

Building Bridges for a Better Community

continued ▼ on page A9

Holiday, Jackson is a living example of King's inclusive approach and efforts to build bridges that make stronger communities.

Although no longer a student, Jackson is still active in the alumni chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi doing community service throughout the community. But this is far from the only community-oriented work he does.

Jackson is tireless. Between work, family, and community service he ends up working 10 hour days mentoring teenagers, sparking an interest science and technology among school children, and getting African-American men to take better care of their health, among others.

"The most important thing is giving back to the community and setting that positive example," said Jackson.

Jackson clearly wants to strengthen communities, and one central way he's doing it is by encouraging future generations to step up and take a stake in it.

On a recent Saturday, Jackson wasn't lounging about at home, but at a church in northeast Portland hunched over a laptop at a table surrounded by children. He explained an engineering lesson to the kids while goading one to sit up.

One of Kappa Alpha Psi's proudest projects is Lego Robotics.

The program gets minority children interested in science and technology at an early age. Kids compete against other schools to building robots out of Legos and programming them to perform tasks.

"It's going to be something very special," said Jackson, who notes that similar programs tend to be aimed at more affluent children.

Another project Jackson is particularly proud of is the work mentoring young African-American men in the Perspective Gents Club. He and other members of the fraternity take time to meet with young people and discuss the issues they are facing and try to steer them on the right path.

"To see them as a senior going to college, and seeing that it's a reality -- that they can make it -- that drives me," said Jackson.

"He's motivating others to get us to do things we'd like to do," said Sean Murray, a Kappa alum and human resources manager for Portland Police, who has worked with Jackson on a number of initiatives.

Murray said that he's been

particularly impressed with Jackson's work mentoring young men, having made the extra effort to drop off and pick up a teenager with problems at home.

Jackson is also involved in health issues. He helped create a monthly men's health forum, where African-American men meet to discuss health issues like eating right, cancer, and can get their blood pressure checked.

Jackson is affable and dapper. The baby-faced 28-year-old wears a neat and thin goatee.

He was born and raised in Portland to Filipina mother and African-American father. Jackson attended David Douglas High School and went on attend Portland State University where he majored in business and played football and basketball.

He was drawn to the predominantly African-American fraternity because of its emphasis on public service and the expectation that he would continue to serve after college.

"I wanted to be a part of an organization that was about doing positive things in the community," said Jackson.

On a typical day, he rises at 6 a.m. and rouses his 5 and 6 year old children to have a breakfast and talk about school. He then goes to work at the Banfield Pet Hospital. After work he attends to his various projects, getting home at about 8 or 9. But often times, Jackson tries to bring his kids to community service activities, just as his parents did with him.

Jackson explained that because he grew up in a multicultural household he is able to immerse himself in a variety of human environments and can build partnerships.

After graduating he became increasingly involved in the local alumni chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, and was recently elected to the position of polemarch, the equivalent of president.

After taking over he's tried to reenergize the organization, which has drawn the praise of previously inactive members.

Ernest Hartzog joined the same fraternity in 1953, but had been inactive in the alumni chapter until Jackson came long.

The 80-year-old retired school administrator said he was impressed by Jackson's infectious drive, and reinvented himself in the fraternity.

Jackson's wife, Cobi, who works for a non-profit providing technology to under-served areas, remembers Jackson breaking his leg, but still continuing his regular schedule.

King Birthday, Black History Gathering

McMenamins Kennedy School hosts event

On Monday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m., a special History Pub will be presented at McMenamins Kennedy School, 5736 N.E. 33rd Ave., in honor of the inauguration of our country's first African-American president, the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. and the start of Black History Month.

Guests of all ages are welcome and admission is free; please bring a contribution of canned goods for donation to the Oregon Food Bank. McMenamins

refreshments will be available for purchase. Two leading scholars of black history, as well as new local research, will shine light on two pivotal yet largely unknown

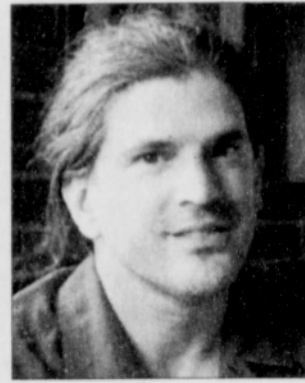
explored through a remarkable film called Searching for York, which aired on Oregon Public Broadcasting's "Oregon Experience" in November 2008. The program's second focal point is from that period of great optimism for African Americans in the 1860s and '70s, following the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation and the 14th and 15th Amendments.

McMenamins Historian Tim Hills will detail the personalities of this city's small but vital African-American community and the unprecedented advances made by these courageous and skilled men and women, many of whom were former slaves.

Dr. Darrell Millner, professor of Black Studies at Portland State University, will offer his perspective on the subject, placing the event's two topics in the larger context of the overall African-American experience in Oregon as well as the historic current events in our nation's capital.



Darrell Millner



Tim Hills

areas of the African-American experience in Oregon. First, the significance of York, sole African-American member of Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery, is ex-

Woman Boxer has Gusto to Compete

continued ▲ from A3

black eye.

She mulled the idea over, and discussed it with her employers before finally tossing a coin to settle the matter. The coin said "fight."

"I'm most scared about the cage door closing," said DeSimone of the fight she was anticipating in a few days.

MMA combatants square off in a cage wearing mouthpieces and four-inch gloves made of synthetic material. There's no eye gouging, fish-hooking, direct strikes to the throat or back of the head, and combatants can only use punches when their opponent is on the ground.

On a Saturday night in November, the Roseland Theatre was bathed in blinding sea of yellow and white lights. A towering cage made out of black metal loomed in a sea of seats.

"I was roasting hot," said DeSimone, who emerged wearing a sports bra, athletic shorts, and gloves.

Her lanky opponent, Christa Shaffer, emerged on the other side of the ring. DeSimone recalls being mentally terrified, and struggled to stay focused on toppling her adversary.

The referee signaled to go ahead. The two nervously danced around each other, before Shaffer took a few swings at DeSimone, who dodged each one before tackling her. Shaffer struggled back

before DeSimone got her in a sleeper hold, ending the match in 40 seconds. The room exploded afterwards.

"It's always good to get the fight over with quickly," said Oriza, who is embarrassed to admit that she was so proud she cried when

DeSimone won. DeSimone's unlikely victory earned her a nickname: "crash course," which she wears proudly.

Martin Luther King Jr. Coloring Page



School Family You go to guide for school success. Visit SchoolFamily.com

Subscribe! 503-288-0033
Fill Out & Send To:

The Portland Observer

Attn: Subscriptions, PO Box 3137, Portland OR 97208
subscriptions are just \$60 per year
(please include check with this subscription form)

NAME: _____
TELEPHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____

or email subscriptions@portlandobserver.com

To Place Your Classified Advertisement

Contact: Kathy Linder
Phone: 503-288-0033
Fax: 503-288-0015
e-mail: classifieds@portlandobserver.com



Paul A. Neufeldt
503-875-1695
panndrw@yahoo.com

Affordable Design and Business Support

Graphic Design • Company Identity • Web Design
Logos • Signage • Ad Design • Outdoor Events



We flash & unlock cell phones

Cell Phone Repairs

Fix screen • Water damage • Power supply

303 N.E. Killingsworth

503-735-1422 *10% of flashing with this coupon

Advertise with diversity in

The Portland Observer

Call 503-288-0033 ads@portlandobserver.com

Michael Tillery

Broker

503.975.8004

michael@bridgetownrealty.com

Please call me, your neighborhood specialist, for any of your Real Estate needs. My success is built on a commitment to quality service.



State Farm®
Providing Insurance and Financial Services
Home Office, Bloomington, Illinois 61710



Ernest J. Hill, Jr.

Agent
4946 N. Vancouver Avenue, Portland, OR 97217
503 286 1103 Fax 503 286 1146
ernie.hill15mb@statefarm.com
24 Hour Good Neighbor Service®



Platinum Fade SALON



Best Barbers in Town & Razor Line Cuts

5010 NE 9th Unit A
Portland Oregon 97221
503-284-2989

Hours of operation:

M-F 9 am - 6 pm
Sat 8 am - 9 pm
Sun 11 am - 6 pm