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Justice Reform Effort Grows

Grant allows county to target jail misuse and overuse

Multnomah County has added momentum to efforts to reform the local criminal justice system and reduce the county jail population by winning a \$2 million grant to study ways to reduce over-incarceration.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacAurhur Foundation grant is part of a national initiative to reduce over-incarceration. It was announced last week after a competitive process that drew applications from nearly 200 jurisdictions in 45 states and territories.

The new round of funding will provide additional support and expert technical assistance to implement strategies that address the main drivers of local jail incarceration, including unfair and ineffective practices that take a particularly heavy toll on people of color, low-income communities, and people with mental health and substance abuse issues, officials said.

Local justice reform advocate Julia Yoshimoto of the Women's



The Multnomah County Justice Center, downtown, includes a jail with several floors reserved for prisoners.

Justice Project, said the funding represents an important opportunity to finally address the disparate treatment of people in color in our justice system.

"That race and ethnicity are a clear predictor of the outcome an individual entering the system can expect goes against the fairness and equal treatment county residents expect from their justice system," Yoshimoto said.

She was most impressed that the county is proposing a new shelter to help justice-involved women and

their families and avoid the lasting damage incarceration can do while giving them a chance to rehabilitate themselves in ways that don't compromise public safety.

Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County chair, said the grant will help the county push its justice reform efforts further, including developing a robust program for women grappling with mental health challenges and offering them cultural, gender-specific, and trauma-informed services they need.

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Deadly Wildfires Explode in California with Dry, Windy Gusts

Deadly wildfires exploded through forests and residential neighborhoods in California Sunday and Monday when dry conditions and gusts of wind exasperated the flames. The death toll from the fires stood at 13 deaths on Tuesday, with at least 1,500 structures destroyed, and 100,000 acres of land burned.

ESPN Anchor Defended

Rashad Robinson, executive director of Color of Change Tuesday called ESPN's suspension of black sports anchor Jamele Hill "a flagrant suppression of Black voices in sports." The co-host of ESPN Sports Center was suspended for two weeks Monday after tweeting criticisms of Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones, who warned on Sunday that his players who did not stand for the flag would be benched.



Hateful Note Found in County Breakroom

A written message threatening Muslims was discovered in a Multnomah County office break room for health department and other workers at 21 S.W. Oak St. last week. County Commissioner Loretta Smith, the only black member of the county commission said the incident was "sad confirmation of the work that needs to be done to change the culture of hate, intolerance and racism at Multnomah County."

Strip Club Exotica's Lawsuit Moves Forward

A federal judge ruled last week that Donna Thames, owner of the now-closed northeast Portland strip club

The Week in Review

Exotica International Club for Men, can move forward with her lawsuit claiming the city forced her to shut down through racist enforcement of liquor laws. One of the few local clubs that catered to black clientele closed in 2015 after it lost

money when the city forced it to close at midnight for three months after a shooting in the parking lot.

Cory Hall Steps in as OSU Beaver Coach

Cory Hall, a former college football and NFL star, was named interim coach of the Oregon State Beavers on Monday after the surprise departure of Gary Anderson who voluntarily gave up the job with millions of dollars left on his contract. OSU Athletic Director Scott Barnes says a national search for a permanent replacement will begin.



Oregon Gun Control Repeal Effort Fails

A new Oregon law that allows a court to deny a gun to a person deemed at risk of suicide or harming others will remain in place after an effort to repeal it has failed due to lack of signatures to put it on the ballot. Chief petitioner Rep Mike Nearman, a Republican from Independence, blamed Democratic Gov. Kate Brown for delaying the signing of the bill, leaving little time to gather signatures under a required timeline.

Trump puts Birth Control Coverage in Peril

The Trump administration on Friday moved to expand the rights of employers to deny women insurance coverage for contraception and issued sweeping guidance on religious freedom that critics said could also erode civil rights protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

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