



From Heart to Startup

PCC class builds reality for entrepreneurial dreams
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Blazers Stay Focused

Under guidance of business-minded President Larry Miller
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Sound Minority Construction

Brothers build towards a lasting neighborhood impact
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Minority & Small Business Week

2007 special edition

SECTION B

Entrepreneur Expands Community Reach

Opens the Terry Family Funeral Home

BY JASON FLOYD
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Although his business is new, Dwight Terry is not new to the mortuary business.

Just prior to opening Terry Family Funeral Home at 2337 N. Williams Ave., Terry managed two funeral homes in Vancouver, and prior to that he was an area manager over six funeral homes in Portland, wracking up a total of 16 years of experience.

But it doesn't stop there. He also teaches embalming lab at Mt. Hood Community College, where he is also an alum, and he holds leadership positions in the community such as membership in the Albina Rotary Club, as a Royal Rosearian, and a first sergeant in the Reserves to name a few.

His goal has always been to open his own funeral home. The opportunity came when a significant area from north and northeast Portland to St. John's was void of any funeral homes.

Managing so many different funeral homes for so many years provided him with a host of interactions with the different cultures Portland has to offer. And when your business is specifically geared toward families wanting to send off their loved ones with dignity, cultural competency is required.

"My main thing is, my prices are reasonable and I think families should



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Community leader Dwight Terry, a respected, longtime professional in the local mortuary business, has opened Terry Family Funeral Home at 2337 N. Williams Ave.

be taken good care of," Terry said.

Believing that the family should be honored, Terry leaves no matter undone. He is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He recounts how in the past he would be on his way out of town for vacation and receive a call from his wife about a family in need and have to turn around. His dedication is matched by his insight. Even the details in the décor of his chapel and offices are comfortable and warm to take the emotional edge off of a grieving family.

Of Terry's three children, only his youngest shows an interest in following in his occupational footsteps. But Terry understands their reluctance in wanting to be in this line of work.

He explains that many skills are necessary for success in the occupation. Because the emotions of grieving families are running high, funeral directors may be the temporary target of their frustrations or you may have to mediate between feuding family members, while taking it all in stride and maintaining confidentiality with the client.

"The funeral home is a friendly environment" states Terry. His doors are open and he encourages people to come by. Believing that everybody deserves a decent service when they die, he encouraged people to prearrange their funerals, and if they have a plan somewhere else, they can transfer it over to him with no complication.

He doesn't believe that people should be forced to travel across town to receive funeral services.

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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
O'Neill Electric President Maurice Rahming and employee Ron Jimmerson oversee the progress on six miles of underground wiring for the Max light-rail construction to Clackamas.

Business Mentors Matched to Start Ups

Port of Portland program builds success

Rhonda Herschell, president of architecture and construction firm, Cherokee General, remembers well

the early days of getting her business started back in 1993.

"I was so excited to be an entrepre-

neur, working for myself and being in charge. It wasn't until I was well into it that I realized how much I didn't

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Construction Business

DaJoshua Foskey works for the bridge-building firm Hamilton Construction and is one of the carpenter apprentices enrolled at Northwest College of Construction in northeast Portland.

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