

Michelle Puts Focus on Her Daughters

Discusses marriage, motherhood in Ebony

(AP) -- Forget the pearls. Michelle Obama says her best accessory is her husband.

"Barack and I — as partners, as friends and as lovers — we accessorize each other in many ways," said Obama, wife of Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama. "The best thing I love having on me is Barack on my arm and vice versa, whether it's having him standing there smiling at me, or watching him mesmerize a crowd or talk to some seniors in a senior center."

Michelle Obama discussed her marriage, fashion sense and how she balances motherhood and work in an interview with Ebony magazine. The issue hits newsstands nationwide on Aug. 12.

Should she become first lady, Michelle Obama says her primary focus will be on

their two daughters — Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7.

"My first job in all honesty is going to continue to be mom-in-chief," she said, "making sure that in this transition, which will be even more of a transition for the girls ... that they are settled and that they know they will continue to be the center of our universe."

Michelle Obama said the challenges women face in balancing their families and jobs should be highlighted in government policies — whether it's through better health care or more family leave time.

She also expressed her support for military wives and the additional stress they face when their husbands are away and have done multiple tours of duty. "Tack on the fact that there is no sustained mental health support for these families as they are struggling with



Michelle Obama, wife of Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., speaks at a Women for Obama luncheon in Chicago.

loved ones who are coming back dealing with emotional issues," she said. "You've got people in pain and we don't

hear those voices a lot." Michelle Obama, 44, has worked as a lawyer and hospital executive. She has been

active in her husband's campaign and is scheduled to speak to military spouses on Wednesday in Norfolk, Va.

Like her husband, she exercises regularly — an activity that was hard to find time for when the girls were younger and Barack Obama was away working in the Illinois Senate, she said.

She said realized she was putting on weight after her oldest daughter was born. She started working out at 4:30 a.m. and would let her husband help with the children if they cried in the early hours.

"I found it wasn't that Barack wasn't interested in helping," she said. "It's just that when the baby cried at 4 a.m., I got up faster than he did because I would hear the baby and I would be up."

Michelle Obama said she tries to teach her daughters the importance of exercising. The family also eats organic as much as possible, she said.

"(Being fit) has become even more important as I've had children, because I'm also thinking about how I'm modeling health to my daughters," she said.

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PCC Enrollment Grows 14 Percent

For the fourth straight term, Portland Community College has experienced enrollment growth. This summer term, PCC is seeing double-digit growth across most campuses.

Overall the college grew by 9.7 percent in total headcount and 14.3 percent in full-time equivalent (FTE) students.

"As the economy continues to slow, it's apparent people are starting to turn to PCC in greater numbers to start their



Preston Pulliams

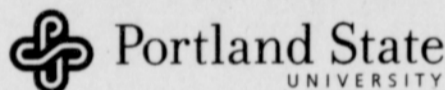
education or to retrain into a new career," said PCC President Preston Pulliams. "The growth at the college has been phenomenal. In many areas across the district, we are near capacity now for general classroom use and office space. This presents challenges in meeting the needs of our students' and educational partnerships."

The Cascade Campus in north Portland had one of the

biggest increases in enrollment. It swelled by 21.1 percent in FTE and 18.3 percent in overall headcount.

"We're excited that so many people are taking advantage of the wealth of resources we have available here," said Algie Gatewood, president of Cascade Campus. "People are beginning to realize, more and more, the importance of education, and that it is the common denominator of success."

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Paramedic Sentenced for Sexual Abuse

Multiple ambulance patients victimized

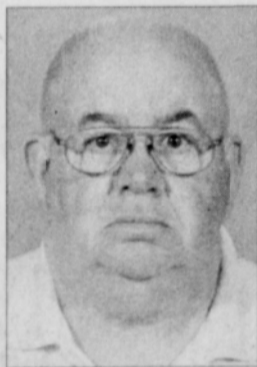
(AP) -- A Multnomah County judge sentenced a former paramedic to five years in prison for inappropriately touching female patients during ambulance trips.

Judge Leslie Roberts also sentenced Lannie Lee Haszard to five years of probation and ordered him to register as a sex offender following his release.

Haszard, 62, pleaded guilty to attempted first-degree sexual abuse.

The abuse became public after a local African American woman, a 28-year-old single mother of three, reported what Haszard had done to her last December.

The woman said she passed out in her Portland home and one of her children called for help. She said Haszard fondled her as she lay in a semiconscious state.



Lannie Lee Haszard

"I wasn't all the way awake, but I was aware of what was happening around me," the woman said. "That's what bothers me the most. It was like watching somebody do something to me and I couldn't do anything."

but she demanded that police be called.

"He was the first to believe me," she said of the Portland police officer.

After the woman's story hit the news, several other victims came forward to report abuse by Haszard. They ranged from 28 to 73 years old.

Three of the them attended Monday's hearing with family sitting by their sides.

"The one thing they all had in common was they're all in the back of the ambulance with Lannie Haszard," Deputy district attorney Donald Rees said.

Haszard, who lost his job with American Medical Response and his professional certification, did not speak at the hearing.

The single mother and two other victims are suing Haszard and AMR.

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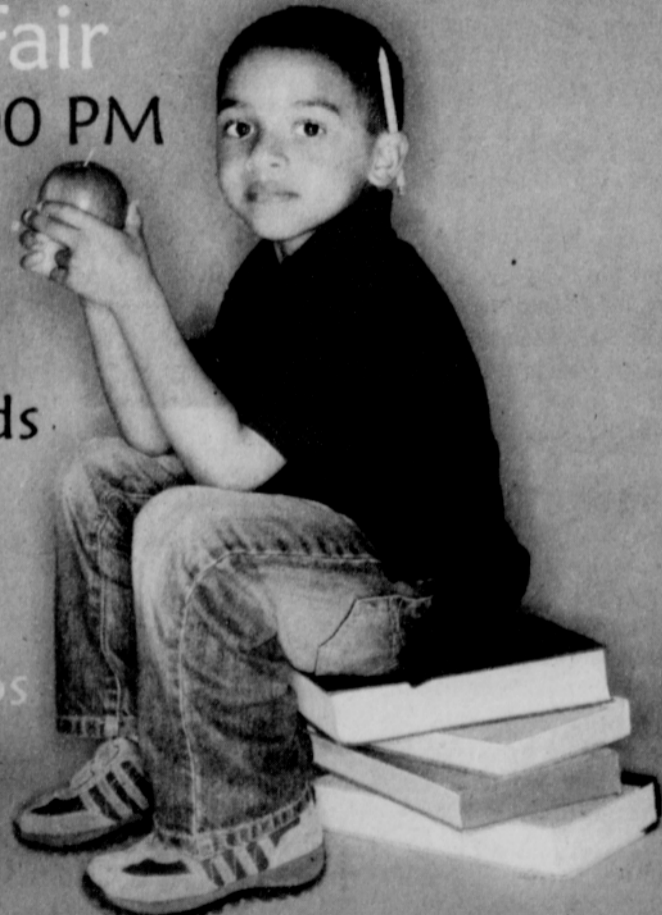
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Portland Crime Rate Dips to 30 Year Low

Portland's crime rate has sunk to the lowest level since the city started keeping records in the 1970s.

Police said the overall crime rate was 63 victims of crime for every 1,000 people. That compares to a high of 161 victims of crime for every 1,000 people in 1988.

The figures show that Portland has made steady improvements its crime rate almost every year over the past 20 years.

Last year, shoplifting was the only crime to increase, growing by three percent. All other crimes were down 14 percent.

The murder rate was down 13 percent compared to this time last year. Rape and robbery were also down 17 percent. Auto theft had the largest drop at 36 percent.