

**Vote! Rock! Bleed!**

Portland Playhouse and King Neighborhood host voter drive

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**Mental Health Crisis**

Advocates speak out on suicide prevention

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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Rallying voters to support a Portland Public Schools facilities bond in the Nov. 6 general election are local Rappers Young Mil, aka Ezekial Jones (second from right), the winner of the Def Jam 'Get Schooled' competition; his band mate Horizun, aka Patrick Lamarr (second from left); and Richard Gilliam and Mary Schutten of the Our Portland Our Schools campaign. The group was part of a phone bank to campaign for the measure on Friday at Self Enhancement, Inc.

# Shared Priorities

**Voters to decide levies for schools, libraries and art**

BY CARI HACHMANN  
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Advocates for local schools, libraries and the arts are counting on Portlanders with shared priorities to vote yes on three tax

measures coming before voters in the Nov. 6 vote-by-mail general election. But will Portlanders be able to put their money behind their support for these public services?

Lindsey O'Brien, communications director for the Our Portland Our Schools school bond campaign, said there are several priorities local residents have for their city, but calls the need to upgrade facilities at Portland Public Schools a vital investment for the future.

The last times the Portland School District passed bond measures were in 1995 and 1948. This year, coming on the tail of an economic downturn in the economy, there's added peril in asking for approval of a property tax measure.

Still, O'Brien said it's been inspiring to see the level of commitment for the school bond (Measure 26-144) among residents.

"It's a stressful time for a lot of people, but we really need to do this now," O'Brien said. "Great schools are important to everyone in the city and the more people know about it, the more enthusiastic their support for it."

Jessica Jarrett Miller is a supporter of the Arts Income Tax (Measure 26-146) which will fund arts education and access to an arts curriculum for elementary students. Miller said her Arts Can advocacy network has been working with schools, the arts community and businesses for the past four years to develop this fund. She points to the need by citing the fact that 8 of 10 local elementary schools don't have art teachers.

"We know this is a very significant priority for Portlanders," said Miller. "We wouldn't be on the ballot if we didn't think this is something Portlanders were excited to vote yes on in November."

If voters say yes to the library district tax (Measure 26-143), property owners within Multnomah County will pay an extra 35 cents for every \$1,000 in assessed property value over the current library levy of 89 cents per \$1,000 for a total of \$1.24 per \$1,000. The levy will cost the average home owner an extra \$49 per year.

Instead of the current system of temporary library levies that voters have to renew every three to five years, which has left the library subject to huge budget cuts, the library tax district would be a permanent, dedicated funding source for Multnomah County libraries.

Those in favor of the library district tax argue that the library is a vital source to schools and education and for reading and learning. The tax will provide stable

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