

The  
PO

Happy New Year 2014

# The Portland Observer 44

'City of Roses'

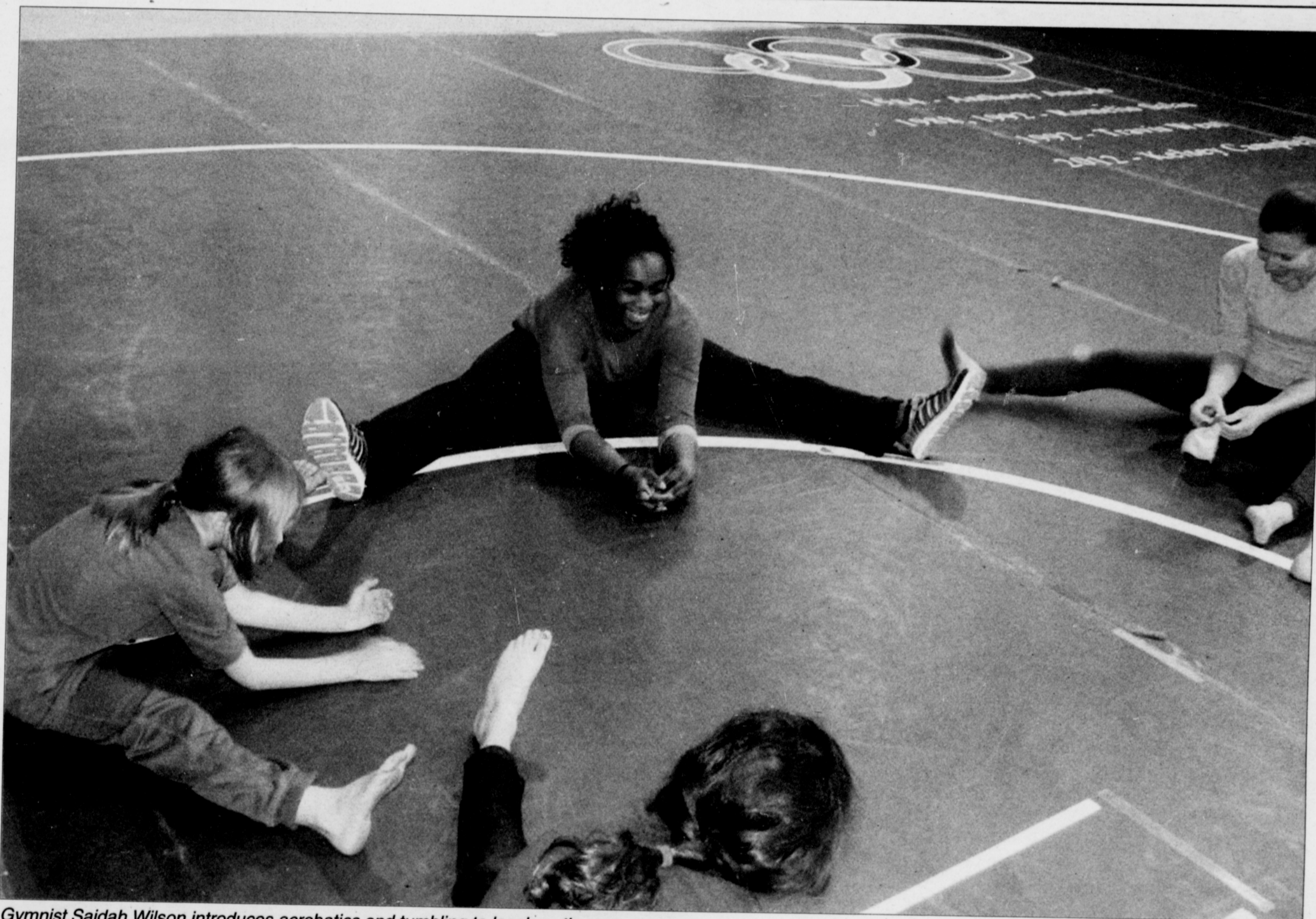


Volume XLIII  
Number 1



[www.portlandobserver.com](http://www.portlandobserver.com)  
Wednesday • January 1, 2014

Established in 1970  
Committed to Cultural Diversity *44 years of community service*



Gymnast Saidah Wilson introduces acrobatics and tumbling to local youth.

PHOTO BY BRUCE POINSETTE

## Elevating Portland

### Gymnast helps kids, adults soar

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

What's that flying in the air? Well, it very well could be you, momentarily denying the laws of gravity, if only for a moment you become engaged in a sport coached by a Portland gymnast.

Saidah Wilson is the energy-charged founder of Bridge City Acrobatics, a new acrobatics and tumbling school that

operates out of the Peninsula Park Community Center in north Portland.

It's hard to believe when in conversation with Wilson now, but the talkative coach said she could was just two words shy of mute as a 2 year old. To help remedy her reservations early-on, her parents enrolled her in a slew of extra-curriculars in hopes that a more confident Saidah would emerge.

One of those activities was gymnastics, and now as an accomplished gymnast at 25, she still describes herself as shy, but she is bursting at the seams to pass-off the joys of gymnastics to others in Portland.

Wilson, a southern California transplant, is directing what may be the only program in the Pacific Northwest exclusively

directed at gymnastics and tumbling.

From toddlers to adults, all are welcome to enroll in classes that range from "Tag-a-long Tumbling" for the toddlers to "Grown-Up Gym" for the older and more experienced folks.

Wilson is not afraid to admit she has a certain affinity for her youngest of pupils.

"When you teach kids you kinda get to bring back that sense of excitement about working, or about trying something, about learning something new, about small progressions, and that sense of wonder," she says. "Like the fact that they've figured out how to point their toes alternately without getting confused. It's a big deal. Like every little thing, it's exciting."

Coaching since she was 14, the ever-smiling Wilson says the word "nice" is perhaps not best suited for her style of training. Though maintaining levity is something she works hard to maintain in both her children and adult classes, she is adamant that working hard is a requirement for any of her

continued ▼ on page 2