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Committed to Cultural Diversity

Bringing the City of Roses to the Bayou!

Urban League of Portland Staff Attends National Conference

From July 25-29th, 2023 Urban League of Portland (ULPDX) brought the City of Roses to the Bayou City for four days of networking, productivity, and empowerment. This year's conference in Houston, TX afforded attendees from 90 Urban League affiliates an in-depth look at issues affecting African Americans across the nation.

For the ULPDX staff, attending the conference was more than a chance to network. It was a rare opportunity to meet in one of the nation's most diverse cities with the sole purpose of discussing key issues concerning civil rights, gun safety, women's rights, and economic justice. Concurrently, ULPDX teens took part in "We Got Next!" - a comprehensive schedule of youth programming during the conference, complete with a visit to the Houston Space Center and HBCU Texas Southern University. ULPDX Communications Director Meera Bowman-Johnson says the experience was especially meaningful for ULPDX staff.

"It's not often that we get opportunities to gather with other people who share our mission and values," says Bowman-Johnson. "This conference remind-



From left to right: Crystal Chane Mathis, Nathaniel Hamlett, Jennifer Parrish Taylor, Kevin Rogers, Arleta Christain, Kashae Kilson-Anderson, Urban League of Portland CEO and President Nkenge Harmon Johnson, Esq. (center), Justice Rajee, Mamie Powell, Zana Mosely, Rachell Hall, Marqueesha Ollison, Lauren Smith, Leor Beverly, Markqula Bradley, Salinda Mingo, Charles Fitz. Photo credit: Meera Bowman-Johnson

ed us that we're far from alone. Now that we've returned to Portland, we're even more eager to continue the important work we do for Black Oregonians."

The conference schedule included 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop Celebration and a Legacy Award Dinner where ULPDX Senior Director of Health and Older Adult Services Arleta Christain was awarded by the National Urban League for her 25 years of service. This esteemed award was the first for an employee of Urban League of Portland in

its 78-year history. This was also the first year that ULPDX sent staff members who were recognized by their supervisors for their consistent dedication and efforts to the national conference.

It wasn't uncommon to see and make small talk with notable figures like attorney Benjamin Crump and journalist Roland Martin, during the week. (Both generously posed with Urban Leaguers for selfies.) But some of the most meaningful interpersonal exchanges took place at a more intimate gathering hosted

by Urban League CEOs hosted by President Nkenge Harmon Johnson Esq. at the Hilton Americas Hotel. Crystal Chanel Mathis, ULPDX Events and Marketing Manager said the invite-only event afforded CEOs from other affiliates the rare chance to relax and discuss individual successes and challenges the face in their work.

"Sharing our methods and processes allows the League to become stronger," Mathis says, "and ultimately more impactful."



McCoy Park Water play

The Heat is Coming! Stay Cool by Splashing around

Our Multnomah County partners would make any announcement around cooling centers they plan to operate; though the County's website notes that none are planned at this time. All visitors are welcome to stay cool in Portland Parks & Recreation community center lobbies (at no cost) during regular facility hours.

While pools are excellent recreation sites, they are not designated as resources to stay cool. First and foremost, not ev-

eryone can swim, and pools have mandated capacity limits for safety. The most convenient, citywide way to stay cool outdoors is to visit a park splash pad or fountain. No swimming skills necessary.

There are a list of Portland Parks & Recreation fountains and splash pads you can play in at www.portland.gov/parks/recreation/splash. Splash pad hours are extended this year as Portland Parks & Recreation anticipated a hot summer; so the expanded hours for splash pads are 10 am to 8 pm daily, through Labor Day. Park fountains which are designed for water play have varying hours, posted on the web page.