

NE Workforce Center Expands



Constructing Hope, job training non-profit that helps people of color, returning citizens and low income folks gain construction skills and job placements, is celebrating the expansion of its workforce center at 405 N.E. Church St. and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Constructing Hope reopens with larger space, outreach

Constructing Hope, a job training non-profit rooted in Portland's historic Black community, is celebrating the re-opening a workforce training center this week after expanding the facility to accommodate larger class sizes and more job training spots.

The renovated building at 405 N.E. Church St. and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard can now accommodate up to 160 trainees annually. The public got a look inside during tours on Tuesday.

The mission is rebuilding the lives of disadvantaged men and women in our community by providing job skills training and education in the construction in-

dustry. The primary groups served include people of color, returning citizens, and low-income adults looking to gain skills to access a career in construction paying a living wage.

Constructing Hope has placed over 1,000 graduates into apprenticeships in trades including carpentry, plumbing and masonry dating back to 1995.

"The trades don't have to be a last resort, there are plenty of opportunities out there for people of all ages, backgrounds and skill sets," said Avon Bailey-Hall, a graduate of the program.

Another graduate Cicely Davis added, "The program also put me in a good position by making me more versatile. When I graduated from the pre-apprenticeship program and went into my first full apprenticeship, earned my superior's trust, and wasn't afraid to advocate for myself, I was able to transition into carpentry as I originally planned."

JJ's Louisiana BBQ

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With Humor and Tenderness

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He holds the audience with such a wonderful combination of humor and tenderness. In keeping with the show's roots, the cast works—and I do mean they work—in a community of listening and play and considerable skill. It's all in fun—but it pays to notice that there is great facility and intention at work here. No

major problems will have been solved over the course of 90 minutes, but the performers have in some ways practiced, and enlisted us in practicing, a resourceful sort of hope, finding the thread of humor and fun woven into ordinary events, ordinary irritation, ordinary dreams and wishes and memories. There's freedom here, and love. And it's not saying too much to call it supreme.

"Freestyle Love Supreme" plays at Portland Center Stage through May 1.

Darleen Ortega is a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals and the first woman of color to serve in that capacity. Her movie and theater review column Opinionated Judge appears regularly in The Portland Observer. Find her review blog at opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com.

In Loving Memory



Douglas Amaya

Douglas Amaya, resident of Gladstone, Ore. and grandfather to Chaudrey Boyd and Curtis Lee, passed away on March 31, 2022 in his daughter's arms. His remains were returned back to Chicago where he will rest permanently.

He leaves behind seven children, Shynovia Amaya of Indiana, DeBorah Lee of Oregon, Sabrina Sumlin of Louisiana, Douglas Amaya, Ashraf Amaya, Kameilah Allen, and his baby girl D'andrea Amaya, all of Illinois; nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and lots and lots of cousins and friends.

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