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Growing up in the West Indies in a small village called Hopetown, Secota Douglas lived a life filled with just that — hope. It sparked an ambition to make an impact in her native home even as she planted roots in the U.S.

And to gain the necessary knowledge to help shape environmental policy, Secota earned her degree online from Oregon State University Ecampus. “I always had dreams that were bigger than my surroundings,” she said. “Earning a degree has always been one of them.”

ecampus.oregonstate.edu/secota



Secota Douglas, '17
B.S. in Environmental
Economics and Policy

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Kabul Falls without a Fight

Taliban promise women's rights under Islamic rule

(AP) — The Taliban vowed Tuesday to respect women's rights, forgive those who fought them and ensure Afghanistan does not become a haven for terrorists as part of a publicity blitz following the fall of Kabul in a message aimed at reassuring world powers and a fearful population.

Following a lightning offensive across Afghanistan that saw Kabul and many cities fall to the insurgents without a fight, the Taliban have sought to portray themselves as more moderate than when they imposed a strict form of Islamic rule in the late 1990s. But many Afghans remain skeptical — and thousands have raced to the airport, desperate to flee the country.

Older generations remember the Taliban's previous rule, when they largely confined women to their homes, banned television and music, and held public executions. A U.S.-led invasion drove them from power months after the 9/11 attacks, which al-Qaida had orchestrated from Afghanistan while being sheltered by the Taliban.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Tal-



Zabihullah Mujahid

iban's longtime spokesman, emerged from the shadows Tuesday in his first-ever public appearance to address those concerns at a news conference.

He promised the Taliban would honor women's rights within the norms of Islamic law, without elaborating. The Taliban have encouraged women to return to work and have allowed girls to return to school, handing out Islamic headscarves at the door. A female news anchor interviewed a Taliban official Monday in a TV studio.

The treatment of women varies widely across the Muslim world and sometimes even within the same country, with rural areas tending to be far more conservative. Some Muslim countries, including

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The Week in Review

COVID Surge Hits Hospitals

Oregon reported a new daily COVID-19 hospitalization record Monday as the state's health system battles another surge fueled by the highly transmissible delta variant. On Monday, 752 people in Oregon were hospitalized due to the coronavirus, health officials said. In addition, 14 more people have died from COVID-19.

Housing Moratorium Extended

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced Monday she is extending the statewide residential mortgage foreclosure moratorium for those experiencing financial hardship during the ongoing pandemic until Dec. 31. “I am committed to ensuring that Oregonians have a warm, dry, safe place to live during this pandemic,” Brown said.

Recall Effort Goes Slow

An effort to remove Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler from office in a recall election is failing to gather the number of signatures necessary to place the measure on the ballot this fall, organizers reported last week. Absent a substantial infusion of cash or a surge in volunteer support, the TotalRecall PDX campaign said it may not reach its goal.

Hundreds of Firearms Seized

Multnomah County deputies seized 337 firearms from a Clack-

amas County home in late July, believed to be the largest weapons seizure in the agency's history. Arrests in connection with the seizure are expected, authorities said.

Pride, BLM Flags Banned

The school board in the Portland suburb of Newberg voted last week to ban pride flags, flags reading Black Lives Matter and any broadly “political” signs, clothing, and other items. The action drew the ire of lawmakers of color in Salem who said it goes against recent state efforts to support black and LGBTQ+ students.

Nabisco Bakers Strike

Nabisco bakery workers in northeast Portland walked off their jobs and called a strike last week, demanding a fair contract. The employees said the company is destroying union jobs by outsourcing work, eliminating pensions, increasing healthcare costs, cutting pay for overtime.

Firefighter Arrested

An off-duty Portland firefighter is accused of kidnapping a man off the street by gunpoint because he believed the man was burglarizing a marijuana dispensary he owned. Douglas L. Bourland, 46, and two other men are accused of holding the abductee in a storage container at a marijuana farm in Estacada.