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Fred Meyer

What's on your list today?



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Cameron Keaton, now a junior at Westview High School, recalls the silence and shock he and other players had when his former freshman football coach at Sunset High School used the n-word in a children's counting game to make a point. According to Principal John Huelskamp, the coach now understands that using the word was not appropriate even if under the context that he was trying to convey a story about progress against racism.

Lessons Learned

Words matter for player, parent and coach

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

When a racist word was inserted into a children's counting game by the adult coach mentoring his son, the Sunset High School parent wanted the school principal to do something about it. Now almost a year and a half after bringing the incident to the attention of school staff, the parent is getting an apology and a commitment that it won't happen again.

Glenn Keaton said his son, Cameron Keaton, was in the 9th grade at Sunset High School when volunteer coach Terry Newsom, during study hall and before a room full of Freshman football players, gave an example of a rhyme used to select a person in games such as tag, "Eeny, meeny, miny, moe..."

But instead of using some common and non-offensive variations of the game, Newsom used a racist

version, believed to date back to the Civil War and post Civil War period where the second line of the rhyme was turned to the offensive "Catch a n----- by the toe."

From the accounts by his son and other players, the coach told his students that using the n-word in the rhyme was something that he and his family did while growing up, apparently to make a point

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6,000 Sign Up for Low Income Fares

For those experiencing poverty in Portland, a simple expense like transportation can mean having to make the choice between getting a bus pass and buying groceries. Now with successful enrollment in TriMet's new reduced fares for low income riders, savings of more than \$860 per year can be made on day and monthly passes, an amount that can be life-changing for some.

People earning up to double the federal poverty level became eligible for enrollment in TriMet's Honored Citizen fare program in July, which discounts 50 percent off the cost of an adult fare for a single ride or day pass and 72 percent off the cost of a month pass.

The \$860 of savings per year is equivalent to about two week's pay of a full-time minimum wage

worker. For one college student, a reduced fare could mean freeing up resources for things like food, clothing or paying bills. But she didn't know such a program existed until recently.

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity, especially due to the amount of low income people that use public transportation and can't afford it. It's a nice savings," Jaleena, a Portland Community College student who qualified through the Oregon Health Plan, said.

So far, more than 6,000 Oregonians aged 18-64 who live on a low income have signed up, according to TriMet which can be done by presenting proof of low income through pay stubs or enrollment in programs such as Oregon Health

Plan, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and several others.

The income documents, along with valid ID, can be brought to TriMet's partnering organizations in person, such as Centro Cultural, IRCO, and WorkSource Oregon to be screened for eligibility. Approved riders can bring their application receipt to the TriMet Ticket Office at Pioneer Courthouse Square downtown to obtain a personalized Hop FastPass Honored Citizen ID card.

Funding for the program was made possible through a \$12 million investment by the Oregon Legislature.

For more information about how to apply for reduced fare, visit trimet.org/lowincome.