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A federal jury has convicted Mary Holden Ayala, 59, the former operator of a foster home serving the black community on Northeast Rodney Avenue of stealing nearly \$1 million from an Oregon foster care agency. The home was purchased by the neighborhood to keep it from being demolished.

Foster Care Provider Guilty

Executive neglected duties; stole \$1 million

A federal jury found Mary Holden Ayala, 59, of Portland, guilty Thursday of stealing nearly \$1 million from an Oregon foster care agency, money laundering and filing false personal income tax returns.

Ayala, a longtime Portland resident, served as the president, executive director and primary agent of Give Us This Day, a private foster care agency and residential program which served youth of

color from a home on Northeast Rodney Avenue.

“Children in foster care rely heavily on the agency to which they are entrusted and these agencies are responsible for protecting and caring for them. Mary Holden Ayala grossly neglected her duties and selfishly stole from children in need,” said Billy J. Williams, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

Ayala was accused of using

money meant to assist foster care children and their families to pay for luxury home renovations, a pilot for a reality show, extensive travel to luxury resorts, a music recording studio, luxury shoes and purses.

According to court documents, since its inception in 1979, Give Us This Day was primarily funded by the Oregon state and fed-

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Health Clinic Hires Advocate

Local leader to manage Good News facility

The Good News Community Health Center at 18000 S.E. Stark St. in Rockwood has hired Sharon Maxwell from Portland's African American community as its new executive director.

Maxwell, a native Portlander, mother of four, grandmother of five, and graduate of Portland Community College and Warner Pacific University, is known as a unity builder, change agent, innovator, visionary, educator, green engineer and community engagement specialist for over 30 years.

She has run her own company for the past 19 years and founded two non-profits to serve the community.

“We are excited for the many connections she has with our community to engage more of our community in helping those



Sharon Maxwell

weighed down with overburdens to stand and carry their own packs, and helping others with overburdens along the way,” clinic officials said.

The Good News Community Health Center serves with a faith-

based mission to provide excellent physical, mental, and spiritual care with the Love of Christ. Many services are low cost and free, available regardless of ability to pay.

The clinic serves a vibrant and radically diverse community. Nearly 90 languages are spoken in the homes within just a few miles of our clinic.

Although, Rockwood is one of the poorest communities in Oregon, home to many with homelessness, addiction, mental illness, isolation and limited access to affordable healthy housing and quality medical care, it is also rich in terms of resilience of its residents, hard working families from many different cultures, thriving small businesses, vibrant churches and dedicated community leadership.