

PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Roy Joy, 66, works out of his office on Northeast Fremont Street in the Beaumont Neighborhood. The native Portlander known for his long list of business and civic engagements 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.

Let's Get Down to Business

continued ▲ from front

and center supporter of a proposed Portland Convention Center headquarters hotel that would generate an estimated 3,000 union construction and hotel jobs, primarily in north and northeast Portland.

He recently was bestowed a 'Bending Toward Justice' award from U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon for his efforts to help others break down barriers to employment, housing and other opportunities. Clean Slate, a non-profit project he launched without pay in 2005, has helped thousands of people erase delinquent traffic tickets and other minor criminal or civil judgments by fulfilling public service requirements and paying fines.

During its inaugural year, he was able to get the various judges, District Attorney, and Portland Police Bureau to partner with Project Clean Slate to effectively move the entire Multnomah County Circuit Courthouse to a meeting space at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus in north Portland.

For the past four years, he has hosted 'Spam and Velveeta' holiday open houses for local chari-

ties. Last year he held a benefit with Mary Wilson of The Supremes in front of nearly one thousand people at the Oregon Convention Center. He plans to bring "Hitsville the Motown Review" for a benefit event in December. (Tickets go on sale after Oct. 15 or visit his website royjay.com.)

Jay realizes that the struggle to succeed is indeed a difficult one because of his own tribulations. From hearing the whispers of doubt from his own community to even physical threats of violence against him, he's been no stranger to the trials of achievement. Even-so, the Portland Daily Journal of Commerce two-time Newsmaker of the Year has managed to persist, and serve as an inspiration for those both inside and outside of the black community.

Although an early career stop for Jay was hosting one of Portland's premier radio shows, he sees too many young people looking to be professional entertainers and sports players as opposed to owning their own businesses. Jay is not completely against sports and entertainment, but despises the implications that can come from pursuing them

for young minorities.

"White folks have told me, look, we pay you guys to entertain us," he laments,

Instead, Jay is a staunch advocate for education as a feasible pathway to a successful life.

"It's up to you, not me, new generation, to re-plant a seed out there to do some more shops, retail, flowers, service business, computers, housing, and all the rest of that stuff," Jay says. "We aren't at the table 'cause somebody told us, oh no you can't do that."

He has participated in a multitude of fundraisers over the years for traditional schools with a high percentage of minority students, such as Jefferson High School and his 1965 alma mater Roosevelt. He says it's all about giving back to the place that raised him.

"As my mother said, never forget where you come from. They can pat you on the back and give you all the accolades and stuff like that; at the end of the day baby you're still black, and you still have an obligation to your family, your neighborhood, your people," he says.

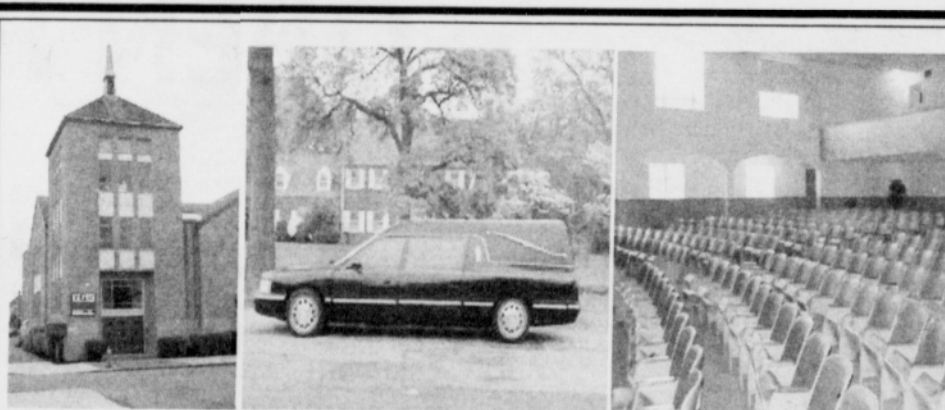
And though Jay remains one of the premier players in city politics and is a leader who was once

considered a top prospect for running for mayor, he knows his ever-aging body will not allow him to attend to every civic issue or concern forever.

"Baby, after a while you start slowing. You start coughing and wheezing and hackin' like your

daddy and your grandparents and everybody else. So you realize, look, it's time for us to get some new folks in here."

He warns with an almost absolute certainty that the next generation "has to be ready" or the city will leave them behind.



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