



Show of Force Grows

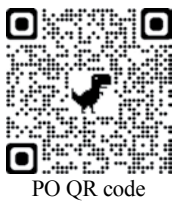
FBI joins police to break 'cycle of violence'

See Local News, Page 3

Building on Community

Annual Al Forthan scholars named

See story, page 4



The Portland Observer



www.portlandobserver.com
Wednesday • May 19, 2021

Volume XLV • Number 10

Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO BY BEN ALMAN/
WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

Esperanza Spalding

Jazz Phenon Eyes Artists' Sanctuary

St. Johns site would serve Black community

Esperanza Spalding, Portland's Grammy award winning jazz and R&B musician, has launched a GoFundMe to build a "BIPOC artist sanctuary" in north Portland, where she is from originally.

Spalding announced Monday that she hopes to raise \$300,000 through a Go Fund Me account to raise the money needed to secure a building and green space in the St. Johns neighborhood to support "the creation of restorative art, in a truly restorative environment," serving Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

"The BIPOC artist Sanctuary I am building in north Portland will be comprised of a 1/2 acre organic garden, two garden-studios for short-term artist residency, BIPOC eco-poetics reading room, tea-bar and recording studio," she said in a statement.

Spalding also envisions the sanctuary serving her interdisci-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/ PORTLAND OBSERVER PUBLISHER

Community leaders Sam Sachs (from left), Dr. S. Renee Mitchell and Elijah Hasan stand in solidarity at Northeast Sandy and Fremont to introduce a campaign of billboards and other messages to stop Black-on-Black gun violence.

Gun Violence: Connecting the Dots

Racism and self-hate fuel crisis, leaders say

Portland's spike in shootings and homicides across Multnomah County is instigating a heightened local and federal police presence. But it is also facilitating awareness among community-based organizations to respond to underlying issues of White supremacy and self-hate that are feeding this public health crisis.

Advocates of the African American community took a stand in solidarity last week to back a new series of provocative billboards that directly connect the issue of Black-on-Black gun violence to violence procreated by racism.

Although shootings are also occurring among other ethnic groups, neo-Nazis and

other white gangs, the billboard messaging is intended to specifically reveal the impact that anti-Black trauma has had on the psyche of Portland's Black community, the advocates say.

"The Billboard campaign is done out of love and compassion, with the intent to bring awareness, action and solutions to the overwhelming number of shootings that impact communities of color, but more specifically Black men in Portland," said Sam Sachs, founder of The No Hate Zone. Sachs has been raising awareness about gun violence in the Portland area for more than 10 years.

Sachs recruited award-winning Black author S. Renee Mitchell to craft the billboards' messaging. Mitchell, a 2019-20 Spirit of Portland winner, is the visionary for a nationally award-winning, youth-development organization, called I Am M.O.R.E. (Making

Ourselves Resilient Everyday). Mitchell had already completed years of research on the effects of racial trauma, who just last week earned a doctoral degree on the subject from the University of Oregon.

The billboard captions she compiled read "Racism + Self-hate = Gun Violence" with the taglines "Reject the oppression" or "Do the math." Another tagline reads: "Destroy white supremacy, not each other." Imagery of a slave ship superimposed onto a gold bullet was created by visual artist and award-winning Black filmmaker Elijah Hasan, who has collaborated with Mitchell on several creative projects for her "Spreading Black Joy" campaign.

"It is my intention to remind the Black minds inside these Black bodies that they may

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4