

Heartfelt Cause

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

money to properly mark his place and his legacy. They searched ancestry records, and sought out potential relatives and descendants who might know anything about the man who broke so many barriers so long ago.

Distant relatives of Waterford were found in Canada but could not attend the June 26 dedication of the new marker. But Miller and his students were able to interrupt their summer schedules to join other firefighters and their families to commemorate Waterford's legacy.

Don Porth, a retired Portland firefighter who worked with the Madison contingency and is vice president of the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation, said it was inspiring watching the students discover Portland history and work with local historians and memorial services to create change.

He said Waterford was not alone in his marker-less state and that as far as he knew at least 17 Portland firefighter graves no longer have a marker.

"I've learned the markers sink into the ground, disappear, crumble up, and the ground underneath them gets soft in the winter," said Porth about the missing headstones. "So I don't think Waterford is alone in that and I don't want to single him out. Many firefighters have missing markers at this point, and I don't want to make it all about one guy, but it's amazing that they could do so much so quickly. There are many others and I hope we can also spend some time getting to learn about them, that this might set a precedent to do more for them as well and just keep in touch with our own history."

Chandler, the historian who brought Waterford's life to the students' attention, pointed out that Waterford had been the son of a freed slave from Tennessee and a Kentucky woman who had, through some level of difficulty and a lot of travel, eventually ended up in Portland.

"Most people don't have the luxury of knowing when they are making history," said Chandler. "These high school students did and they made some history of their own. I am very proud of the work that Mr. Miller's students did. They really impressed me."

The students also have left seeds of more social change for their upcoming year's class. Miller said his students will be following up on efforts to change the name of Delta Park in north Portland to Vanport Park, in honor of the African American community that existed in the area prior to a disastrous flood in 1948.

On the successful effort to honor Waterford, Miller said, he was happy for his students.

"So many people helped us. We got donations from the Retired Firefighters Society and Friends of the Lone Fir Cemetery and a discount on a headstone," he said. "This is something we all did together."

Minority Entrepreneurs Rank High for Loans

The Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs was recently recognized by the Small Business Administration as the No. 1 micro lender of the Western U.S. and No. 2 nationally among 178 micro lenders in the country.

OAME micro loans help women-owned, minority-owned and emerging small businesses in Oregon and southwest Washington to access short term capital they need to become successful.

Previously ranked as the No. 7 micro lender in 2013, the non-profit organization advanced to its new position by increasing the volume of loans to qualified borrowers.

"We are proud to be recognized for our continued success and hope to fur-



Sam Brooks

ther the support for MWESBs by our public and private sector partners," said Sam Brooks, the founder and chairman of OAME.

OAME has been in existence for over 28 years, helping promote and develop minority entrepreneurship and economic development in the Portland area. OAME works in partnership between ethnic minorities, entrepreneurs, education, government and established corporate businesses.

The SBA's Microloan program provides loans of up to \$50,000 to help small businesses, with OAME's average microloan amount to \$9,000.

For any questions about the OAME microloan program, visit oame.org or call Matt Rutter at 503-249-7744.

School Board Welcomes New Members

Four new directors to the Portland School Board officially took their seats Monday evening. They won election to the seven member panel in May after three incumbents stepped down and another lost a tight race.

Amy Kohnstamm defeated three-term incumbent Bobbie Regan, while newcomers Paul Anthony, Julie Esparza Brown, and Mike Rosen won the open seats.

They join directors Steve Buel, Tom

Koehler and Pam Knowles. Koehler will serve as board chair and Kohnstamm as vice-chair.

The new board members were sworn in by Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Balmer.



The Portland Observer



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SPECIAL EDITION



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During the last few decades, the United States has joined the rest of the first world nations in providing healthcare for most of its population as a fundamental right and need. Simultaneously we have become aware of the environmental problems that challenge our well being. significantly, some of these concerns affecting the entire earth are air pollution, energy, transportation and wholesome foods.

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