



# Communities of Color Leader Fights for Progress

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He said rosy statistics by some major companies to show their diversity and inclusiveness are often deceptive.

“Nike likes touting itself, but whenever there’s layoffs, a lot of blacks lose their jobs,” he said. “It’s a national company and they use national numbers, but most of their employees are lower paid employees at their Memphis distribution center, their hub for distributing all their stuff. And so the people in Memphis – that’s a lot of black employees.”

But the highest paying jobs at Nike are all in Beaverton, at the company’s world headquarters, and those employees are mostly white, he said.

“You can find black people everywhere, but the people at the top making the big, big bucks, they don’t look like people of color,” he said. “But they (Nike) still get to report decent numbers (for diversity)

because they have a flood of lower income (black) employees they can count in Memphis.”

Mundy said he is always suspicious of glowing reports on employee diversity.

“You can play with stats, but you need to get underneath them,” he said. “Is it anybody who ever worked on the job? Is it permanent employees? Sometimes you can get a flood of employees but they’re only in there for a week’s worth of work. You have to get underneath how they count.”

One wonders how Dr. King would see progress in race relations today – or the lack thereof – but although he’s relentless in his goal of ensuring Portland’s communities of color have a place at the table, Mundy was realistic when asked if some people are “cooking the books” in reporting diversity in their organizations.

“Always. Always,” he said. “There’s nothing new under the sun.”

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For more information, contact

**Tiffani Penson,**  
**Supplier Diversity Officer**

[tiffani.penson@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:tiffani.penson@portlandoregon.gov)

503.823.7785

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