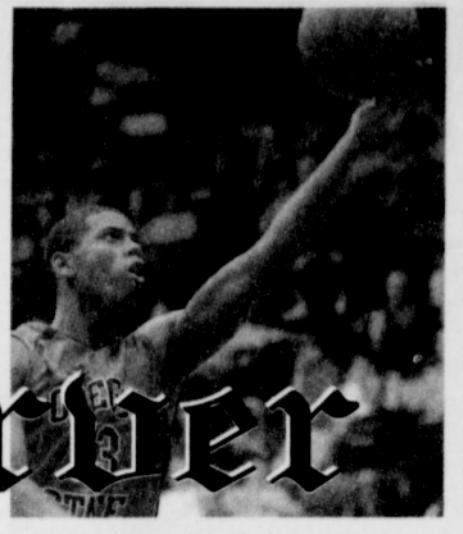
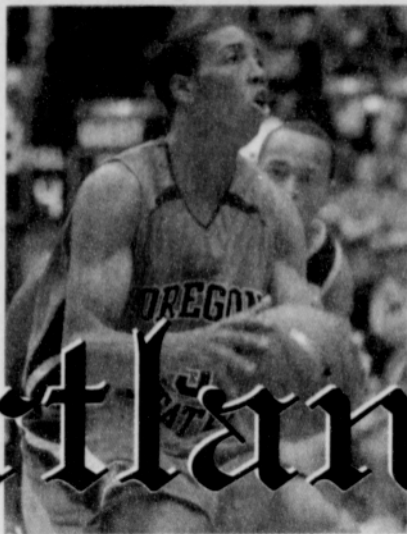




Brothers of Basketball

Portland's Josh and Seth Tarver are a dynamic duo at Oregon State

See story, Metro section



Week in The Review

Obama in the Running

Democratic Sen. Barack Obama on Tuesday filed papers creating a presidential exploratory committee, the initial step in a presidential bid that could make him the nation's first black to occupy the White House. See story, page A2.



Bomb Kills 4 US Soldiers

A roadside bomb killed four U.S. soldiers in northwestern Iraq, the military said Tuesday. The blast struck the Task Force Lightning Soldiers assigned to the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division Monday while they were conducting operations.

Attack Rocks University

An explosion outside a Baghdad university as students were heading home for the day killed at least 65 people on Tuesday, in the deadliest of several attacks on predominantly Shiite areas. The attack came a day after the United Nations said more than 34,000 Iraqi civilians died last year in sectarian violence.



Saddam Aides Hanged

Saddam Hussein's half brother and the former chief of Iraq's Revolutionary Court were both hanged before dawn Monday, but the half-brother's head was severed by the noose — leading to outrage from Sunnis who claim the body was mutilated.

King Holiday Celebrated

From the pulpit of the church where Martin Luther King Jr. once was pastor, Atlanta's Mayor reminded the congregation Monday that his work for peace and justice remains unfinished. See story, page A2.



Big Night for 'Dreamgirls'

The Oscars got their front-runners on Monday: "Dreamgirls" and "Babel" are likely to duke it out for best film after winning Golden Globes. "Dreamgirls" is also leading the pack in NAACP Image Award nominations. See story, page B3.



Heavy Snowfall a Surprise

Postal Service Letter Carrier Andy Ngju makes his rounds in northeast Portland during a Tuesday morning snowstorm that surprised forecasters for its velocity. An expected dusting of snow turned into four inches by afternoon. The remainder of the week called for partly cloudy skies and a bit warmer weather.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Anti-Affirmative Action Group Targets Oregon

Follows battles in other states

BY SARAH BLOUNT

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A group supporting a ban of public affirmative action programs based on race and gender preferences is landing on ballots across the country, and Oregon may be one of its next targets.

The confusingly titled American Civil Rights Coalition, a California-based group, has poured millions of dollars into other states, introducing initiatives that strike Affirmative Action — programs used to level public agency and educational playing fields for women and minorities.

A recent proposal passed in Michigan with more than half the vote. It banned affirmative action programs that give preferential treatment to groups or individuals based on their race, gender, color, ethnicity or national origin for public employment, education, or contracting purposes.

With their sites set on future state proposals possibly as soon as the 2008 election, the coalition has set up exploratory commit-

tees for preference bans on ballots in Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

U.S. affirmative action laws center heavily on access to education for minority students. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, a group in support of affirma-

share of Seattle public-works contracts awarded to minority or women-owned firms decreased by more than 25 percent when Washington State voters enacted a ban in 1997.

Chau Hoang, administrative assistant for Portland Community College's affirmative action office, said a ban in Oregon would not

ance when hiring diverse suppliers and contractors.

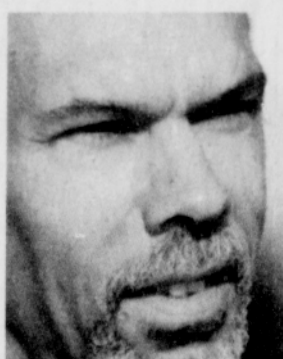
"There is not a written policy, we don't have hard, firm goals," said John Persen, coordinator of procurement diversity.

"We have aspirational goals," he said. "We look at projects and opportunities for small firms, and we have outreach events to get as much participation as possible."

An affirmative action ban could affect the way the City of Portland does business — city code requires any employer that supplies services to the city in excess of \$2,500 must be certified as an "Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action Employer."

However, not all programs would be negatively affected. Portland's Bureau of Purchases helps women and minority-owned and emerging businesses secure contracts with municipal agencies. Program coordinator Greg Wolley said a possible ban would

continued ▼ on page A3



'We set up our program to buffer against this sort of thing.'

— Greg Wolley, Portland Bureau of Purchases Program Coordinator

ative action, the number of black students admitted at the University of California at Berkeley fell from 562 in 1997 to 191 in 1998 when an anti-affirmative action measure passed in California. The ACLU also reported a drop in the number of Hispanic students admitted: from 1,045 to 434 in 1998.

In 2000, the Seattle Times reported the

directly affect the college's system.

"We have an open admission policy so we don't screen applicants like at larger universities in Michigan and Washington," Hoang said. "Anyone who wants to attend can, regardless of race and gender."

PCC does not have measurable goals as mandated by the office of federal compli-

Activist Addresses Health Disparities

Helping women struck by HIV and abuse

BY SARAH BLOUNT

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Cherrell Edwards is already a veteran HIV advocate in Portland, and now her untiring advocacy has earned her national attention, plus a local program to help women who suffer from the disease and abuse.

In addressing health disparities disproportionately affecting black men and women, Edwards, 22, stands on the verge of many more accomplishments.

She appeared on MTV for the network's "Think HIV" campaign in August, and in October appeared on Oprah for a segment examining HIV/AIDS in African American women.

Meanwhile, Edwards seeks non-profit status for Collective Care Services, the organization she founded, and has been busy securing events for the new year, including work on the cable access television show Urban Vibe, an HIV awareness retreat for women and girls and this weekend's Eshe Celebration at Portland Community College Cascade Campus.

Edwards became intimately aware of HIV/AIDS education as a child, when she realized



Portland activist Cherrell Edwards poses for cameras in Toronto as a spokeswoman for the MTV network's campaign to promote HIV protection and testing.

her mother was at high risk of contracting the disease because she injected drugs.

Her mother never contracted the disease, but died of Hepatitis C in 2000. Edwards believed this was the end of her battle with HIV, but after ending a three-year relationship in 2004 with a boyfriend who was not monogamous, she was diagnosed with HIV.

Shortly after, Edwards became a client at Portland's Women's Intercommunity AIDS Resources, and started networking with other women of color who speak out about women and HIV. She started her own program to empower black women through a common, unified space.

"This teaches us we can come together and receive love and support from another black woman," she said.

African Americans represent 13 percent of the U.S. population, but reportedly account for approximately half of the nation's diagnoses.

Despite this reality there remains an outdated yet still lingering belief in this country that it is a gay white male's disease.

Portland has Brother to Brother as an advocacy group for gay and bisexual black men (Edwards resigned as a staff member this past fall) but services for black women still fall short, despite it being the leading cause of death for African American women

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