



HOUSING

Investment Builds at New Columbia

HOST Development, a local non-profit housing developer is the largest single-builder at New Columbia, the new neighborhood in north Portland being built from scratch in what once stood as Columbia Villa.

Founded in 1989, HOST builds quality, affordable homes for individuals and families earning between 70 percent and 100 percent of median family income, which is currently \$67,900 for a family of four. Since 1989, the group has built almost 250 homes in north and Northeast Portland.

Construction on the HOST homes began at the end of February and are available for pre-sales now. For information call 503-331-1752, extension 100 or visit www.hostdevelopment.com.



The non-profit group HOST Development is building 80 quality affordable homes for purchase in the New Columbia neighborhood of north Portland.



PHOTOS BY NICOLE HOOPER/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Hope Minor (from left) and sister Amanda Fredricks were two of nine female students in Benson's home construction project.

Benson Builders

Construction majors gain experience

BY NICOLE HOOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Calling it the end of a school project is an understatement. Students at Benson High School in northeast Portland have just finished building a 2,200 square foot home in two years.

The Benson Construction Department is famous for building beautiful homes for the local community for the past several years. The newest house is on the corner of Northeast 77th Avenue and Klickitat Street. The school's architecture and drafting students also gained experience on the project.

Tony Franciscone has been teaching at Benson for over 10 years and personally supervised the construction of five houses. During the students' junior year, they work

on the framing of the house and the second year is where most of the construction happens. The students spend half of their school day outside of the classroom and learn about the whole facet of building a house. Unfortunately, the electrical department at Benson still is not included in the process.

"This is a great way of teaching students about not only the construction industry but also other career choices that involve this industry," said Franciscone.

He estimates that 30 to 50 percent of the students now have careers in construction and many attend Oregon State University to major in engineering.

"The big picture is that over half are doing something related to their major here at Benson," Franciscone continued.

Richard Weber graduated from Benson in 1974 and believes his experience while attending Benson was invaluable as both a construction worker and teacher.

Most of the houses are in northeast and southeast Portland and



Potential buyers (above) visit the new "Benson House" on Northeast 77th and Klickitat Street.

sell quickly.

"We get over 20 people sometimes, making an offer on the house before it's done. We just can't do that because the house hasn't run through all the final inspections, also, people tend to want to make changes," Weber added.

The Benson houses are never on the market long and the proceeds of each house goes towards the building of the next house in two years.

This year, Carranza Marble and Granite donated granite

countertops, GCI Commercial Painters provided interior and exterior paint and plumbing materials and expertise was donated from Bruner Plumbing.

"This is the most donations we've had on a house," Franciscone said.

The three bedrooms two and a half baths home was constructed by 30 students, nine of which were female.

Sisters Hope Minor and Amanda Fredricks, both juniors, used the opportunity to learn

about construction so they could work with their father after graduation. With most of the students in a department being male, Minor and Fredricks felt they were treated like equals. The students, teachers and the new homeowners will all benefit from the positive and educational experience over the past two years. Many students don't get this level of hands on experience.

"We've already built a house and we are only 17 years old," said Minor, smiling.

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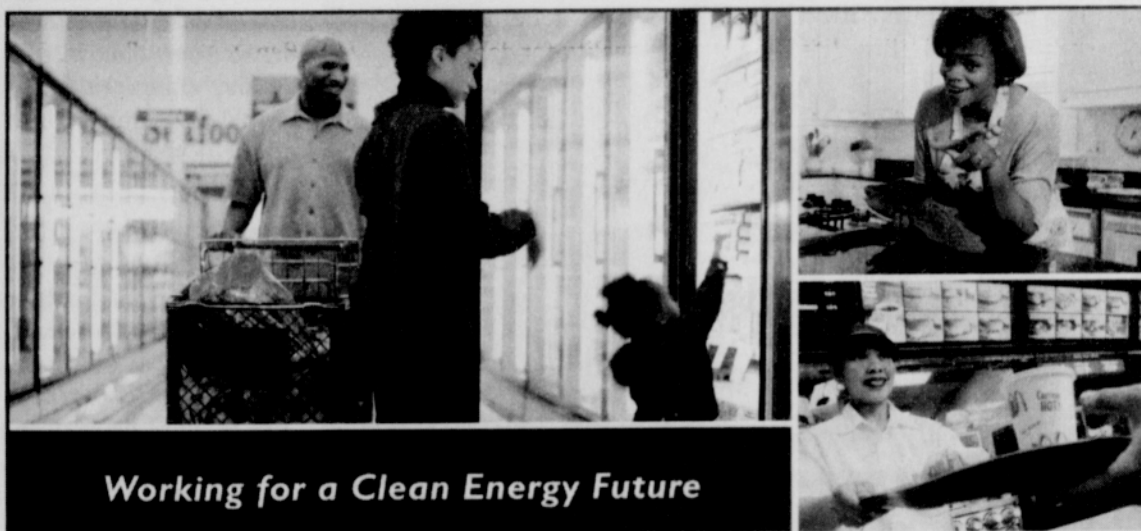
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This research study is being conducted by the Oregon Center for Applied Science, Inc. with funding from the National Institutes of Health. There are no sales or mailing lists involved.



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