

# Men's Academy Boosts Enrollment

continued **▲** from Front

and Technology.

But Jefferson Principal Cynthia Harris isn't satisfied with the predictions and looks to the single-sex academies to help double enrollment during her tenure.

So far the Harriet Tubman Leadership Academy for Young Women has been more successful at attracting middle-school enrollment than the John H. Johnson Leadership Academy for Young Men at Jefferson, which administrators see as the result of city already accustomed to a large Catholic girl's high school downtown.

Hundreds of female students from all over the city quickly signed up for the single-sex academy, according to Aurora Lora, women's academy administrator. But of the 62 students on the men's academy list at the end of August, only 10 lived outside of north and north-east Portland.

The leader of the boy's academy refuses to get caught up in an enrollment rat race, claiming it's enough work to run a program that the community can be proud of.

"The highest priority is of course educating the children," says Willie Holmes, men's academy administrator. "Jefferson is a political animal, and right now people are bogged down because of the past, but I can't let that stop us."

Citing kids that have eschewed private school and home schooling in favor of the academies, Holmes is one of the many Jefferson administrators who want to impress the city with the school before it even attracts many students from outside of its immediate area.

Traynham sees the single-sex academies as part of Jefferson's programming diversification that would draw a larger student body with a racial diversity more reflecting the area.

Her view follows the district

policy put in place by former Superintendent Vicki Phillips which encourages schools to meet enrollment expectations by attracting families' favor.

"We're ready to help Jefferson to get back on its feet, ready to get it back to being a school to contend with, so that it's a school of choice that people want to come to," Traynham says. "I think the district is really being supportive of Jefferson to make sure that we're getting the support that other schools are getting."

Some find it degrading, however, for schools to be forced to compete with one another for enrollment-based funds, opining that it raises the stakes too high for schools struggling with an unpopularity streak for a few years.

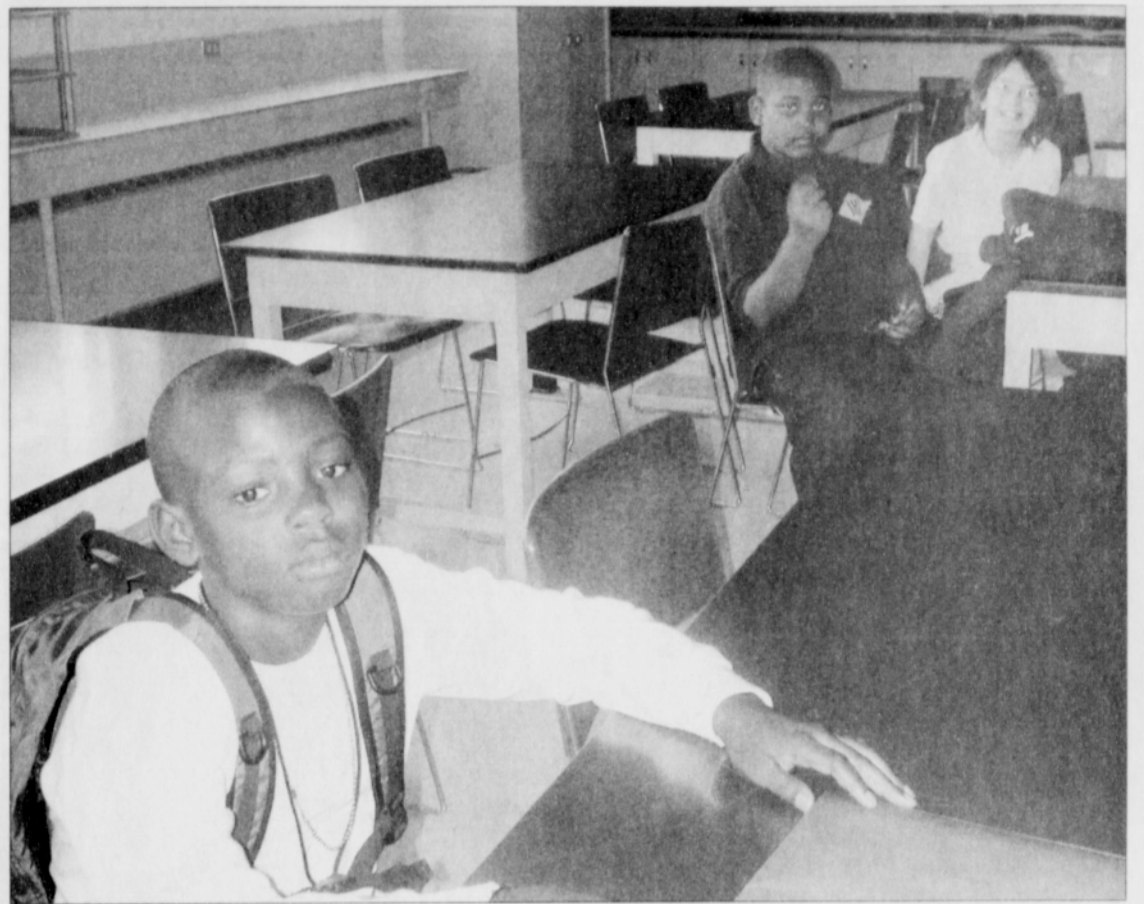
Low enrollment resulted in the

recent closure of two elementary schools in the Jefferson cluster, and parent Lynn Schore filed under the Freedom of Information Act to find out what this did to funding allocations.

Schore found that the closures would probably result the loss of \$1.1 million in federal Magnet Schools Assistance monies designed to help Jefferson's renowned art program and to ease district-wide segregation.

One teacher expressed dismay with Jefferson's situation last month while packing his belongings in preparation of transferring to a neighboring school: "I hope things turn around here," he said, wishing to remain anonymous, "because things have to go in the right direction."

Many would love to see the dis-



Academy sixth graders (from left) Dominique Bailey, Jacob Davis and Noah Peterson wait on locker combinations on the first day of school. PHOTOS BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



Austin Casey (left) and Lee Miller take a break from basketball practice at the John H. Johnson Academy for Young Men at Jefferson High School.

advantaged school getting some more special treatment.

"I realize schools are funded based on student body, and we don't have many students, but I wish there were some way to get around that," says Darryl Miles, a social-studies teacher for the young men's academy.

For now, innovation represents the biggest tool that the academy teachers have against any perception of stagnation.

Miles and fellow teacher Heather Stevens briefly discussed whether to enforce a separation among the grade levels in the cafeteria, and Stevens concluded, "I like seeing the eighth graders mixing with the sixth graders."

Many of the students had been mixing and bonding for weeks in a summer camp at the Moore Street

Salvation Army, where they found experiences in common by sharing essays on Vanport and Katrina, and by playing their favorite video games together.

During the first day of school, they banded together to discover which pieces of their uniforms they could get away with.

Another contentious point was where to house the single-sex academies, and it was eventually decided that only the young women needed a separate campus.

Holmes argues that the boys have more to gain from occasional interactions with the various students in higher grades, saying that "learning will not be inside the box."

For all the benefits of older role models, there will be some uncomfortable moments as well. As the academy young men made their

way from basketball practice back to their classrooms, they had to pass by the hallways with legions of Jefferson High School females, who said, "Eew, it's the boys," upon seeing them on the stairs.

Many of the middle-school boys, whose greatest prize is to appear suitably aloof, called out to teachers several times in attempts to hasten the inevitably awkward processes of the first day of school.

Academy leadership also looks forward to the day when things settle down to business as usual, while maintaining the excitement of a dynamic program.

"They're all here because they want to be here," says Holmes. "We've probably doubled expectations, and we expect more once school starts and parents find out about us."

## Portland Activist, Teacher Remembered

### Bobbie Nunn worked tirelessly for civil rights

A citywide memorial service in honor of civil rights activist Bobbie Nunn will be held Sunday, Sept. 16 at 6 p.m. at Highland Community Church, 7600 N. E. Glisan St.

Co-Emcees will be Sen. Margaret Carter and Sen. Avel Gordly, with spoken words from Rev. Alcega Boozer, Dr. W.G. Hardy, Harold Williams, members of the Links, the Deltas and many others.

Nunn was born in Muskogee, Okla. on Sept. 16, 1924. She peacefully went home to her God on Aug. 24, 2007.

She attended high school in Oklahoma and college at Prairie View A & M and Tillotson, completing her education with a master's degree from the University of Portland. She was active in school bands and played the saxophone.

At a time when black women were chaperoned, she formed an all women jazz group that played in jazz at USO clubs throughout Texas. While touring she met her husband, Josiah J. Nunn.

She was a passionate fighter against inequality and racism. Her personal mission was to inspire black women to know their "crown," to get an education, and to make a difference for themselves, their families and community.

In 1945 she started a lifetime of involvement as a member of the



Bobbie Nunn

urban children through the Ford Foundation. She taught the program and encouraged other teaching professionals to stress science and math skills particularly for inner-city youth.

As a director of personnel for Portland Public Schools, she was a leader in the advancement of women and people of color as school principals as well as political careers, including Carter, Gordly and Charles Jordan.

She worked with Dr. John McAnulty helping start the Marie Smith Alzheimer's Center. She served her church, St. Phillips Episcopal Church, as a deacon and junior warden. She received many awards, but was most proud to be recognized as the City Woman of the Year through the March of Dimes.

She was preceded in death by her husband, and daughter Darla Louise. She is survived by her son, Joe, daughter-in-law, Jan, grandchildren, Trudy, Patch, and Trenton Strickland, Tina his wife and great-grandsons, Tyler and Travis.

Contributions in her memory can be made to the African-American Chamber of Commerce, the MIKE Program, or the Nunn Family Scholarship Program at Portland Opportunities Industrial School which Josiah Nunn helped found.

NAACP. She was a member of the African American Chamber of Commerce and chaired its education committee. She was also active in the Urban League and the Portland chapter of "Links".

The couple led distinguished careers as educators and inspired their son, Joe, to pursue a career in education. The family served over 127 combined years in Portland Public Schools educating and mentoring thousands of children.

She was one of the first teachers to create a science curriculum for

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**The Portland Observer Established 1970**  
USPS 959-680  
4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER: Charles H. Washington  
EDITOR: Michael Leighton  
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER: Mark Washington  
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ADVERTISING: Kathy Linder  
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Send address changes to Portland Observer, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

Subscriptions are \$60.00 per year  
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