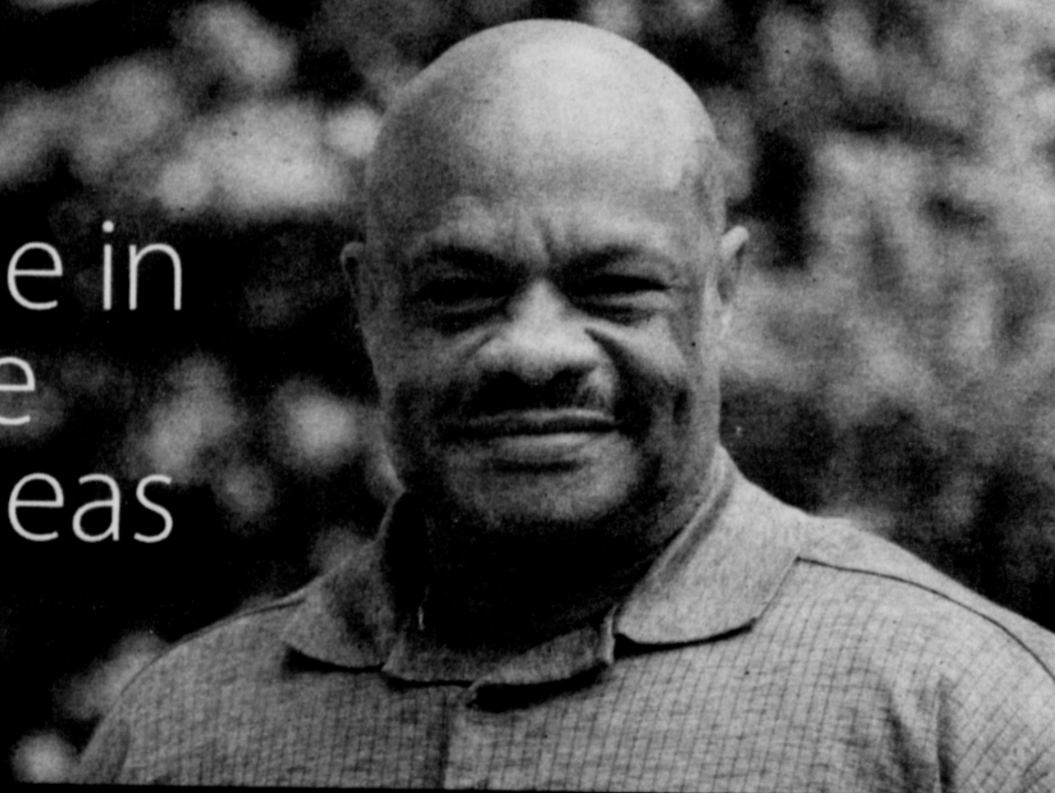




PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
 Varied examples of self-made zines created by Portland's Women of Color Zines group, touch on topics including but not limited to gentrification, art, beauty, minority womanhood, and housing. Tonya L. Jones, the founder of the organization, says she's seen a birth of pride among various women authors who are participating in the group as well as herself.

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Diversityⁱⁿ Action

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2009, when Portland hosted the world's biggest zine festival, she was compelled to go.

She recalls how the works at the symposium were multi-layered and multi-storied and came in an abundance of colors, but ironically lacked color in terms of the race of the authors.

The lack of diversity sparked Jones, a Portland State University graduate student, to give birth to Women of Color Zines Portland in response. The group began meeting monthly out of the PSU Women's Resource Center.

"[Some] people feel very threatened by it. But I think people underestimate that Portland is a very white city, so women of color, people of color, are looking for those spaces, you know, to connect with people, especially women of color artists," she says.

During its initial chapters, Jones said hardly anyone would come to her group, but after a time she began to see interest grow. Her dedication to the project has allowed her to see growth in different women throughout the group's five-year tenure.

As an example, she recalls a young woman originally from Chi-

cago named Ebon Lee who joined up simply as a way to root herself to something culturally relevant after experiencing culture shock in Portland. Lee has since remained an active member.

"It's been good to see that progress of the women coming into their own voices, and you know, their own artistic styles," she says.

As for Jones, the good times and good art that she has fostered here may be soon be coming to a final chapter. As she gears up for her graduation in the fall, she also has her sights set on leaving her Rose City roots for the east coast shores of Maryland.

She says if someone does not pick up the mantle, Women of Color Zines will ink its final period the moment she walks across the stage at PSU's fall commencement ceremonies. In the meantime the women of the group will continue to create, and continue to color the ongoing story that is Portland.

For more information on the group and its upcoming event schedules, visit wocpdzines.com and follow them on Twitter at [@woczineworkshop](https://twitter.com/woczineworkshop). To see about joining the group, shoot an email to Tonya L. Jones at wocpdx@gmail.com.