



Let's Get Down to Business

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Entrepreneur and Portland civic leader Roy Jay is synonymous with success in the Rose City. Once considered a prime candidate for mayor, the accomplished Jay is quick to share his insights and open doors for the next generation.

Big personality entrepreneur has advice for the next generation

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Roy Jay is synonymous with success in the Rose City. He has made a name for himself as an entrepreneur, civic leader and general all-around big personality. At 66, he has no plans on slowing down, but he does look forward to seeing a new generation of Portlanders pass through some of the many doors he has left open for them.

"I'm a businessman first and foremost. But I'll never forget where I come from, ever," Jay said during an interview with the Portland Observer from his offices on Northeast Fremont Street in the Beaumont neighborhood.

Jay is a native Portland resident. He was raised in north Portland's public housing projects, a skinny kid who stuttered a lot, but then grew up to become an outstanding communicator and African-American leader with big shoes to fill.

Even with an ever-swelling list of accolades to add to

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-- Portland entrepreneur and civic leader Roy Jay.

his already impressive resume of operating 11 businesses over his lifetime, he is quick to assume new responsibilities.

"I'm never gonna retire. Not because I can't, oh yeah I can do that. But see I've gotta be at the table to keep the

door open for the next person," he says.

On starting a business in Portland or following dreams for a career, Jay gives inspiration to the next generation.

"There's opportunity sitting out here, all people have to do is go and apply themselves. And I'm not saying it's easy, nothing's easy," Jay says.

As the director of organizations like the Portland African American Chamber of Commerce and Project Clean Slate, he has created a pathway for people that are truly serious about enhancing their lives.

Under his leadership, the African-American chamber has been recognized as one of the best chambers of any kind in the nation. The group has served as a major catalyst for budding and established business ventures in Portland's African-American community and people of all races.

Jay is also considered the face and brand for minority convention marketing across the country. He is a front

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