



PHOTOS BY SARAH BLOUNT/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Alex Hopkins sits down for a breakfast break outside of the Native American Youth Association's new Family Center, site of the former Whitaker-Lakeside Middle School at 5135 N.E. Columbia Blvd.

## Native American Family Center Opens

continued ▲ from Front

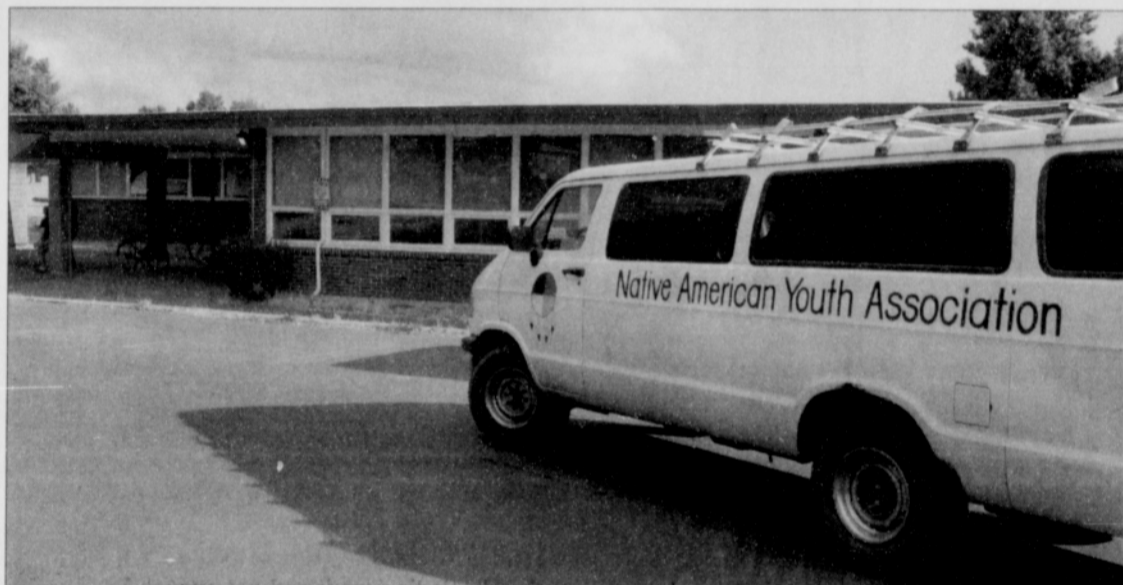
have the highest dropout rates and lowest college completion rates of any ethnic group in the country.

To close the achievement gap, NAYA plans to adopt an early college educational model with courses that promote a strong cultural identity. Students will focus on math, science and Native American culture. Juniors and seniors will be able take high school and community college courses, presenting them with an opportunity to earn a high school diploma or an associate's degree.

Maher said cultural courses will integrate traditional, ecological knowledge with practical applications.

"Kids have learned that math and science have nothing to do with them," she said, "but the reality is our people have been doing math, science and technology for thousands of years, in a different way."

The student body will exhibit the diversity found in hundreds of na-



A youth and family center for Native American youth is now utilizing part of the former Whitaker-Lakeside Middle School on Northeast Columbia Boulevard. Adjacent to the site are wetlands thought to have once been a historic Native American village.

tive cultures - NAYA serves more than 300 of the 738 tribes within the United States.

Maher said the school will recognize diversity by teaching students to honor and value their tribes, while at the same time honoring

other tribal perspectives.

NAYA is taking a year to plan the new high school, looking at successful Native urban schools in Minneapolis and Santa Fe and charter schools on reservations. Enrollment will start at 110 students and

increase every year.

NAYA has financial support from Portland Public Schools, Portland Community College, and a grant from Antioch University Seattle through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Early College Initiative.

## Public Health Scholars Program Grows

(AP)-- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation says it will add \$58 million to expand its \$1 billion Millennium Scholars program to target low-income and minority students seeking graduate degrees in public health.

It's the first time the foundation has added money to the scholarship program since it was established in 1999.

The program has already given scholarships to more than 10,000 students for undergraduate education in their choice of major and for graduate work in public health, education, science, math, engineering and library science.

The foundation, which planned an announcement about the program on Monday, says it will help 20,000 students over 20

years. The United Negro College Fund administers the Gates Millennium Scholars program, which has given money to students in every state and Washington, D.C., and has helped send them to more than 1,300 colleges and universities.

The new scholarship money will be used to increase the number of

minorities pursuing graduate degrees in epidemiology, biomedical science, tropical disease, public health practice and nutritional science.

The Gates Foundation spends most of its money on fighting diseases around the world and on public health, so the scholars could potentially end up working for the foundation in its other projects.

## Jenkins Headlines Roundtable

Broadcast veteran Angela Jenkins, longtime manager and head of programming at minority-owned radio station KBMS 1480 AM, will headline this month's Black Entrepreneurs of Clark County business round table and networking event.

The free session will take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 24, at the Jim Parsley Community Center, 4100 Plomondon St. in Vancouver.

Jenkins, a Vancouver resident whose media-industry experience includes nearly 30 years with KBMS owner Kris Bennett Broadcasting Inc., will discuss adaptation to market changes and the push to continue innovating.

Black Entrepreneurs of Clark County, a free monthly business round table and networking group, works to expand empowerment and close opportunity gaps through advocacy, contacts, fellowship and the exchange of expertise and ideas.

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