

Study Looks at Gentrified Portland

Young college graduates move here and stay

(AP) — Portland may not be "a city where young people go to retire," but it's the place they go to be underemployed, a new study found.

A famous quip by Fred Armisen on the television show "Portlandia" led Portland State University researchers to investigate the reality behind the comment. The quirky IFC network series pokes fun at the Oregon city's many eccentricities.

The researchers' review found that Portland is a magnet for the young and college educated from across the country, even though a disproportionate share of them are working part-time or holding jobs that don't require a degree.

In short, young college grads are moving here, and staying, because they like the city's amenities and culture, not because they're chasing jobs. Their participation in the labor force tracks with other cities,

but they make 84 cents on the dollar when compared to the average of the 50 largest metropolitan areas, the research found.

"You put all of that together, and it suggests that young people are coming here and they're trying to make the best of it," said Greg Schrock, an assistant professor in urban studies at PSU. "They're committed to working, they're committed to trying to make ends meet, but they're more committed to living in Portland."

Young people are drawn by a relatively low cost of living, a vibrant arts scene and a collegial, laid-back atmosphere. With abundant public transit, a vibrant bicycle culture and many walkable neighborhoods, there's no need for a car.

"I'm pretty content being able to support myself on a minimum-wage job," said Deanna Horton, 22, who graduated in May from Lewis & Clark college and is now working the front desk at a science museum. Horton doesn't have a driver's license, but she said the only time she's ever felt she needed one was



A young couple enjoys the view of Mount Hood from Washington Park. (AP photo)

when she moved across town.

A transplant from Syosset, N.Y., on Long Island, Horton said she'd love to have a more challenging and fulfilling job — but not enough to

give up on a city that supports things like a neighborhood tool library, which gives residents free access to a wide variety of tools for carpentry, home improvement and gardening.

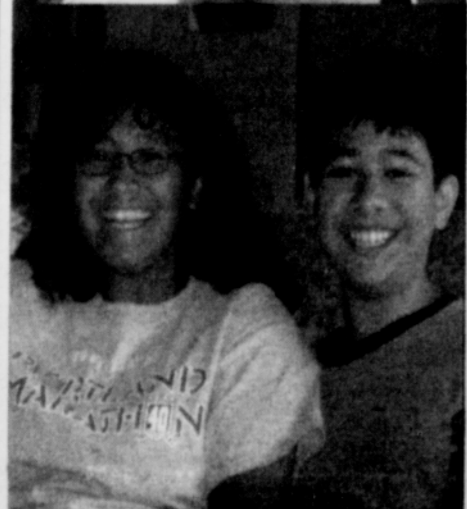
"I feel like my job prospects in other places would be really good," she said, looking over the top of her Apple computer at the popular Stumptown Coffee. "But I don't want to try."

Portland's reputation as the place young people go to retire was cemented with a sketch on "Portlandia."

The PSU researchers studied Census data from 1980 to 2010 with a focus on young people, ages 21 to 39, with a college degree. They found that the migration of those people to Portland had already begun in 1980 and was consistent throughout the 20-year span. Portland was the only major city that never saw a lull in migration, even during recessions.

The data suggest that young people continue flocking to Portland, in good times and in bad.

And they're coming from places large and small. While young college graduates tend to move to larger metro areas, Portland had a net gain in migration from cities large and small.



Come Out for Our Families!

We believe all our families have so much in common: we struggle to access healthy food, quality education, affordable healthcare, and housing. Our families also face discrimination that prevents us from thriving in our workplaces and our neighborhoods. As families of color, we experience unique challenges as we work to keep our homes, our jobs, and our health.

These struggles affect Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) families of color in very unique ways. LGBT families of color are part of the fabric of our community and members of our own families.

Unfortunately, some of our LGBT family members do not feel our community's full support. So, in honor of National Coming Out Day, we are coming out as friends, family and public allies of LGBT families of color. We believe our communities are strongest when all families — extended families, multi-generational families, single-parent families and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families — have the resources, respect and love they need to thrive.

We believe it's time to come out in support of all our families. Join us!

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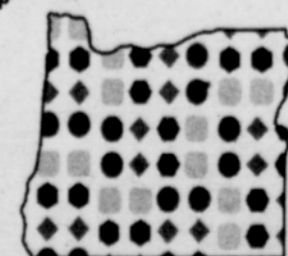
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