

# Black Oregon Symposium: Call for Action

## Urban League hosts strategy session at PSU

Portland Mayor Sam Adams will lead a roster of elected officials, policymakers, and community leaders at a Symposium on the State of Black Oregon report, recently published by the Urban League of Portland.

The State of Black Oregon Symposium: A Call for Action and Accountability will be held on Thursday, Dec. 3 at Portland State University, Smith Memorial Hall, 1825 S.W. Broadway, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mayor Adams, Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen and Oregon state legislators Sen. Chip Shields and Rep. Lew Frederick will focus on specific solutions for ad-

ressing the stark disparities highlighted in the report that exist for African Americans in Oregon in the city, county and state.

A panel of experts, who contributed research and analysis to the report, will also outline strategies for change in public policy aimed at eliminating disparities in education, employment, health, criminal justice and child and youth welfare.

The State of Black Oregon Symposium is part of the Urban League of Portland's work to develop a bold action plan that calls for implementation of proven, effective policies and tools to eliminate the state's gaps between African Americans and the majority population in income, wealth, health, social progress and educational attainment.

Other speakers, include Sheila Holden, North/Northeast Economic Development Alliance; Dr. Karen Gibson,

Associate Professor, Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, Portland State University; Joyce Braden Harris, Co-chair, African American Alliance; Dr. Robert Thompson, Oregon State University, Department of Ethnic Studies and David Rogers, Director, Partnership for Safety and Justice, Tricia Tillman, Administrator, Oregon Office of Multicultural Health, Angela Cause, Diversity Manager, Oregon Department of Human Services,

former Senator Avel Gordly, Associate Professor, Department of Black Studies, Portland State University, and Peggy Ross, Governor's Office, Director of Affirmative Action.

The State of Black Oregon Symposium is sponsored by The Urban League of Portland, Portland State University, PSU Black Studies Department, PSU Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, US Bank, Featherlite Inc, Urban Bridges, and Comcast Inclusion Team.



Zeta Sigma Omega volunteers prepare food boxes for delivery to appreciative families.

## Food Panty Helps Others

Members of Zeta Sigma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. donated enough food items to the AKA Food Pantry to provide 16 families in need with food boxes that con-

tained at least 10 non-perishable food items each.

Several members of the chapter delivered 11 food boxes to diverse and very appreciative families on Nov. 22. The remaining 5 boxes were

delivered before Thanksgiving. The AKA Food Pantry community service project, which started in March 2009, was organized by chapter member LaShanda Hurst.

## Collection Drive for Survivor

The Healing Roots Center, which provides services to African and African American families surviving domestic violence, is collecting Christmas presents for 11-year-old Jasmine Medina-Barr.

"Our hearts just go out to this child who is the only surviving member of her immediate family," organizers said.

Jasmine's 28-year-old

mother Tameka Medina and 4-year-old brother Ashawn were killed earlier last month by her father who also shot himself in one of at least three tragic, domestic violence-related murder-suicides in the Portland area in recent weeks.

The community is asked to help bring some joy back into this child's life by dropping off new gifts appropriate for

an 11-year-old girl at Reflections Coffee, 446 N.E. Killingsworth, or the Healing Roots Center, 5432 N. Albina Ave.

You can also make a deposit to the Tameka Medina Family Fund in care of any Wells Fargo branch.

For more information, email [reneemitchellspeaks@yahoo.com](mailto:reneemitchellspeaks@yahoo.com) or call 503-278-8280.

## Rights Group Seeks Members

The City of Portland is seeking qualified volunteer applicants to fill three vacancies on the Human Rights Commission.

The commission works to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, strengthen intergroup relationships and foster greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work,

study, worship, travel and play in the City of Portland.

The commission is comprised of 15 members who represent a broad spectrum of the community with areas of expertise in advocacy, leadership, and community involvement. The commission is broad on a number of diver-

sity fronts including education, profession, race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, religion and geographic identification.

For more information or to apply, visit [portlandonline.com/humanrelations](http://portlandonline.com/humanrelations) or call Koffi Dessou at 503-823-4429.

## Media Tackles Disparities

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land jobs in the future.

After young people have completed an introductory cablecast course, kids interested in pursuing a career in media are put on a track to develop specific skills like script writing, and digital editing.

PCM also offers coursework for people wanting to get skills relevant to our increasingly technology-saturated society. People can learn how to use animation programs and other visually-oriented technology to produce features for the web and television. They can also learn about new media technology like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other highly-used Internet mediums.

"We're really needed more than ever in this economy," said McDaniel, who has seen people wanting to pick up new skills while the economy is in a slump.

In order to help further bridge the digital divide, PCM aims to bring down the barriers between it and the community it serves. It recently landed a grant to partner with six com-

munity organizations like Central Northeast Neighbors to establish "SmartAccess" centers.

McDaniel explained that PCM's SmartAccess program is meant to directly address community media needs, rather than just assuming PCM knows what those are and hope people will come to them.

At each SmartAccess site, hosted by the community organization, people will have the opportunity to get training in digital technologies and multimedia.

McDaniel points that many of the classes, which range from \$65 to \$150, are typically more affordable than many other institutions of higher learning.

"It's one thing to have a masters in communications, it's another to have your hands on a camera," said Ray Larson, chief engineer at PCM.

Larson said that he tries to get people to focus on one aspect of television production that they're most comfortable with, and work on becoming proficient.

"We try to do more with less," said Larson of PCM's fa-

cilities, located at 2766 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, which he points out aren't as huge a commercial television station, but are still up to snuff.

McDaniel explained that many businesses, both for and non-profit, are increasingly relying on new media, particularly video, to get their messages across to the public.

"People want visual communication," said McDaniel. "Video is what really tells the story."

McDaniel didn't have numbers on how many people who have taken classes have gotten jobs, but noted that they would start tracking that in the future.

Mindy Clark, marketing director for Children's Justice Alliance-which works with the children of incarcerated people, experienced the benefits of PCM first hand. She took a course in multi-media to help revamp her organization's website with a video telling the stories of three fathers in local penitentiaries.

"It was a huge help to get our organization up to another level," she said.



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