

LAW & JUSTICE

Inequality Found in Sentencing Blacks receive harsher punishments than whites

(AP) — The percentage of minority inmates in U.S. prisons has increased sharply since federal sentencing guidelines took effect 17

years ago, with blacks generally receiving harsher punishments than whites, a federal advisory panel has concluded.

The 15-year study by the U.S. Sentencing Commission, which sets guidelines for federal judges, examined how well the guidelines had brought uniformity to punishments. It found that while sentencing had become "more certain and predictable," there were still disparities among races and regions.

The findings come as the Supreme Court considers the constitutionality of the guidelines, which advocates say are critical to achieving fairness in punishments.

The justices could decide as early as next week whether to throw out the system because it allows judges, not juries, to consider factors that can add years to sentences.

"The big unanswered question is do we need to have sentences growing this way," said Douglas Berman, a law professor at Ohio State University and expert on sentencing. "Nobody wants to go back to the bad old days of complete unguided judicial discretion."

Before the guidelines were created in 1987, judges had wide discretion in issuing sentences. The guidelines give judges a range of possible punishments for a given crime and make it difficult for them to deviate from those boundaries.



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Rape Suspect At Large



Mark Lockhart

Beaverton Police, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, would like your help in finding a wanted person.

Mark Anthony Lockhart, 23, is wanted on a rape warrant in Washington County with a \$250,000 bail. The warrant stems from an incident that occurred on Sept. 10 in Beaverton. Lockhart sexually assaulted a woman in a wooded area

and threatened to cut her with a knife, although the weapon was not seen.

Lockhart fled the scene after she drew the attention of a passerby by screaming for help.

Lockhart is described as a black male, 5 feet 7 inches tall and about 175 pounds. He has black hair and brown eyes.

Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information, reported to Crime Stoppers, that leads to an arrest in this case, or any unsolved felony, and you may remain anonymous. Call Crime Stoppers at (503) 823-HELP (4357).

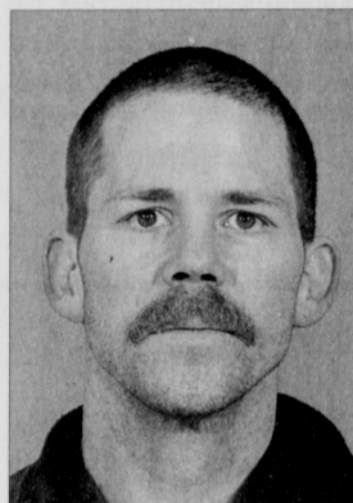
Officer Shoots Bank Robber

A veteran Northeast Precinct police officer shot and killed a suspected bank robber on Monday, Nov. 22 while responding to a robbery call at the Bank of the West at 905 N.E. Halsey St.

Police cornered Bruce Perison Clark a few blocks from the bank after being given Clark's description and being told that he had threatened to kill employees of the bank.

Several witnesses reported that the man ignored verbal commands from the police and advanced toward officers.

Officer Mike Smith, a 17-year-



Bruce Clark

veteran of the Police Bureau fired 3 to 5 shots striking Clark, who fell to the ground. Smith, who is assigned to the Northeast Precinct, remains on administrative leave.

The suspect was found with a knife, which was taken as evidence.

Detectives are seeking contact with anyone who may have information in this investigation. If you saw any portion of the crime and have not had contact with police, call the homicide unit of the Portland Police Bureau at 503-823-0479.

Fire Bureau Behind on Minority Hires

continued ▲ from Front

But this newspaper, which is committed to diversity in Portland, has never received any outreach information about recruiting people of color to the Fire Bureau. Sten says he sees this as a missed opportunity.

"That shows to me that the folks doing the outreach are missing a really obvious opportunity," said

Sten. "I'm not satisfied with our efforts today but I think we are making progress."

The reputation of the bureau was damaged in 2002 when the city settled a claim by African-American firefighter Rick Fizer, who was awarded \$100,000 for suffering racist and sexual remarks and pranks on the job. He worked at the fire station on North Going Street, just off Interstate Avenue.

Shortly after the settlement, a consulting firm conducted a survey about the cultural climate of the bureau. More than half of department employees responded that an exclusive, white culture exists within the bureau and 20 percent reported that the bureau tolerated racist jokes.

Some of the recommendations resulting from the survey results have still not been implemented, insiders say. A steering committee

was formed to field those recommendations but some supervisors still have not received the advised 16 hours of training to handle harassment complaints.

But according to Sten, a new day is coming for the bureau, proving the bureau provides inclusiveness for all.

"You're going to continue to see the fire bureau get more and more diverse," he said.

Call Center to Occupy Neglected Site

continued ▲ from Front

with Fred Meyer, then Albertson's, fell through.

Details for the new plans will be discussed during a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2 at the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, 4134 N. Vancouver Ave.

"We are 95 percent confident of this,"

PDC executive director Don Mazziotti told the commission. "We want to get to 100 percent."

PDC staffer Michael McElwee admitted that the call center will bring no new jobs to the area, as they are all currently filled at a site west of Portland, but that they would become available to north-

east Portland residents over time. He said the jobs would be "family wage," paying more than \$14 an hour.

Timothy Ray acknowledged the difficulties the development team had encountered in trying to make the project work.

"To refer to a call center as an anchor doesn't fit my idea of an anchor," Ray said. "People want something they can walk to and use. I think Northeast Portland deserves more," especially at this "key piece of property."

Leary expects economic benefits from the presence of call center employees on site.

"It's a very good first step," he said. "Without this in place, achieving our objective would be even more challenging."

"This is the best Plan B that could still be a catalyst," PDC chair Matt Hennessee said.

King Neighborhood Association member and nearby resident Jennifer Jordee-Borquist disagreed.

I would prefer for the property to be vacant four more years than something the neighbors neither want nor need," she said.

Former King Neighborhood Association chair Fred Stewart told the Portland Observer that a similar strategy had been pursued with the Walnut Park Center, the former Fred Meyer store that was turned into a new Northeast Police Precinct providing support for retail shops around it.


The strategy was a failure for economic development, Stewart says, and shouldn't be repeated.

Told of Stewart's comments, Leary says, "These are two totally different efforts undertaken at different times." The call center promises to have a work force that lives in the community and works on site rather than using it as a place to check in, he says.

With regard to realizing the project's original dream he says, "We're closer to that opportunity than ever before."

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