

# Competition Heats Up!

## Helping students of color in the dramatic arts

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THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland high school students from across the city have been learning their lines and practicing their

moves as they prepare to compete in the regional finals of the August Wilson Monologue Competition, named in honor of the late African-American playwright.

Three of the students will be selected to participate in the monologue finals on Broadway in late spring. Actor Russell Hornsby, who has been working behind the scenes with the students on their performances, will emcee the competition on Monday night at Portland Cen-



Grimm TV Actor Russell Hornsby works with Kyra Orr, a drama student from Grant High School, and one of the local students he is mentoring through the August Wilson Monologue contest.

ter Stage.

Hornsby is known for his starring role in NBC's Grimm, ABC Family's Lincoln Heights and HBO's In Treatment, among a myriad of other artistic achievements.

The monologue competition is a program of the August Wilson Red Door Project, a not-for-profit organization working to bring more actors of color into the dramatic arts and more diversity in the audiences that attend theatrical productions.

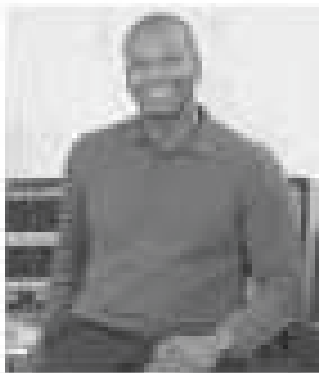
Practicing for the competition has been a transformative experience for many of the students. They have received one-on-one coaching and have had the chance to work with professional actors on honing their performances.

Red Door Project Co-Founder Kevin Jones, a black playwright and artistic director from Portland, likens the effort to promoting a diverse ecology.

"Every city is comprised of different cultures. We are working to bring the marginalized parts of the *continued* ▼ on page 8

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## Making Amends

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draw from a process of filing a claim with the Civil Rights Division of the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries.

He said when Peters issued the apology and stated that this was an employee mistake, the chapter decided to back down and accept

"As an organization we seek to engage in meaningful dialog and conversation," Edwards said. "We came together to resolve an issue in our community. Moving forward I think Ambridge is going to be a much stronger business because of this."

The Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement had considered moving their annual community summit scheduled for this Saturday because of the controversy. The city requires meetings held in locations deemed to be non-discriminatory and open to the public.

Amalia Alarcon de Morris, public involvement manager for the office, said they have received a written statement from Peters detailing their non-discrimination policy and affirming they are "an open and welcoming venue."

In addition, she says Peters told them the Ambridge Event Center plans to provide sensitivity training to all their staff to ensure this does not happen again.

"We are monitoring the situation closely and will provide updates if circumstances change," de Morris said.