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# The Portland Observer 45

'City of Roses'



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PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Adrienne Cabouet (from left) and Jamilah Bourdon work within the All-African People's Revolutionary Party to lift up disadvantaged members of Portland's black community in ways similar to the Black Panther movement of the 1960s. The women are pictured at the In Other Words Feminist Community Center, 14 N.E. Killingsworth St., which has volunteered to accept food donations for the party's free breakfast program and where the group meets.

## Empowering Lives

**Outreach evokes  
Black Power  
movement of the 60s**

BY OLIVIA OLIVIA  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A local organization is bringing more than free meals to local students. Members

of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party are working to bring lessons of sustainability and empowerment to black communities in Portland, taking a page from the Black Panther movement of the 1960s, such as a free breakfast program and other efforts to help the disadvantaged. Organizers hope to inspire other communities to engage in similar programs.

Back in October, members of the polit-

ical group discussed bringing back a free breakfast program to Portland along the lines of the feeding program the Black Panthers started in 1969 in Oakland, Calif., an effort that eventually fed up to 10,000 poor inner city children every day before school.

The breakfasts were intended then to give marginalized communities a sense of agency and self-determination, allowing low-income students to meet their basic needs while also learning about feeding themselves and each other. The breakfasts and other social programs expanded to Portland in the late 1960s as well. By the end of 1969, the Portland Panthers had started a Children's Breakfast Program at Highland United Church of Christ—where they fed up to 125 children each morning before school—as well as the Fred Hamp-

ton Memorial People's Health Clinic, extending free medical care five evenings a week on North Russell to anyone of any race.

The magnitude and powerful impact of the breakfast program was such that the federal government adopted a similar program for public schools across the country. The breakfasts and other programs however became difficult to maintain and by 1979 many of the Panther's outreach efforts came to a close in Portland.

Decades later, as free breakfast programs and government spending on low-income services have slowly disappeared or grown smaller, grassroots activists felt the spirit and goals of the original program could stand to have a revival.

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