., Room 119 and an Ombudsman Training from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. March 29 through April 1. For more information, call 503-823-5269 or visit www.eldersaction.org.

Health For Everyone

The 6th annual Health Fair featuring "Health Issues that Affect Everyone" is from 9:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Saturday, March 13 at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ, 2941 N.E. Ainsworth United Church of Christ. The event is free, and lunch is provided. For more information, call 503-284-8767.

NAACP Meetings

The Portland Branch of the NAACP will hold two monthly executive committee meetings, one on the second Thursday of the month and the Thursday before the fourth Saturday of the month. General membership meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of each month. For more information, call 503-284-7722.

A Healing COMMUNITY

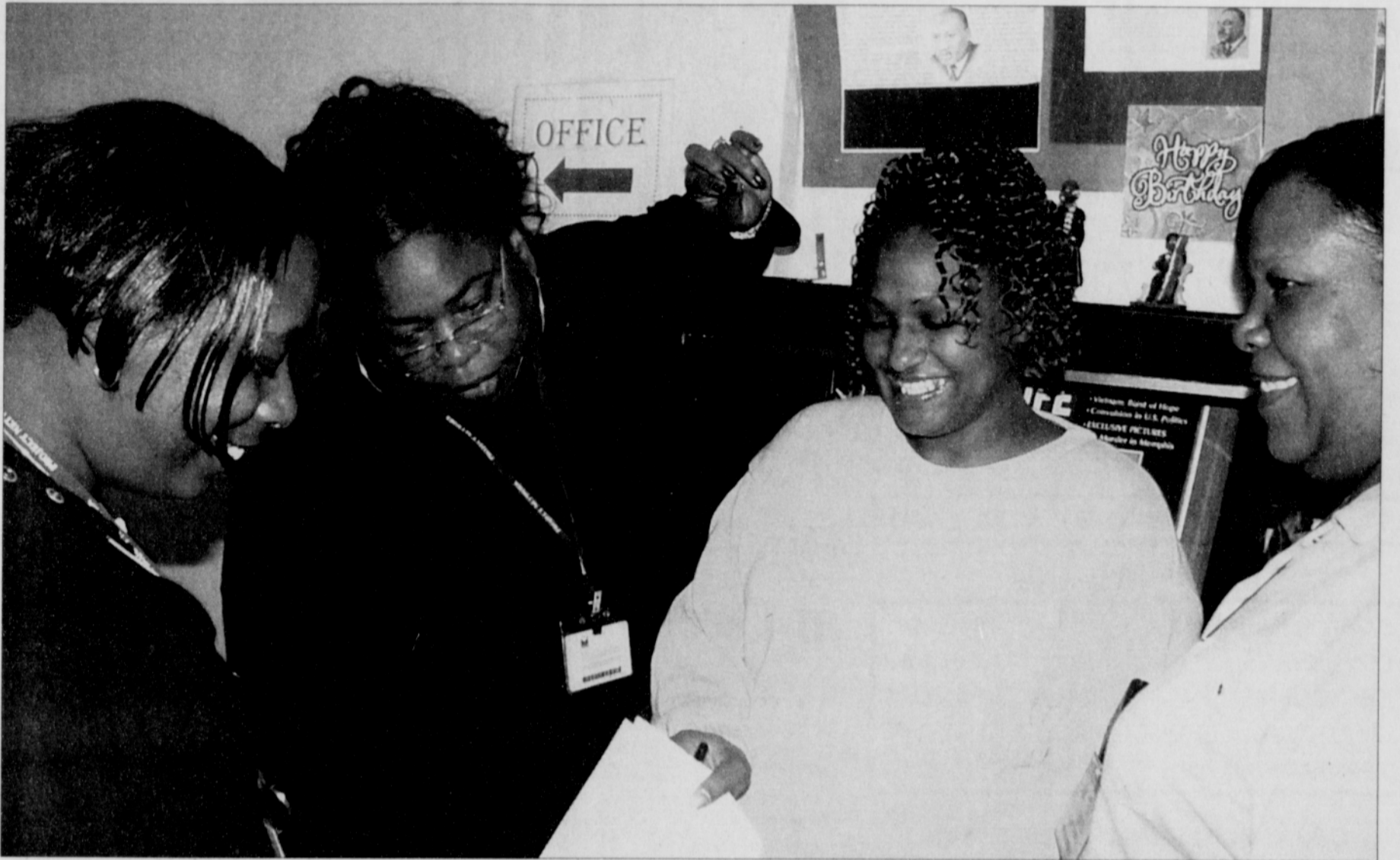


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Kathaleen Huff (from left), Sherrilynn Blanton, Charee Bailey and Lianne Roland discuss a schedule of workshops sponsored by Ugaza Jamii, a counseling program for African-American women.

Culturally-specific services help Portland women

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Lianne Roland was very proud of her clients at last Friday's celebration at Ugaza Jamii, where she works as a domestic violence facilitator.

For the last several months, she's been following African Americans through their self discovery and self improvement as they work through counseling programs

and other culturally specific services to get their lives back on track.

Roland knows the road is long, as she is a graduate of Ugaza Jamii, herself. The program, translating to "healing community," conquers heavy topics such as trauma, parenting and substance abuse to help participants find employment, housing and raise their children in well-adjusted families.

"I'd been to countless other treatment facilities and I always ended up relapsing because I didn't have the support I needed from my community," says Roland, who changed her life around after 25 years of substance abuse, domestic violence, in-

carceration and a separation from her children. "I was able to relate to the facilitators (at Ugaza Jamii) because they looked like me, understood my language and I was more able to model their behaviors."

Ugaza Jamii celebrated the accomplishments of participants last Friday at Lorenzen Auditorium at Legacy Emanuel Hospital. The program is nearing a close because its grant is running out, but a new program, Weku, focusing on pregnant women and mothers with children less than 12 months of age, will persist in teaching parenting and life skills with cultural sensitivity.

"If we can get a pregnant woman in

treatment, the chances of delivering a clean and sober child are greater, or if she already has the child, we can provide developmental services," said Sherrilynn Blanton, clinical resource coordinator for Project Network, the parent program of Ugaza Jamii and Weku.

Project director Jeanne Cohen and other facilitators are pitching the benefits of culturally specific treatment to area judges and district attorneys, hoping that someday, clients will be referred to treatment with Project Network instead of serving jailtime.

For more information, or to enroll in Weku, call 503-335-0855.



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Willia Ida Williams reflects on 59 years at Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church.

An Anniversary to Remember

Willia Ida Williams, once the president of the music department at Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, is still an active member of the church her late husband, Rev. O.B. Williams founded.

The church will celebrate its 59th anniversary with music, food and good people during special events all week,

including a potluck supper on Saturday, March 13 and concluding anniversary celebration at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 14.

Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church is at 3138 N. Vancouver Ave. The church is one of Portland's oldest African-American congregations.

Cascade Campus Expansion Builds Skills

Tomas Romero is the jack-of-all-trades at Portland Community College Cascade Campus' construction sites in north Portland.

Romero is a labor apprentice and works on everything, from operating heavy machinery to applying carpentry skills and any task in-between that needs to be done.

"It's a job that gives me an opportunity to learn new things," he said.

For the last six years, the Aloha resident has been an apprentice with Walsh Construction. He is in the midst of several construction projects at the Cascade Campus, all progressing at a dramatic rate.

In conjunction with the recently renovated Terrell Hall, Walsh Co. is overseeing construction of the new technology classroom facility, a remodel of the old Renaissance Market for public service education programs, and the physical education building.



Tomas Romero gains job skills during the construction of new buildings on the Portland Community College Cascade Campus in north Portland. Romero is an apprentice with Walsh Construction.

From grading to framing to finishing work, Romero is there from start to finish. He estimates he works on 15-20 job sites a year. On one rainy day, he was assisting a fellow worker in surveying the foundation of the new technology building. This will enable them to rest the slabs of concrete evenly, which will be the basis of the first floor. There are many things he must keep in mind as he works.

"The toughest thing about my job is trying to stay sharp," Romero said. "There are so many things going on at the site, from people, vehicles and heavy machinery, I must stay alert. And I have to be as accurate as I can with my measurements. My coworkers have to be able to trust me."

Romero, who is engaged to be married, came to Oregon 13 years ago from Mexico City at the age of 16.

continued ▼ on page B5