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# Whiteness History Month Defended

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concept of whiteness has changed over time, and a panel of white Portlanders involved in antiracist groups and organizations discussing their experiences and how to be most effective in working against racism and white supremacy.

Kate Chester, director of community engagement at PCC, explained that the event is targeted not at specific people or groups of people but at whiteness as a social construct. She says the school was prepared to publicize the events once the agenda was finalized by its organizers, subcommittee of the colleges' Cascade Campus Diversity Council, in early February. But the event attracted national attention when conservative bloggers and news sources began dis-

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--A black woman working as faculty

cussing it the week of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, using language like "whiteness shaming" and "hate whitey month".

The school has received many messages both from people taking offence at the event and "personalizing it", and from supporters who recognize the event's ability to contribute to social justice and

equity.

A student supporting it said, "Often, the focus has not been on who defines and propagates racial categories but the victims of it. Turning the gaze allows us to have more critical conversations about how this country was started and how it came to prosper that is missing from mainstream dis-

course on race."

However, the controversy around this event is also affecting individual people of color at the college. A black woman working as faculty, blogging anonymously, says about how her co-workers have reacted, "I started by wanting to support this effort to investigate a structure. The effort was never about investigating individuals. The more individuals attempt to make it about them, to make it about their comfort, the more I have to reassess my mental model and my approach here."

The interim college president has also issued a statement defending the event: "We view this project as part of a larger national conversation around race and social justice on America's college campuses...[this] event is intended to enable a rich and engaging exchange of ideas. We hope it will open up a space for dialogue and discovery around these complex issues," Sylvia Kelly said.

*Alex Wise is a student intern at the Portland Observer attending Portland State University.*



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## Building a Workforce

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

in the area, resulting in a cycle of poverty. Building the trades center and its programs are key in combating this issue, he said.

"The value of the trades center is clear," Frederick said. "You have to have people who understand how to do these jobs right

here; you can't outsource them. We want to make sure everyone can be part of getting these jobs."

Hinshaw explored how the finance sector supports regional manufacturing through sustainable workforce development training and education, as well as providing access to capital for businesses. He said that Portland

has the 17th largest manufacturing sector among the top largest 100 metro markets in the country.

"I'm a big champion of the manufacturing industry," Hinshaw said. "It's an under-recognized sector in the state and is a big deal for me. Twenty six percent of the state's GDP is from manufacturing. Our partnership with PCC has been a natural path for us. It's great to see all of the work PCC has done here."

## New Center Brings Hope

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

1989 in honor of two members of Portland's African American community, the late Rev. Dr. John W. Garlington Jr. and his wife, Yvonne, who successfully pushed for more social services in the community during the 1970s and 1980s. The couple died in a tragic traffic accident in 1986.

The new clinic would be placed on a 1.5 acre site in the heart of Portland's historic black community in the Eliot Neighborhood at 3034 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., and serve as a new community-centered healthcare model for local residents.

The campus will house one building for primary health care and mental health services and a separate four-story 52-unit apartment building in which 10 to 12 of the units will be reserved for people experiencing behavior health challenges and economic difficulties. Rents would be targeted

at around \$700 a month, although those suffering from mental illness will have access to subsidies, officials said.

Mental health, addiction, and disease management services would be coordinated with an on-site integrated medical team, and preventative care and healthy lifestyle classes. Additionally, the center would offer wellness resources including a community kitchen, food pantry, exercise room, and shared gardens accessible to all. The projected completion date would be around fall 2017.

"Our new campus addresses our community's need for improved behavioral health services and affordable housing," says Derald Walker, Cascadia president and chief executive officer. "We know that together we can help those in need experience better health outcomes."


In addition to FamilyCare's donation, Cascadia has received

\$250,000 from an anonymous donor, \$250,000 from Meyer Memorial Trust, \$250,000 from Multnomah County, \$100,000 from the Mitzvah Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation and a host of smaller donations from other groups.

Cascadia's "Building a Culture of Caring" philanthropic campaign was started with the visionary support of Howard and Jane Glazer with their \$1 million property donation. Cascadia expects to raise the final \$3.5 million over the next six to eight months.

"Serving lower-income Oregonians is at the heart of what FamilyCare is all about," says Jeff Heatherington, the insurer's president. "Providing assistance for a neighborhood-based clinic combined with supportive housing is exactly what we believe it will take to help people get the care they need, especially those facing mental health challenges."

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