

# From Service to the Classroom

## Portland State opens Veterans Resource Center

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With a growing number of men and women in the military returning to civilian life after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Portland State University is looking to accommodate them with educational services and resources.

Home to over 30,000 students, PSU boasts the highest number of military veterans of any other school in the state. Recent numbers show that there are currently up to 1,100 enrolled vets at the downtown university at any time.

This summer, the university opened a Veteran's Resource Center to help the growing number of military personnel transition to the classroom with success.

According to Carolina Gonzalez-Prat, one of the two people who navigate the center's operations, the primary function is assisting vets with the G.I. Bill which provides servicemen and women with a range of benefits, including lower tuition fees.

Gonzales-Prat says that with government shutdown in October, a lot of military-students' benefits were at risk, and reminded both college officials and former military of the



PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Carolina Gonzalez-Prat (left) welcomes a military veteran student and his wife to the new Veterans Resource Center at Portland State University.

importance of the VRC's advocacy for them.

She said before the shutdown, you wouldn't think twice about the education benefits disappearing, "Like we'll be fine no matter what. But the shutdown went two weeks and people were freaking out. That's rent for them, that's benefits."

The Veterans Center also sponsors a College Success Class for the returning warriors.

The class is more focused on the transition from being a soldier to a student, something Gonzalez-Prat who served 5 years in the military herself knows is crucial to veterans performance in the classroom.

"Everything's not life or death anymore. So it's just kind of shifting your mindset, of how to interact with people. And asking for help," she says of the veterans she serves.

## The Week in Review

### Rasheed Wallace Hounded

Former Trailblazer and current Detroit assistant coach Rasheed Wallace was hounded by TV reporters during his team's visit to Portland Monday. Wallace refused to answer questions about owing more than a \$150,000 in delinquent property taxes to Multnomah County on a nearly 9,000 square foot house he owns in southwest Portland.

### Cougar Kills Woman

A 36-year-old employee of a wild cat sanctuary in Sherwood was killed by a cougar on Saturday. Renee Radziwon-Chapman was reportedly cleaning the animal's cage alone when she was mauled. The company and state officials are conducting an investigation.

### No Charges on Cogen

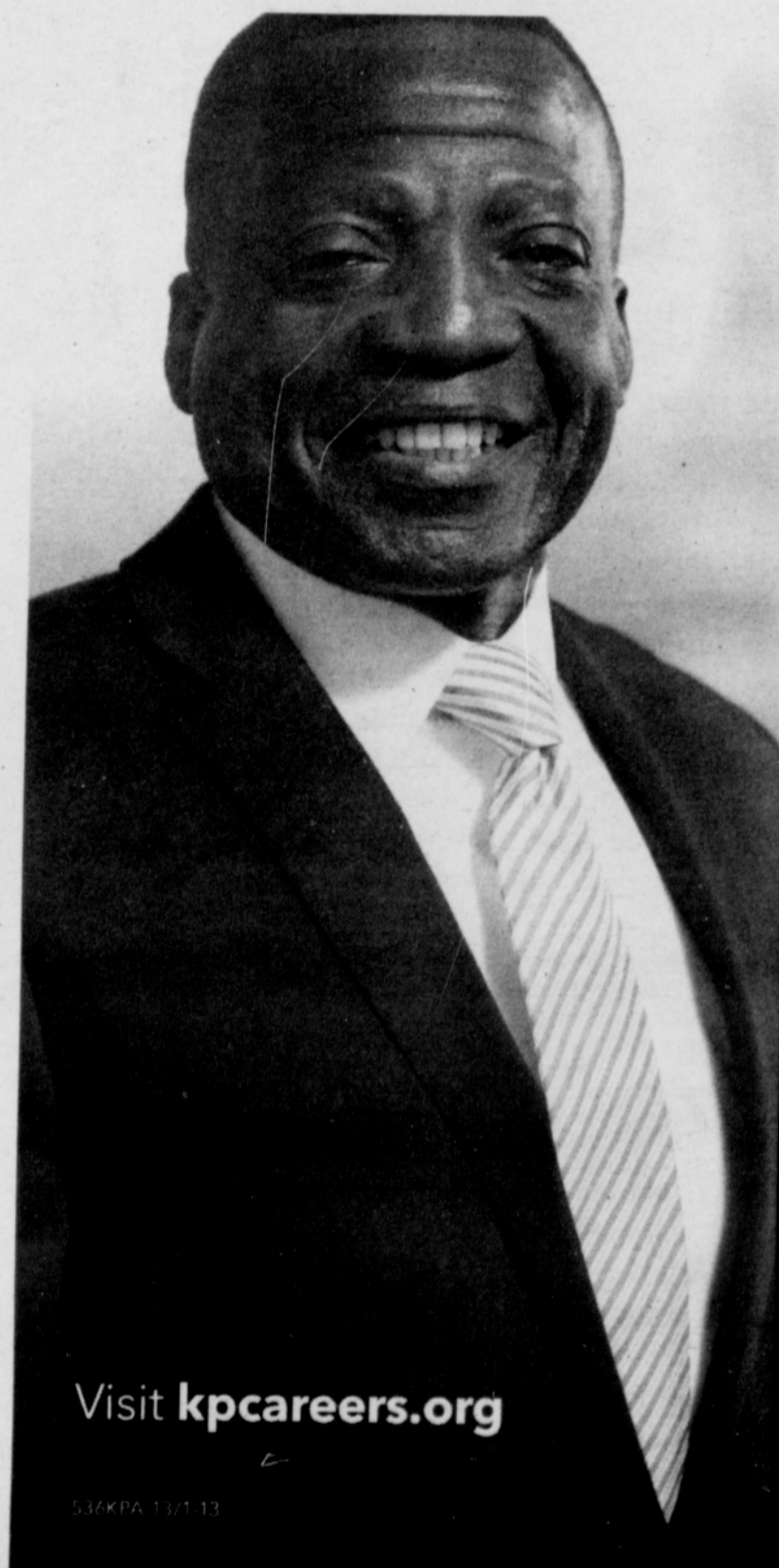
Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum announced Friday that after a "thorough investigation" the Oregon Department of Justice did not find any evidence to charge former Multnomah County Chair Jeff Cogen with a crime in connection with the affair he had with former county employee Sonia Manhas.

### Nightclub Crowd Shooting

Durieux Harris, 24, was shot and killed Saturday in a violent disturbance involving a group of people outside the relatively new nightclub Fountaine Bleu at 237 N.E. Broadway near the Rose Quarter. Two other people were shot, but survived the incident, police said.

### Merkley Leads on Gay Rights

The U.S. Senate approved a bill on Thursday co-sponsored by Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., outlawing job discrimination against gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans. President Obama supports the legislation, but the bill's chances in the House may be slim because of opposition by Republican House Speaker John Boehner.



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**Ken Wright, DMD, MPH**  
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When Dr. Wright joined Kaiser Permanente Northwest to lead our Dental Care Program, he brought an extensive and distinguished military career that spanned more than 30 years. Now a retired U.S. Navy captain, Dr. Wright is also a Board Certified periodontist who earned his DMD and Masters in Public Health from Harvard University. Dr. Wright completed his residency at University of North Carolina School of Dentistry in Chapel Hill.

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