



**Affordable
for Now**
*Tax legislation
may gut
future housing
investments*
See Local News, page 3

**County Hiring
for Construction**
*Networking event
focuses on jobs
and training*
See story, page 2



Portland Observer

Volume XLVI • Number 49



www.portlandobserver.com
Wednesday • December 6, 2017



Established in 1970
Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

J.T. Flowers grew up in northeast Portland to become a Yale graduate, and now becomes one of America's celebrated Rhodes scholars, as he was just awarded one of the most prestigious academic fellowships in the world to study at Oxford University in England.

A Rhodes Scholar

**Portland student soars to
new academic heights**

BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

JT Flowers, a 24 year old Portlander who went to Lincoln High School and grew up in the heart of Portland's historic African American community, has just been awarded one of the most celebrated academic scholarships in the world, a Rhodes fellowship. He becomes one of only 32 other Americans selected each year to study at Oxford University in England, the United Kingdom's top-

ranked university and one of the worlds' most prestigious.

"It doesn't quite feel real," Flowers told the Portland Observer. "I'm still trying to process exactly what this means for both myself and my community. Above all else, this process has been humbling beyond belief. I was as shocked when I found out as I am today"

Since last summer, Flowers has been working at U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer's Portland field office as a liaison for the congressman's constituents. Flowers comes to work in a suit and tie every day, proudly brandishing his class ring from another prestigious university, Yale, his Ivy League alma mater in which he earned a political sci-

ence degree.

Flower's thesis at Yale examined gaps in Portland's sanctuary city law for undocumented immigrants. And last year, he won a Truman scholarship to pay for graduate-level studies for government or public service careers. In spite of these achievements, Flower hasn't forgotten his roots.

"Ultimately, I'm just a kid off the block of northeast Portland," he said. "I try to commit every waking second I have to giving back to the people who have got me where

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5