

## Contracts

continued from page 2

Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska and Idaho, from using race-based goals in contracting – unless they could show compelling evidence of previous discrimination. Washington state's Initiative 200, passed in 2004, also barred any form of affirmative action in employment, college admissions or contracting.

"When all the minorities get left with just 1 percent doesn't that seem like discrimination?" Rye says. "But it will take a legal challenge to set this straight."

Michael Cobb says the court ruling is precisely why Oregon commissioned the disparity study, and the update currently in progress: to have the proof needed to get a federal waiver to develop race-based goals

and a support program.

"We can't just give contracts to select people. But those who have bid have been

**"We can't just give contracts to select people. But those who have bid have been successful."**

successful."

Cobb defends the disparity study, pointing out that MGT of America has a strong track record.

"This firm we hired has worked with 40

states," he said. "They look at hard data and also conduct one-to-one interviews. And when disparity studies have been challenged in court, they have won their cases. So I know for a fact that the methodology they are using is exactly what they have to use."

To Bid or Not to Bid?

The disparity study showed inequities, but it also gave ODOT somewhat of a pass, on the grounds that African American contractors had not entered bids for many of the contracts. Black firms simply were not available for hire, the

study said.

"Sure they are," contradicts Burch. "ODOT uses a very narrow set of criteria for availability. They look at your firm and say you haven't bid on the last 10 projects so you're not available."

From the contractor's point of view, Burch says, putting your name on the list of certified highway contractors or bidding on ODOT projects can seem like a waste of time, when you have never secured a state transportation contract and don't know anyone who has been awarded a contract.

"It doesn't mean you are not available," Burch says. "It means you've given up bidding—you're discouraged."

Other disparity studies use a much broader definition of availability, Burch said. They use everyone in the certification database and even those who choose not to be certified, but are licensed and qualified to do the work.

Cobb disagrees. If construction firms want to contract with the state they should follow the rules and register, he said.

"You cannot give up," he says. "A firm basically has to be breathing and registered to be eligible for state contracts. If you bid you stand a good chance of getting the contract, but if you don't bid you definitely won't get one."

## Mooz-Lom

continued from page 5

such an accomplished actress give you a different perspective when you direct a music video?

NL: Directing music videos is all about capturing images. I think my experiences in

front of the camera have enhanced that because I know how to make other women look beautiful: from hair to makeup to wardrobe. So, I feel that I have a gift with imaging, and that's kind of fundamental to the music video process.

KW: Judyth Piazza says: I would love to hear about your time on The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air. Were the scripts written with a predominately white audience or an African-American audience in mind? Or was this not a factor?

NL: I don't think it was a factor at all. Funny is funny: black, white, yellow, pur-

ple. Funny is funny!

KW: Ola Jackson asks: How do you feel about the number of black actors who are often paired with white leading ladies in movies, such as Will Smith, Wesley Snipes and Denzel Washington?

NL: It is what it is. As long as the acting is good, I can appreciate it. It would certainly be great to see more films featuring the black family and showing that we are capable of having that unit strong and present and beautiful, because that's so much of who we really are. For me, that's missing sometimes when I watch films. But since Denzel and Will are superstars, studio execs don't necessarily see them as black. They see them as superstars. I suspect they pair them with a white or a Latina star because that takes the pressure off their having to market the movie as a black film, which in my opinion is completely ridiculous. But we still have a lot of growing and maturing to do in terms of how we view

black people, the black family and black filmmaking, because we shouldn't be narrowly pigeonholed. We are not just one thing. We have so many different voices and experiences. And on the flip side, there are black men who are madly in love with white women. God bless them, if that's what works for them. I just hope that we can strike a balance that portrays black folks and the black family in a light that's not extreme. Those are the types of characters that I find myself attracted to.

KW: Marcia Evans says: I'm such a fan and proud of yours. I can envision you doing a project addressing many of the concerns of black folks. Have you ever considered creating a project like "Single Ladies," the upcoming movie that Queen Latifah plans to turn into a series?

NL: I am in constant search for that project that speaks to me personally. And when all the pieces come together properly, it'll happen.

**Caldwell's, Hennessey, Goetsch & McGee Funeral Home**



David E. Hinton  
Funeral Director  
20 NE 14th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232  
503-232-4111  
Fax 503-231-1586  
E Fax 503-328-7012  
david.hinton@sci-us.com



shop online

**NEW SEASONS MARKET**

**NOW DELIVERING**

Your favorite neighborhood grocery store now delivers groceries right to your home or office.



[www.newseasonsmarket.com](http://www.newseasonsmarket.com)  
you click. we deliver. (or pull up for pick up)

**MY FATHER'S HOUSE MINISTRIES**

**It's Time to Awaken Your Miracle!**



Pastors Jerry & Annie Gutierrez

Join us for an anointed Miracle Service! Come and receive your Miracle and your breakthrough!

**Friday, Feb 25th at 7pm**

**New Song Community Center**  
2511 NE MLK Blvd.  
Corner of NE MLK Blvd and Russell Street  
Doors open at 6pm for every service.

For directions or more information, call 503-488-5481 or log on to [www.mfimportland.com](http://www.mfimportland.com)