

Fighting for Social Justice

continued ▲ from page 3

talking, and then she looked at me and asked, 'Are you Klamath, did I see you on TV?'"

Following their talk of the elections, the woman said, 'you might know my husband.'

"And I did," said Williams. "He was the CPS worker when I got my children taken away," she said. "While I didn't appreciate him in 1993, he is responsible for me walking around with these pins (made for her campaign) today."

"Sometimes when you look at people, you feel like they were part of a divine intervention for you, but you just didn't feel it at that time," she said.

Williams added there have been several members of both the Native American and African American community who have helped her become the strong woman she is today. "These people in this commu-

nity watch over you, and they have watched me grow," she said.

Today, Williams is a known advocate for communities of color and low income communities in the workplace. She has also been educating students on Environmental Justice issues for over 10 years through speaking engagements, conferences and teaching a senior capstone class at Portland State University for five years.

At the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, she manages Diversity Leadership Programs.

Williams said her current passion is on the cleanup of the Willamette River. "If you spent 50-years on that river as a factory polluting that river, then you should spend the next 50-years cleaning it up because it is our children's legacy," she said.

"We need to create green jobs off that river, clean up and restore that river with schools

teeming with fish you can eat," she said.

In Native American ways we plan for several generations, not just five years, she said.

Williams, who founded the organization Survivor to Survivor, also advocates for survivor's rights, and the group helped in the creation of the new seven bed shelter for com-

A photograph of her grandchildren is a keepsake for City Council candidate Jeri Williams, 51, a mother and grandmother of eight. Williams said Portland needs to do a better job of representing communities of color in government to help lead the way for a more just future for minority youth in the city.

PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



NEW SEASONS

MARKET

Come by and taste items from our new Spring Menu!

Our Chefs use the finest ingredients to craft the delicious entrées and sides that fill our deli cases. They are responsible for the fabulous foods that you find in our stores every day.

Check out our Easter and Passover menus!

EASY & FUN TO SHOP • SENSIBLY PRICED • LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED

ARBOR LODGE • 503.467.4777

Interstate Ave & Portland Blvd

CONCORDIA • 503.288.3838

NE 33rd & Killingsworth

www.newseasonsmarket.com



mercially sexually exploited children, as well as aided in the development of the last six human trafficking legislation over the last three years.

"For me as a woman in Portland, I don't want to see women get the short end of the stick," she said. "We have a lot of jobs for women that provide no workers compensation, no health insurance and no unemployment benefits, and that is treating women as second class citizens—many whom are young mothers and deserve much better."

Knowing first-hand what it is like for a minority working single mother, Williams said she wants to see women be empowered in Portland and be able to be the head of the household and also make a living wage.

She said the barriers for many residents living in Portland need to be addressed through collective action.

"My little tag line for my campaign is 'opening doors,'" she said, a message for people who have been historically underrepresented.

If you want government to be smaller, you actually have to make community larger, which requires an increase in meaningful community involvement, she said.

"But it is exciting," said Williams. "To shift what you once believed was unshiftable."

For more information on Jeri Williams, visit jeriforportland.com.