

Making Below Minimum

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weekly fee, called a "kitty," which averages approximately \$500 per week paid directly to the company they work under.

According to Beraka Habte, who has worked as a taxi driver for eight years, although the work can be fun, the kitty fee is a significant factor in determining low wages for the full-time professional taxi driver.

"I pay the company \$580 each week, and sometimes it is hard," he said. "Business has been slow all this month."

According to the report, driver wages are not supplemented with health care or retirement benefits, paid vacation or sick leave. Drivers also often work 12 to 14 hour days, six days a week.

One taxi driver, who refused to give his name in fear of being fired, said he had been awake since 4 a.m. on Monday, even though he had yet to have one customer after several hours.

"Because we pay them \$500 a week, if you take a day off, you are behind," he said. "But if I don't

work 12 hours, I can't make anything, and if you take a day off, you still have to pay."

Even in the current state of a poor economy, the companies still make "so much money," while drivers struggle, he said.

"But do I have a choice?" he asked. "I have got to survive."

Although the low hourly wages are consistent with those found in other U.S. cities, he said it's harder to make ends meet in Portland because of the high number of taxi drivers, as well as an efficient public transportation system, offering competition.

The report found, however, average wages are higher and working hours are shorter, for drivers at the one Portland driver-owned taxi company.

"This is not an easy issue," said Mayor Adams. "But this study provides an excellent basis on which to make improvements that will directly impact the working conditions of our city's taxi drivers. We can, and must, do better."

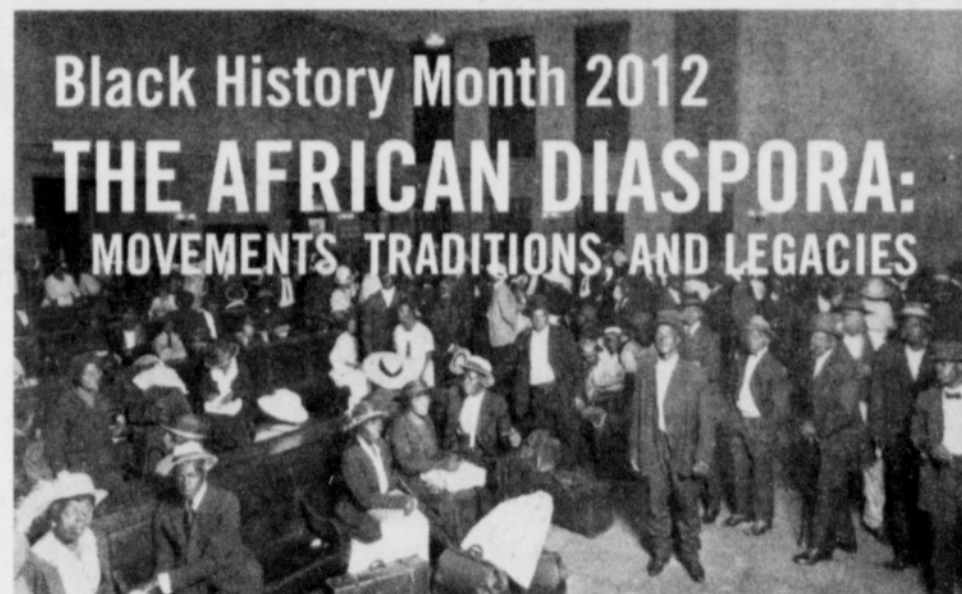
The Portland Revenue Bureau is seeking comments from taxi cab industry stakeholders and the public at large.



Black History Month programming at Reed is developed and cosponsored by the Multicultural Enrichment Committee and the Office for Institutional Diversity.

All events are free and open to the public.

www.reed.edu/bhm/



Segregated waiting room at railroad depot, Jacksonville, Florida, 1921, from State Archives of Florida.



JAZZ PERFORMANCE: "Double Legacy Project"
DARRELL GRANT

The internationally recognized jazz pianist and composer with drummer Brian Blade, saxophonist Steve Wilson, and vibraphonist Joe Locke, in an exploration of the legacies we inherit and those we leave behind.

February 11, 8 p.m., Kaul Auditorium



LECTURE: "Race, Racism, and Discrimination in America"
CHARLES J. OGLETREE JR.

Harvard Law School's Jesse Climenko Professor of Law and author of *The Presumption of Guilt: The Arrest of Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Race, Class, and Crime in America*.

February 18, 7:30 p.m., Vollum lecture hall



LECTURE: "Obama is No King: Reflections on Presidential Politics and the Black Prophet Tradition"
GLENN C. LOURY

Brown University's Merton P. Stoltz Professor of Social Sciences and professor of economics. Cosponsored by the Walter Krause Economics Lectures fund.

February 20, 4:30 p.m., Vollum lecture hall



LECTURE: "The Warmth of Other Suns"
ISABEL WILKERSON

Professor of journalism and director of narrative nonfiction at Boston University and author of *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

February 25, 7:30 p.m., Kaul Auditorium

Photo by Joe Henson

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