



Education/Careers

Inside: Our special focus issue on schools and the workplace



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Committed to Cultural Diversity

Future Ready Careers



Portland Community College students enrolled in Career Pathways earn welding certificates. PCC is expanding its career pathways curriculum for adult learners, dislocated workers, people of color, women, people with low incomes, rural communities, individuals who disproportionately experience age discrimination in employment and disconnected youth.

Expanding opportunities for the underserved

In his State of the Union Address, President Joe Biden called community colleges “America’s best kept secret” for preparing America’s workforce for future careers. The sentiment is shared at Portland Community College which just took new steps for students to quickly become job ready.

During a celebration at Intel this month that drew an assortment of legislators, business, education, labor and community leaders, Gov. Kate Brown signed the “Future Ready Oregon” initiative into law.

The investment in statewide community college Career Pathways programs are geared as a solution to developing Oregon’s future workforce and creating more equitable prosperity across the state.

Crafted with input from the Governor’s Racial Justice Council Workforce Workgroup, the \$200 million investment focuses on opportunities for historically underserved communities, including adult learners, dislocated workers, people of color, women, people with low incomes, rural communities, individuals who disproportionately experience age discrimination in employment and disconnected youth.

“Approaching workforce development with an equity lens really is the heart and soul of this legislation,” Brown said. “That means identifying barriers to career advancement for underserved communities, providing support services to help individuals overcome those barriers, and viewing those supports—such as child care access, or broadband—as critical infrastructure.”

Program advisors will help students identify their career of choice and provide wraparound support as they accumulate stackable credentials.

Future Ready Oregon is funded by le-

veraging Biden’s American Rescue Plan Act, which was passed by Congress last year, with state general funds.

In 2020, the state declared a need for an additional 300,000 skilled adult workers with postsecondary credentials, to meet the demands of a future filled with increasingly complex work. The COVID pandemic further disrupted the workforce crisis, as well as highlighted pre-existing economic disparities across the state.

“This initiative provides the roadmap for Oregonians, especially BIPOC Oregonians, to get access to family-wage careers in healthcare and beyond,” said Patsy Richards, director of Long-Term CareWorks at RISE Partnership and a member of the governor’s council.

Marin Areolla III, president of Advanced Economic Solutions and co-chair of the council’s workforce workgroup, said, “This historical bill will change our workforce system for the better and create an equitable economy that works for everyone.”



City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero

Audit Critical of Police during Protests

By BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Activists for police reform are calling on changes in police tactics following an audit finding that Portland Police violated the civil rights of protesters during the Black Lives Matter marches of 2020, demonstrations sparked by the murder of George Floyd by a white Minneapolis police officer.

The report this month by City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero reveals many disturbing facts that Black leaders and others say call for more action and stronger regulations.

For more than 100 consecutive nights, the report states, protestors gathered in various locations “to object to law enforcement policies and tactics that disproportionately harmed Black Portlanders.”

The protests often turned violent, and there were many complaints of police use of “tear gas.” More than 160 police misconduct investigations of PPB officers have been launched based on incidents that occurred between May and November of 2020, the report states, and “many others are working their way through the discipline system.”

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