



Electrician Starts Business
Union membership leads to subcontracting
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First female CEO at PGE
Peggy Fowler honored for community service
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High Marks for Engineering
WSU Vancouver earns quality seal
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Minority & Small Business Week

2008 special edition



Hermann Colas of Colas Construction, Inc. (second from right) works with HOST Development as he builds affordable homes and fulfills dreams for first-time homeowners.

Building Homes and Dreams

Founder and CEO committed to community

Some construction and development companies may look at a house and just see timber, siding and concrete. When the people at Colas Construction, Inc. and HOST Development look at a house, they see the gateway to the American dream for Portland's working families.

By working together, HOST, a nonprofit

organization that provides affordable homeownership opportunities, and Colas Construction, a Portland-based construction company, are creating quality housing and thriving communities.

Established in 1997, Colas Construction began when founder and CEO Hermann Colas, Jr., originating from Haiti, experienced some difficulties building his own dream house.

"I had such a horrible experience with my contractor," said Colas. "I ended up firing him and finishing the house myself. I decided no one else should have to go through that experience."

Colas, who worked in telecommunications for 20 years, built his business on a commit-

ment to fine craftsmanship and service — starting with the construction of two personally financed houses in a subdivision in Portland.

"Since I didn't have any development experience I figured people wouldn't want to finance me, because they didn't know my capabilities," Colas said. "I decided to put my money where my mouth was and finance the first project myself."

Since then, Colas Construction has expanded significantly, adding Colas' son and daughter as the company's president and CFO. The company builds about 100 units per year with multiple projects throughout the Portland met

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Summit Looks at Art as an Economic Engine

Experts to talk business opportunities

The Center for the Arts Foundation and the Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce are bringing a renowned panel of experts together to discuss arts as an economic engine.

The "Arts are Good for Business" summit is open to the public and will be held Friday, Oct. 17 from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Persimmon Country Club, 500 S.E. Butler Rd., Gresham. Reservations can be made by calling 503-665-1131.



Actor Frankie Faison

Frankie Faison, a Tony award nominated and seasoned character actor has appeared in many television and film roles, is one of the summit's keynote speakers.



Actor Roscoe Orman

Faison has starred in the Silence of the Lambs, Do the Right Thing, City of Hope,

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Emerging Industries Grow with PCC

Alternative energy brings work force needs

With the impending construction of a huge wind farm and big interest in alternative energy, Portland Community College is responding with a new option to its existing Electronic Engineering Technology associate's degree.

The Renewable Energy Systems option, which recently was approved by the state, prepares technicians to work in the maintenance of all renewable energy systems, including solar, fuel cell and wind manufacturing industries.

This option is similar to the one at Columbia Gorge Community College and shares some courses. Students will get a chance to experience what it is like to be a technician in these fields, including having a chance to climb one of the windmills at the farm.

"This is the most comprehensive renewable energy systems training offering in the state of Oregon," said Sanda Williams, instructor in Electronic Engineering Technology. "Graduates can work in any of the areas and we have classes that they can take at different campuses. We are dedicated to serving the community and industry in the best possible way to direct students to jobs that remain local. We have great faculty and plenty of services. We are excited about what we've done here."

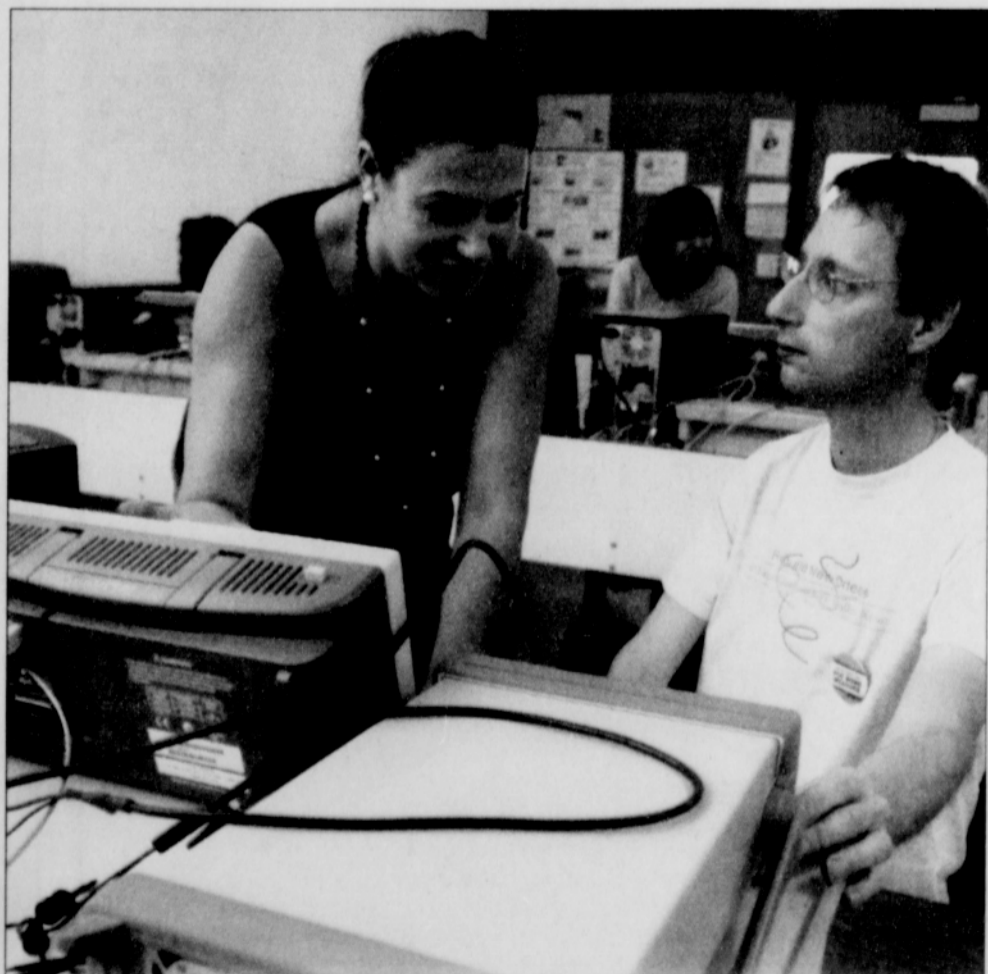
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—Sanda Williams

Three years ago, the electronic engineering program, based at the Sylvania Campus in southwest Portland was going through a reinvention of its curriculum, eventually adding Biomedical Engineering and Wireless and Data Communication Engineering technology options.

But industry leaders mentioned the need for

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Electronic Engineering Technology instructor Sanda Williams works with a student at Portland Community College.