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Ethos Taps Successful Director

Jedidiah Chavez to lead non-profit music program

BY MINDY COOPER
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The hard work of a local arts educator was recognized last week when he was named the new executive director for Ethos Music Center, a local non-profit dedicated to empowering youth through music.

Jedidiah Chavez, 32, replaced Ethos' founder and former executive Charles Lewis.

Chavez, the former development director at Ethos, not only increased revenue for the organization by 30 percent since he began in the position in 2008, but he also helped successfully secure \$1.5 million for capital improvements to Ethos' north Portland headquarters.

"I am excited and honored to build on the strong foundation created by Charles Lewis," said Chavez. "With my colleagues, I look forward to extending the impact of our programs while continuing to pioneer innovative practices in music education."

Growing up Latino in Colorado, Chavez said he was raised by a single mother, who worked extremely hard to make sure he had access to music education.

"I grew up with music," he said. "She was a single mom, and she waited tables and saved up money to pay for expensive private lesson."

His mother, who is also a working con-

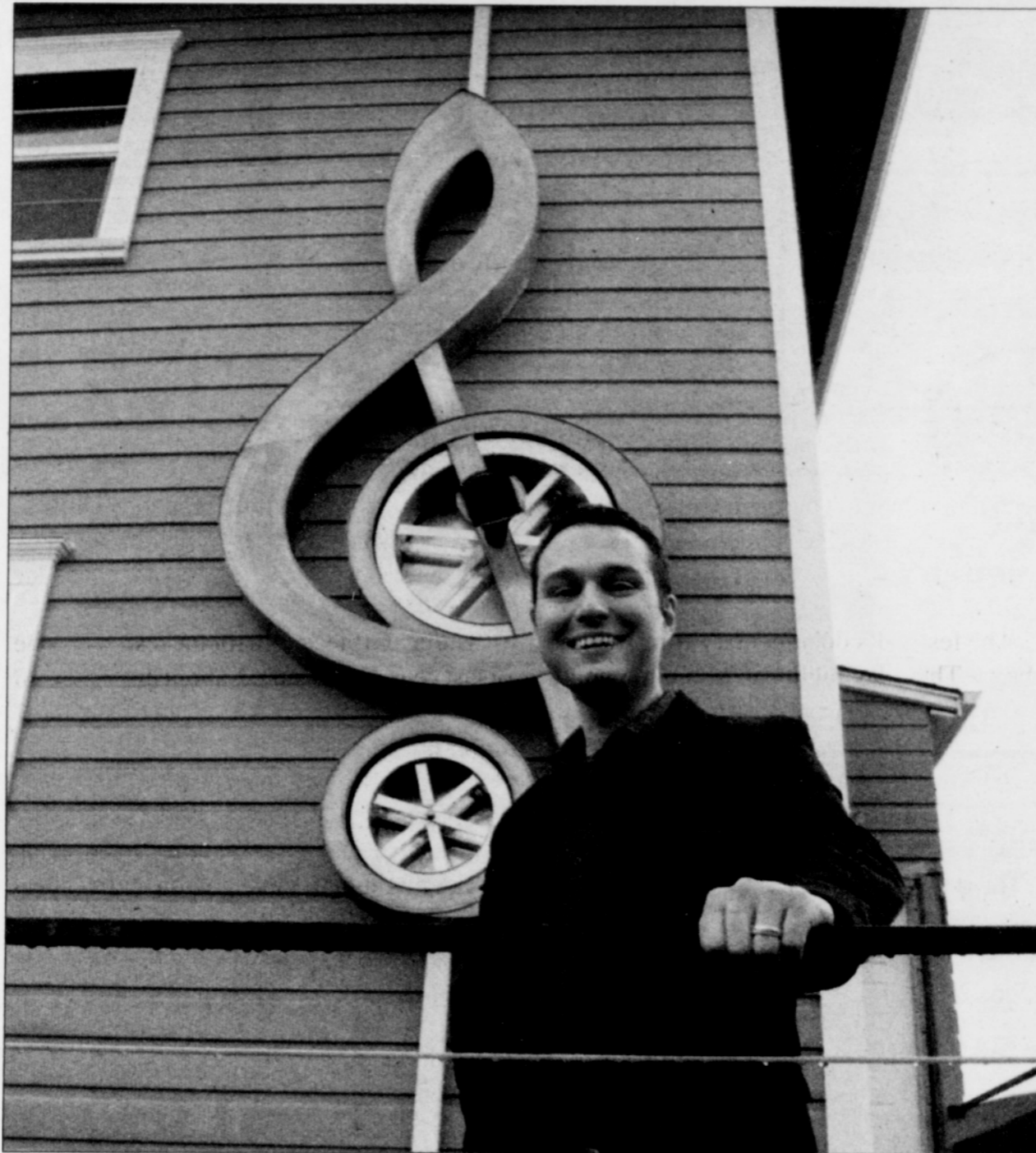


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Jedidiah Chavez is the new executive director for Ethos Music Center, a non-profit dedicated to empowering youth and building community through music.

cert pianist, recommended he play the flute. Unlike school programs for youth today, Chavez said he also had access to music through classes, including band and choir.

"It was something that was always in school when I was in school," he said. "It was around me all of the time, and it was never something I could accept or reject. It was always present, and that was extremely valuable."

Ethos Music Center, which was established in 1998 as a direct result of budget cuts made to public school arts programs, is dedicated to the promotion of music and music-based education for youth in underserved communities.

According to Chavez, music has a transformative power, which is often the only way to reach kids.

"The research proves kids who receive music education have higher self-esteem and perform better academically," he said.

He said, however, music programs in schools continue to be cut, which is why he believes Ethos is such an imperative resource for kids throughout the state.

"I feel absolutely honored to be involved with the organization," he said. "I truly feel we do tremendous work, and the programs we do have a high impact for the community."

After more than a decade of work dedicated to fundraising for non-profits throughout the city, Chavez, who also received a master's degree in Fine Arts, said he feels grateful for stumbling upon his job at Ethos.

"I have always had a passion for education,

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Tax Help Sites Aim for Fair Share Refunds

Super Saturday events offer free services

BY ROB JUSTUS

Are you getting your fair share at tax time?

A free service, where you can get your taxes prepared and find out if you're eligible for the "Earned Income Tax Credit" will take place on Saturday, Feb. 4, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Lloyd Center Mall, Suite 2025, and the Beaverton Resource Center, 12500 Allen Boulevard.

The "Super Refund Saturday" events are open to everyone and provided by KeyBank, CASH Oregon and AARP-Tax-Aide.

Hardworking families trying hard to make ends meet might qualify for hundreds or thousands of dollars in a tax refund through the "Earned Income Tax Credit."

The EITC is based on your income and number of qualifying children. If you qualify, you'll get money back from the IRS when you file your taxes. Refund amounts range anywhere from \$2 up to \$5,751, depending on income and family size.

Last year, a client at KeyBank's Super Refund Saturday found out about the EITC

and decided to check her previous returns. Imagine her delight when she realized that her paid tax preparer had failed to mention it to her for the three previous years. Upon refile, she received a check for \$4,500.

"I was able to pay some bills and get some debt off my shoulders," she said.

To take advantage of the free tax preparation services, visit the sites above for help on a first-come, first-served basis and bring the following documents with you:

W-2s or other statements for you and

your spouse from all your employers; Picture ID; Social Security card or ITIN number and birthdates for everyone on your return; Any 1099 Forms (for income from

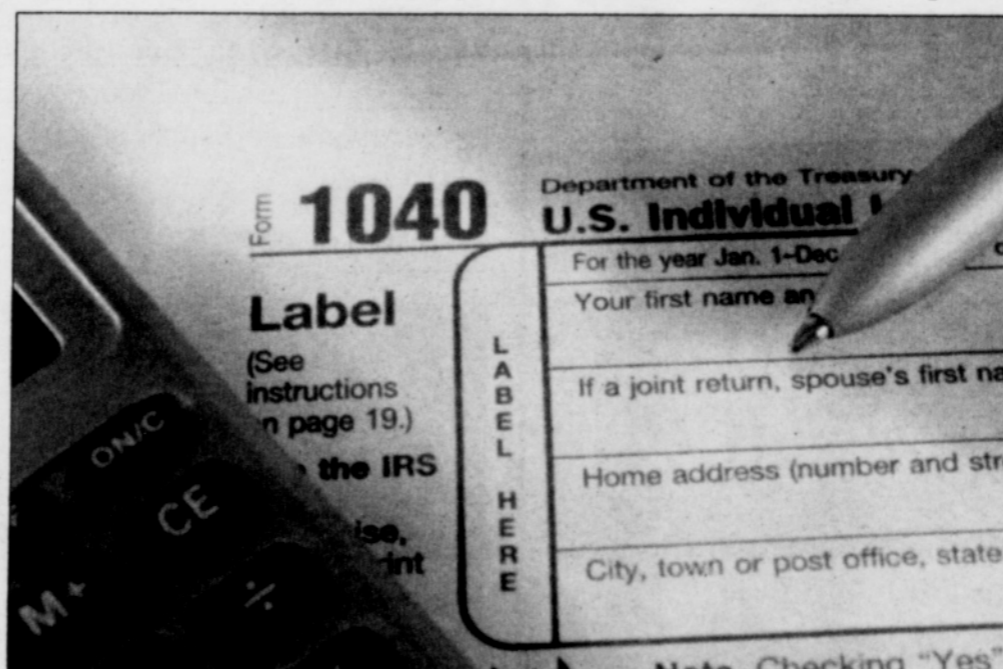
care provider, if you pay for daycare; Records of student loan payments; Records of payments for educational expenses, such as college tuition; Mortgage interest and property tax statements if you own a home; Bank account number and bank routing number, for direct deposit; A copy of last year's tax return, if you have it; If filing jointly, both filer and spouse must be present to file electronically.

Tax advisors will be at Super Refund Saturday and ready to help you.

Each year, thousands of Americans don't claim the EITC on their federal income-tax returns, which means almost \$160 billion goes unclaimed.

For more information, call 2-1-1 or visit cashoregon.org.

Rob Justice is executive director of CASH Oregon.



interest, dividends, retirement, social security or unemployment); Name, address and taxpayer identification number of child