



## Madison Grad Makes History

*As Valedictorian, Taj Ali achieves highest academic honor*

See Local News, page 3

## Summer Free for All

*Portland parks all geared up to keep kids active, healthy*

See Metro, page 6



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Committed to Cultural Diversity

# Hail Queen Mya!

A dream comes true for St. Mary's senior



Rose Festival Queen Mya Brazile

Mya Brazile of St. Mary's Academy was crowned 2019 Rose Festival Queen Saturday, an amazing accomplishment for the 18-year-old senior and the fulfillment of a childhood dream.

Brazile said she's wanted to be part of the historic Rose Festival Court ambassador program since she was just 9 years old. The best part so far has been the community outreach and getting to know the other 14 Rose Festival princesses, she said.

"To give back to the community which has given so much to me, is something I'm excited for and I can't wait to start," she told reporters after the coronation, anticipating even more responsibilities in the upcoming year of her reign.

Her selection was announced in a ceremony just ahead of the Rose Festival's Grand Floral Parade at Veterans Memorial Coliseum. She was joined by her parents, Montral and Michelle Brazile, and other family members.

An all-league standout varsity basketball player at St. Mary's, Brazile said she plans to attend Concordia University in northeast Portland where she can continue playing sports and pursue an education in social work and computer science. She also said she wanted to attend the school because it's close to the family and Portland community she loves.

# Fostering Diversity Behind the Lens

## New black filmmakers celebrate

BY DANNY PETERSON

Black and women filmmakers, who are sorely underrepresented nationwide in the television and movie industries, were the focus of a yearlong fellowship for filmmakers of color at Open Signal Labs, the nonprofit community media organization in northeast Portland. Now the culmination of their work will be shared with film screenings and an after party celebration this Friday starting at 7 p.m. at Hollywood Theatre in northeast Portland.

The pilot year fellowship was overseen by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Ifanyi Bell, the executive producer of Open Lab Signal. The first screenings will come from six local black filmmakers: Kamryn Fall, Elijah Hasan, Tamera Lyn, Sika Stanton, Noah Thomas, and Dustin Tolman.

Project Coordinator RaShaunda Brooks, who is herself an African American film-

maker, told the Portland Observer the screening is to highlight the work and let people know more about the program.

"There are people of color here in Portland; there are black, brown filmmakers, people who just want to have access to this type of equipment, access to this type of work," she said.

The films include documentary and narrative works that cover topics including law enforcement, African identity, music, fashion, and gentrification. Brooks said beyond that description, "it's more of a surprise."

"We want people to come out and see

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

PHOTO BY SAM GEHRKE

Portland filmmaker Ifanyi Bell behind the lens. The executive producer of Open Signal Labs on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard spearheaded a unique black filmmaker incubator program for the nonprofit community media organization, which will screen six film projects made by local black filmmakers this Friday at 7 p.m. at the Hollywood Theatre.

