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Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Workers in Construction

Construction workers put the finishing touches on the Alberta 13 Apartments, the culmination of an 18 month build and representing a boom in construction across the city, mostly related to housing and mixed use retail. This week's Portland Observer issue gives special coverage to construction and the boost it gives to family wage jobs.



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Veteran Portland rapper Mic Crenshaw is using his music to fight racial and economic injustice and empower young people to thrive in their creative fields. His work will get a boost over the next two years because of the support of local organizations providing grant funding.

Mentoring on Rap

Mic Crenshaw expands reach with new support

BY DANNY PETERSON
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Veteran Portland hip-hop emcee Mic Crenshaw is one of Portland's best known rap artists who this month releases a new album with fellow rapper and Max train stabbing survivor Micah Fletcher. But Crenshaw is also a proven mentor to kids, a role that will grow vastly in the next two years because of the support of two local organizations.

Crenshaw, 48, is the recipient of the Oregon Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program grant, providing \$4,000 in salary to teach hip hop to aspiring stars of

a new generation; and an Oregon Humanities Fields Artist Fellowship that will pay him \$100,000 over a two year period to advance his artistic practice while helping young people get past the "opportunity gap" the disparities in life outcomes for Oregon children born into poverty and children of color.

"To me, it's a life changing blessing. It's one of the biggest opportunities I've ever encountered," Crenshaw told the Portland Observer when we caught up with him at Portland Underground Recording Studio in southwest Portland, fresh off of recording seg-

ments for two collaborative songs with his longtime producer Prince Strickland.

The financial support will give him the chance to solely focus on his entertainment career, something he said he's rarely gotten the chance to do.

"There's an opportunity to work less, to hustle less, and to be more creative. So I'm looking forward to that," Crenshaw said.

Crenshaw currently is a teaching artist in high school and other educational organizations, such as at the alternative program inside

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