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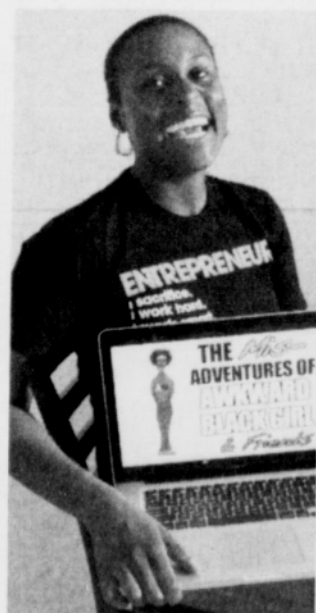
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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS

On Mission for Birth Justice

Founder and CEO grows non-profit organization

BY MINDY COOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Shafia M. Monroe, who has assisted women in healthy and holistic birthing practices since she was 16-years-old, has worked her entire adult life dedicated to eliminating the barriers lived by minority women and families to positive and beautiful birth experiences.

As a midwife with seven children of her own, Monroe said she has assisted in the birth of over 500 women and educated thousands of individuals throughout her lifetime in hopes of creating a society where justice is given at birth.

"Over 25 years, and I'm still doing the same thing," she said, pointing to a black and white image of herself as a young African American doula holding a baby that just entered the world.

"Women need to feel beautiful and valued."

As the founder of the non-profit International Center for Traditional Childbearing (ICTC) located in northeast Portland on Martin Luther King Boulevard, Monroe is a living advocate that women should and can be the destinies of their own bodies.

Founded in 1991, the ICTC was created to promote the health of women and their families and to train minority women who aspire to

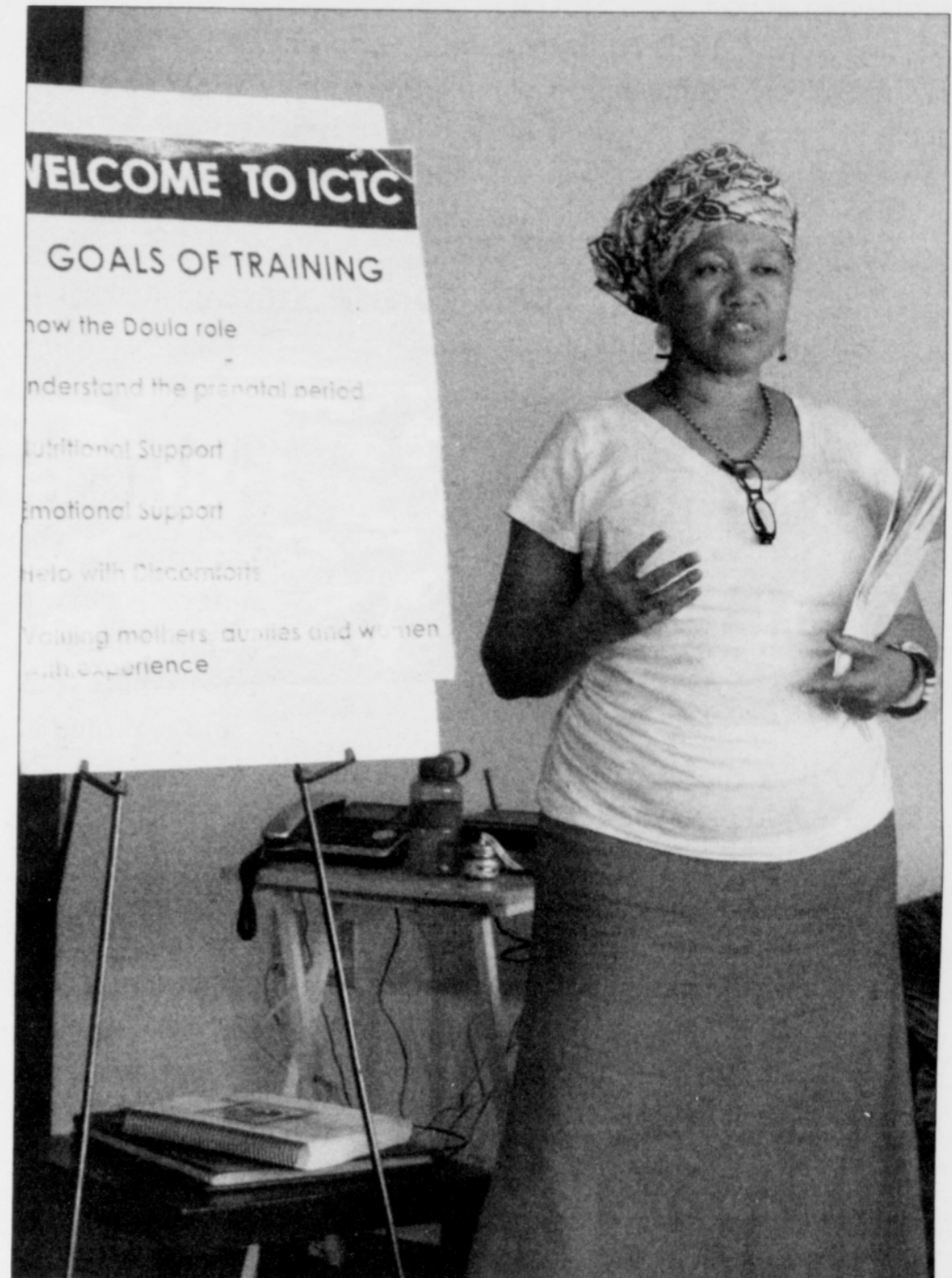


PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Shafia M. Monroe, the founder of the non-profit International Center for Traditional Childbirth based out of Portland, teaches a Full Circle Doula and birthing companion workshop, which trains women to help mothers and families have a positive and healthy birth experience.

become midwives or birthing companions, known as doulas.

The Greek word doula refers to an individual who provides personal support to women and families throughout the pregnancy and child-

birth.

The ICTC's doula training program, which is one of the newest in the country, teaches students how

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ODOT Updates Disparity Study

In 2007 a study was conducted that reviewed contracting practices for the Oregon Department of Transportation over an eight-year period.

The study showed that the ODOT's overall use of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises to be positive. However, construction sub-contracting for African-American and Asian-American firms were found to be underutilized.

Disadvantaged firms include

those that are at least 51 percent owned and controlled by women or minorities and other businesses on a case-by-case basis.

In response, ODOT established "hard goals" for hiring African American-owned and Asian American-owned construction subcontractors and committed to reviewing its progress regularly.

ODOT invites business owners and the public to a meeting on the results of its latest disparity study update which will evaluate

ODOT's activities over the past three years.

The meetings are scheduled in Salem, on Thursday, Sept. 22, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the ODOT HR Training Center on 2775 19th St. S.E., and in Portland on Friday, Sept. 23, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the ODOT Region 1 Office on 123 N.W. Flanders.

After the meetings, the study will be available online on ODOT's Civil Rights website by visiting oregon.gov/ODOT.