

GOP Pollster Called Extremist

For hateful statements on gays, women, blacks

Four community leaders are calling on Republican candidates to the state Senate to publicly repudiate their GOP pollster Dennis Oliver Woods, saying, "Woods is an extremist, whose views are broadly hateful, but especially to women, African Americans, and the gay and lesbian community."

The group — comprised of former Gov. Barbara Roberts, Rep. Lew Frederick, D-Portland, Rev. Chuck Currie of Portland's United Church of Christ, and Basic Rights Oregon Executive Director Jeana Frazzini — released a letter to the candidates citing media reports of statements Woods has made on his personal website, and in the 1998 book "Disciplining the Nations."

The letter mentioned that Woods recently wrote, "In many, if not most cases, slaves in the old South were purchased for much the same reason that Christians today engage in overseas adoption: to rescue them from a life of hopeless paganism.

Their condition was usually happier, healthier and more secure than that of a typical European wage earner..."

Woods has also made statements about how in the Bible, "the death penalty is specified for a number a crimes ... (including) homosexuality," and also that "America's founders limited the franchise (voting rights) to male heads of households."

The community leaders want Republican candidates to terminate any relationship they have with Woods, and to refuse or refund any money from groups continuing to employ Woods.

Over the past three years, Woods' Damascus-based company, Target Market Strategies, has polled for the Senate Republican caucus, conservative interest groups, and several Oregon Senate races this year.

So far, no Republican candidate has officially distanced himself or herself from Woods.

And it now appears as though all of the content on Woods' website, which was repeatedly cited in the letter, has been removed.

Cascade

BY ALGIE C. GATEWOOD

Connections



Preparing for New Jobs and Professions

Let's not mince words. The economy is still in shambles. While certain indicators seem to suggest that a recovery is imminent — rising stock prices, for example — too many Americans are either out of a job or live in constant fear of losing the one they have. For most people, the recovery won't start until the economy begins to consistently add jobs rather than lose them.

While we're being brutally honest, let's face one basic fact: the vast majority of people determine their economic health by one factor alone — gainful employment. If someone has a job, then he or she has a measure of economic health. If not, then very little stands between dislocation or all-out economic ruin.

And lest you think I'm simply trying to scare you, let me be perfectly clear: the current downturn will end. While not all old jobs will return — perhaps more importantly — new jobs will be created, many in professions that didn't exist even a few years ago.

The question is — will you be ready?

Before I dig into this topic, a little background. First, while our present economic slump is the worst since the Great Depression, there is a reason — several, actually — for my optimism. Like President Franklin Roosevelt did in the 1930s, President Obama is marshalling the power of the federal government to put people to work expanding and restoring our national infrastructure.

Roosevelt's New Deal was responsible for the creation of hundreds of roads, bridges, dams, schools, community centers and other landmarks in communities all over the country, many of which are still in use today. President Obama's stimulus legislation calls for many of these same kinds of projects, but also extends to a whole range of communications, transportation and energy infrastructure projects the likes of which Roosevelt could scarcely have imagined.

Fiber-optic networks. Solar and wind farms. Rail and streetcar lines. Weatherization and energy-efficiency enhancement projects. Projects like these, and many more, are already under way or slated to begin here in our state, including the construction of what will be the world's largest wind farm in eastern Oregon. All told, according to recovery.gov, President

Obama's stimulus plan has funneled nearly \$2.8 billion in contracts, grants and loans to Oregon, all of it aimed at getting Oregonians back to work.

So where are the jobs, you may be tempted to ask? Many have already been created, and many more are to come. For example, the MEMC Inc. (formerly Solaicx Inc.) solar-panel fabrication plant in north Portland, is expected to triple its capacity and more than double its workforce in the next year, thanks in large part to the federal stimulus program. This trend will only increase as more and more stimulus projects get under way and the need for workers increases.

Which brings us back to my earlier question — will you be ready?

The answer could depend on the choices you make right now. Let's say you want to land a job making solar panels or components for wind generators, or maybe you want to go to work installing or maintaining those products once they're manufactured. How do you take steps to ensure you're ready to answer the call when the time comes? Where do you acquire the necessary skills?

At a community college campus near you, of course.

There are simply no other educational options that offer as much bang for the buck as community colleges. I challenge anyone to name another institution that offers such a comprehensive combination of high-quality instruction and facilities, student support services and range of subject areas at such a reasonable price.

For example, at Portland Community College, a student can take a full-time load for approximately \$3,500 per year — a little less or a little more, depending on which courses he or she elects to take. In the world of higher education, believe me when I say this is a bargain.

However, times are tough, and I realize that any price tag — however reasonable — can be intimidating for someone who is out of work. But don't let that stop you. There is plenty of financial aid available, enough to defray the cost of attending community college significantly.

So will you be ready? You can be, if you make the right choices now. Visit a community college campus near you to learn more.

Algie Gatewood is president of the Portland Community College's Cascade Campus.

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