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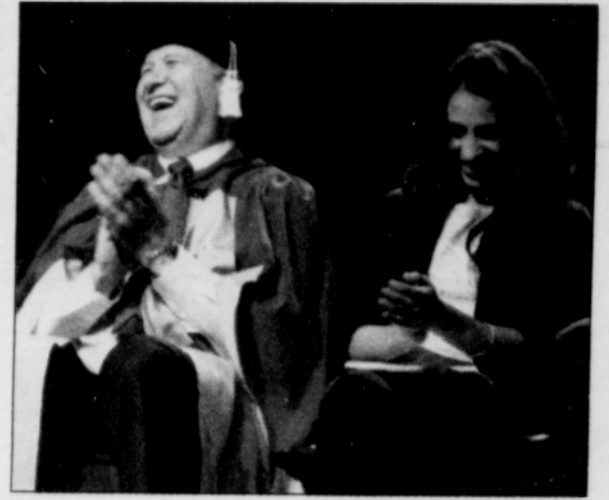


Officer Mourned

A police officer is shot and killed while responding to a fire
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New College Leader

Jeremy Brown takes reigns at Portland Community College
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'City of Roses'



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Model School

SEI Academy earns high score on state report card

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Self Enhancement Academy is taking its bows after the middle school serving local African American kids was named a "model school" by the Oregon Board of Education.

The north Portland school's education coach, Linda Harris, said she felt elation when the scorecard was announced last month.

"I know that the principal and the teachers have worked really hard, especially over the last two years. So for us, it was just a lot of our successes and accomplishments coming to the floor because of all the hard work and diligence that's been put into that process," Harris said.

Self Enhancement, Inc. founder Tony Hopson, the school's president and chief executive officer, said earning the high

marks only magnifies what he was long aware of, that African-American kids can excel and compete educationally in a culturally specific learning institution.

In the case of SEI, it boils down to what people at the school call 'the right who'.

"In this particular case, you've got the appropriate leadership," Hopson said. "You've got the appropriate education coach, who has years of experience that she can share. And you've got teachers who are committed and dedicated to kids who don't have low expectations, but have high expectations."

One of the major components for SEI Academy, a charter school operated with oversight from the Portland School District, is the school's attention to children and families outside of the traditional school setting. SEI takes a "big picture" approach to learning, for example, by linking itself with

social services and parent coordinators who follow students home to evaluate the quality of their living conditions.

Hopson said the school "looks at the challenges that many of our kids show up to school with, the environment that they come from, whether or not they have parents that ever went to school, or had bad experiences, or are from single parent households. You know, all of those ills in society that can impact many of our kids."

SEI reports that a staggering 70 percent of its incoming students come to the school testing drastically behind grade level, the very students most likely to later drop out of high school if there is no intervention.

SEI Academy Principal Andre Goodlow said that all of his

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PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Self Enhancement Academy celebrates being named a 'model school' for its innovative services addressing the unique challenges facing underserved, mostly African-American students. Pictured at the north Portland charter school are Principal Andre Goodlow (center) and students (from left) Elijah Crawford, Jacob Willingham, Titus Green, and Elijah Winston.