Making the Impossible Seem Routine

In the life of every educational institution, there are events that stand out as high-water marks that will linger in the memory for years and decades to come. For Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, one of those events took place recently when our Technology Education Building was officially renamed and dedicated for former State Sen. Margaret Carter.

For a community college campus president, this is a pretty big deal. It's not every day that we get to dedicate a building, let alone do so for someone as eminent and respected as Sen. Carter. A virtual who's-who of Oregon politicians showed up to honor this extraordinary woman, including Gov. John Kitzhaber, U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, and a host of luminaries from state, county and local government, as well as family, friends and members of Portland's faith community.

The life of Sen. Margaret Carter is the story of a remarkable journey. This is a woman who made her way here from Louisiana some four decades ago as a single woman with Black Elected Legislative Women, six children in tow. She was at a crossroads in her life, and she had no way of knowing that the path she had chosen would lead to heights she never imagined.

And once she arrived here, among the roses and the raindrops, she bloomed. From the most challenging of circumstances, she climbed, giving of her time and talents in service to those less fortunate. She is living proof that it doesn't matter where you came from - it only matters where you're go-

And oh, what places she has lor, an instructor, and the first African-American woman to serve in the Oregon Legislature. Along the way she has nurtured and guided a whole army of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She even found time to be the adopted team mom for the peoples' lives. Portland Trail Blazers.

ascade

In other words, she has spent the this past four decades making the im- could not ask possible seem routine.

behind the creation of a Cascade Campus program that now bears her name, the Margaret Carter Skill Center, which has helped more than 6,000 people from this community get the skills they need to find and keep a living-wage job. These are the most underserved among us, the people most in need of a way to lift themselves to a better place, and the Skill Center has helped them to

Sen. Carter's life has been filled with many significant historical firsts. A former state chair of the Oregon Democratic Party, she was the first African-American woman to head a major political party in the American West. She is a past president of the National Organization of the first Oregonian to be elected to this prestigious position. She was the first African-American woman to be elected President Pro Tempore of the Oregon Senate.

Carter was the author of landmark divestiture laws targeted to South Africa during Apartheid, and Sudan for genocide in the Darfur region. She helped create a state holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and she continues to work for the betterment of all Oregonians. particularly those from traditionally underrepresented communities.

Sen. Carter has done all these gone. Sen. Carter got her start in things because, above all else, she education at Cascade Campus, cares for the well-being of this comand went on to become a counse- munity. She cares about the hopes and dreams and struggles of the people she has so ably represented. In all my years of working in education, I have never met someone so passionately dedicated to her constituents, or so committed to the power of education to transform

This campus, this community and



for a better

Sen. Carter was the driving force advocate or a more stalwart champion than Sen. Carter. It is fitting that future generations will see her name on a building where people learn the skills to transform their lives, just as Sen. Carter transformed her own and helped to do the same for so many others.

In my mind, there is no person more deserving, no person whose life's work is more worthy of such an honor. The Sen. Margaret Carter Technology Education Building will stand as a testament to her deeds, and an inspiration for others to seek

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

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Urban Jobs Initiative





Urban League of Portland

Save the date:

Wednesday, November 30th

Urban Jobs Initiative Community Forum

Date: Wednesday, November 30th, 2011

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Place: Humboldt Gardens **Opportunity Center** 5033 N Vancouver Ave. (NE of Alberta St.) Portland, Oregon

Contact us www.updx.org http://urbanjobsinitiative. eventbrite.com/ 503-280-2600

Panelists

Kathleen Saadat

Interim Diversity Development/Affirmative Action and Inclusion Manager, City of Portland

Carl Talton

President, CEO and Exec. Chair Portland Family of Funds

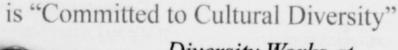
John Gardner

CAWS Investment Manager

Debra Lindsay Director of Workforce & Development Urban League of **Portland**

Sen. Diane Rosenbaum of SD-21, Portland (legislative staff to attend)

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