

A Hero for Community Health

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work of other churches and community organizations serving African Americans in Multnomah County. By working through the REACH network, she increased access to healthcare for her community by bringing preventive services such as blood pressure screenings to other commu-

nity churches, and to increase access to healthy foods.

"I am a helper by nature. When I know I can help, I feel an obligation to make a difference," Williams was quoted as saying after the award presentation this past August.

Highland Haven partners with the Multnomah County Health Department, a REACH recipient, as part of the coun-

ty's effort to reach infants, youth, adults, and elders to advance policies, systems and environmental conditions to reduce chronic disease disparities. Conditions addressed may include hypertension, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, or obesity and associated risk behaviors of physical inactivity, poor nutrition, or smoking.

The program has reached

thousands of people, helping community members improve their physical health, manage their mental health, and cope with the traumas of racial injustice.

CDC Director Dr. Robert R. Redfield said it was an honor to recognize Williams for her leadership and her contribution to advancing health equity in Oregon.

"Through local outreach and partnership with the faith-based community, Lessie Wil-

liams united and strengthened efforts to improve health access and outcomes for those she and her organization serve," Redfield said.

The national award is named in honor of Lark Galloway-Gilliam—the founding executive director of Community Health Councils, Inc. The council began in 1992 to support planning, resource development, and policy education in response to the growing health crisis in the South Los Angeles area.



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Ballots Returned at a Record Pace

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is Multnomah County — Oregon's most populous county. Nearly 60,000 ballots have been returned, which make up 10.5% of the county's registered voters. At this time in 2016, the county had received 21,452 ballots.

The avalanche of returned ballots within the first days of voting has been witnessed across the country.

As of Friday, more than 22 million Americans had already

cast ballots in the 2020 election, a record-shattering number of early votes.

Americans' rush to vote is leading election experts to predict that a record 150 million votes may be cast and turnout rates could be higher than in any presidential election since 1908.

In Oregon, ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. Election Day, Nov. 3. The state also allows you to track your vote-by-mail ballot online.

--Associated Press

Discrimination Cases Explode

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and replied, "I don't serve Blacks."

For Marquita Corley, 37, it was shopping with her friends Terra Hartley and Ramona Austin when she says she was denied service by a Walmart employee who claimed that she could not help them because there were more than four people in line, even though they were the only people in line. The worker questioned why the women were shopping in Troutdale and another Walmart employee told them the employee had a history of problems with black customers, Kafoury said.

In the fourth lawsuit, Benita Presley said she was surrounded by three Safeway employees at Northwest 13th and Lovejoy who falsely accused her of having stolen items in her purse. When she requested that they look in her purse, they refused, so she had to empty the contents of her purse onto the floor to prove she hadn't taken anything, Kafoury said. Presley described

the incident as the most humiliating event that has happened to her.

In another discrimination claim brought to the attention of the Portland Observer, Black resident Jayana Rushing said she has retained Kafoury's service in response to what she called a "horrific humiliating situation" on Oct. 8 when wrongly accused of trespassing and a prior theft incident at a Ross store.

"I have never ever stole anything in my life. I was completely mistreated and embarrassed in front of a packed line at the Ross Cascade Station registers," Rushing said.

Thankfully, she was supported by mall security as well as Portland Police.

"I waited for 44 minutes for Portland Police to come. Just for them to check my identity, apologize for the inconvenience and release me," she said.

If you have been a victim of discrimination or have been unjustly denied service, Kafoury said don't hesitate to contact his office at 503-224-2647.