

# Loretta Smith Runs for City Council for 3rd Time

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I was always trying to make sure that the community's voice was a part of everything that I did," Smith said. "That was the mission of what we started out to do. I want to finish that on the City Council."

Smith lost her bids for city council in 2018 and 2020 and for the U.S. House in Oregon's 6th District in 2022.

Smith also spent 20 years working for U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden and later was a Multnomah County commissioner from 2011 to 2018. She said all that government experience gives her the experience needed for the job, she said.

"East Portland deserves an experienced leader with a proven record of listening to the people she serves," Smith said in a statement to Willamette Week.

Smith could not be reached to comment for this article, but told OBP she is eager to represent her constituents.

"I'm running to make sure that folks in my district have greater access and input in our local government," Smith said. "I have a few priorities. But I think my agenda is going to be decided based on the conversations that I have with the constituency in District 1."

Smith is not the only Black person running for the District 1 seat. Sonja McKenzie is community engagement coordinator at the Oregon Community Foundation, according to the Portland Mercury. Since 2019, she has been president of the Oregon School Boards Association and also serves on the Parkrose School District board and the Multnomah County Library Foundation board, among other volunteer positions.



Loretta Smith

"I have been a strong advocate for educational equity for students statewide, adequate funding during the legislative session, and supporting the needs for board members to have access to professional development," McKenzie wrote in an email to the Mercury.

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McKenzie said she was inspired to run for a seat on Portland City Council because of the restructuring of city government.

"I care deeply about Portland and want to be a part of the change in the way we make decisions for our community," McKenzie wrote. "I am ready to utilize my years of experience

setting policy and engaging with community as an elected official and community engagement professional to bring needed change."

Also running is Candace Avalos, executive director of the environmental justice group Verde, who describes herself as a "Blacktina" since her mother is from Guatemala and her Black father is from Virginia. She said coming from a multiracial family "has shaped my justice-centered values and political identity," she told the Mercury. "These roots are what sparked my interest in government and politics at an early age."

East Portland, a growing and evolving community, has been waiting a long time for promises made in city hall to be realized, she said in a news release.

"The only way Portland has ever made progress has been people coming together to make change. For years I have shown my love for this city by being a part of creating real solutions. And now I'm inspired to run for City Council to take it to the next level."

Avalos said she has "the heart of an advocate, the skills of an executive leader, and the vision for a city that truly works for all Portlanders."

"I have a track record of convening and collaborating with folks with different perspectives to create real solutions on tough issues," she wrote to the Mercury. "I don't shy away from difficult conversations, nuanced decisions, or complex challenges because I truly believe that is the only way we can make progress."

On November 5, the city is holding general elections for mayor, city auditor, and city council. The filing deadline for this election is August 27.

# A Shift in Leadership

## St. Andrew Nativity School Appoints President

St. Andrew Nativity School announces important news regarding its leadership. Lorraine Shepherd has decided to step down from the position of President, Director of Mission of St. Andrew Nativity School, citing personal reasons.

The Board of Trustees of St. Andrew Nativity School is pleased to appoint Brianna Hennessy as the new President, Director of Mission, effective immediately. Bri has served the school faithfully for over twelve years, the last year as Interim Co-President while continuing as Director of Graduate Support. Bri's extensive experience will exceptionally serve Nativity as a longtime member of school leadership, her dedicated work with our students and their families not only during their time at Nativity but beyond, as well as her passion for equity in education and deep understanding of and commitment to our mission.

Bri, a Portland native who grew up in the St. Ignatius Parish, attended La Salle Prep and earned her undergraduate degree from Gonzaga University. After graduation, she dedicated a year of volunteerism as a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Bri later pursued her passion for social work, obtaining a master's degree from Portland State University. In addition to her longtime service to St. Andrew Nativity, she is an active member of The Madeleine Parish community in NE Portland, where her children attend school.

"We are confident that St. Andrew Nativity School will contin-



Brianna Hennessy the new President, Director of Mission at St. Andrew Nativity School

ue to thrive under Bri's leadership and uphold its commitment to underserved students in the Portland area," states Nativity Board of Trustees Chair, David Blaszkowsky. She is eager to continue engaging with our dedicated faculty, staff, students, families, and greater community to build on Nativity's 23 years of providing a transformative Jesuit education that empowers our students to become people for others.

Bri shared, "Over the past 12 years, I have had the privilege of watching our students grow from curious 6th graders to accomplished adults, taking full advantage of the opportunities at Nativity. This past year, I have engaged more holistically with the entire Nativity community and its supporters, witnessing their remarkable dedication to our mission. I am humbled and look forward to continuing to support our students, families, graduates, and staff as President, Director of Mission at St. Andrew Nativity."



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