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Portland Observer
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Forum Theater Weekend

Interactive plays to focus on housing, racial profiling

See story, page 13

'Phenomenal Woman'

Survivor wins makeover from community supporters

See Metro, page 9



Portland Observer 45

'City of Roses'



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PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Emanuel Price, founder and president of Second Chances Are for Everyone, a Portland nonprofit that focuses on rehabilitating former prisoners.

Success found in turning around lives of freed prisoners

BY OLIVIA OLIVIA
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Emanuel Price sits at a north Portland café across the street from Portland Community College watching students come and go from classes while grabbing lunch between breaks in the rain. He notices the students surrounding him, he says, because he himself is learning, albeit in a different way.

Over a decade ago, Price was a 19-year-old student back home for summer break after attending a historically black college in Virginia. A business management and finances major, he struggled to pay for his education, was anxious about not having

Second Chances are for Everyone

his necessities covered, and worried about the big bite of debt that higher education would take out of him.

Not wanting to ask his struggling mother for money, he took matters into his own hands one night when a group of students held up a convenience store at gunpoint.

"I had never held a gun before," he said. "I thought of it as a prop, I didn't know how to use it."

His hopes and dreams as a young man were all lost in that fateful decision. The stolen money would not help him get back to Virginia, and he would later be arrested and plead out to four years in prison. And just like that, Price went from an honor roll student to a black felon, and had to rethink how he was going to spend the rest of his life.

Price served his time and today he is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4