



Fire Impacts Historic Gym

Grand Avenue Boxing Club awaits word on damages

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All Set for MLK Dream Run

A new location for weekend celebration and races

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Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO COURTESY MULTNOMAH COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

Candice Murphy (center) celebrates with parole and probation officials and corrections counselors upon her graduation from a unique Multnomah County Department of Community Justice curriculum focused on helping black women involved in the criminal justice system transition to productive lives.

Transitioning Self, Family and Community

Pilot program focuses on better futures for black women

Candice Murphy always knew she had the intelligence and personality for success. After grade school in northeast Portland, Murphy left for California, where she finished high school at the top of her class in biology.

When she returned to her native Portland, she enrolled at Concorde Career College in pursuit of a career as a phlebotomist or medical assistant. At 21, she was a college graduate employed at a local dermatologist's office. She later worked at Legacy Emanuel Women's Clinic as a medical assistant.

But life began to spiral as Murphy made the wrong turns with the wrong people. For 17 years, she struggled with an on-and-off-again addiction to crack cocaine. That battle intersected — more than once — with the criminal justice system.

And, coming from a broken home, Murphy said, "I didn't have the skills to stop myself from spiraling. After I had my daughter, I settled down a bit. But I never really regained ground with addiction. Throughout the years, I had four children. I couldn't keep up with society. So instead of getting multiple jobs, I just stole."

At 36 years old, Murphy was in a fight with a relative's girlfriend. She was charged with assault and served more than two years in prison.

But last month, in a long-awaited personal milestone, Murphy took another step toward a different future. She joined seven others in the Multnomah County boardroom for the first ever graduation for women involved in a pilot program called HEAT (Habilitation, Empowerment, Accountability and Therapy) a curriculum tailored

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