



# THE SKANNER™

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



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## County's Black Men Speak Up

### Commissioner Loretta Smith reaches out to underserved residents

By Brian Stimson  
Of *The Skanner News*

When it comes to budget decision making, there's an old saying: The squeaky wheel gets the grease.

And last week, when Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith held a meeting directed at African American males from the ages of 12 to 25, there were a lot of squeaky wheels.

The meeting hall was packed. Drawing in many more – and older — men than intended.

"They felt they had something to say," she told *The Skanner News*.

And say they did. For more than two and a half hours both attendees and scheduled experts talked about many of the long-standing issues plaguing the Black community and what was needed of government, individuals, schools and the community to help solve the diverse range of problems.

Many of the men were students, expressing their frustrations with a school system that didn't challenge them enough; students who were unaware of the health services provided free of charge; difficulty in finding mentors; frustration with classmates who didn't anticipate their future, difficulty of landing a summer job, etc.

For many expert panelists, there was no one or simple solution.

Dr. Harold Briggs, Portland State University: "We don't have skills for success embedded in education systems or spheres in life we frequent."

Dr. Daymond Glenn, George Fox University: "Everyone's looking for a simplistic answer. If we just do this, our problems will be solved, if we just do that, our problems will be solved. Let me tell you something, the problems plaguing our community are complex. It's going to take a lot of different answers to solve our problems."

Aldis Hodge, actor on "Leverage": "You have to be willing to sacrifice, look at your-

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# BACKPACK DROP



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEAN LOOMIS

Local Delta Sigma Theta sorority member Jean Loomis was with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers this last week when they dropped off school supplies, toys and treats during Operation Backpack Drop.

"The opportunity to experience the Afghan culture and to show a different view of Americans to young children was a great way to spend Mother's Day," said Loomis, an administrative assistant here deployed from the Portland District Corps of Engineers. "I hope that by showing the young people we are concerned about their well being we made a lasting impact. I can't think of a better way to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people than to help the children. The smiles and thanks we received were great Mother's Day gifts."

## Local Delta Helps Afghan Kids

### Operation Backpack Drop provides supplies, money for schools

Jean Loomis assists the Army Corps of Engineers to give orphans school supplies

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Aged 5 to 18, the children are all considered orphans because their parents are either dead or disabled.

Each of the 160 students that attend the all-boys Ostad Khalil Ullah Khalili Orphans Education Center located in Kabul received a new backpack filled with pens, paper, pencils, notebooks, crayons, erasers, rulers, sharpeners, toys, a puzzle and candy delivered by members of the Afghanistan Engineer District-North.

Many of the donations came from AED-N member's home districts, like Sharon Schwab from Waynesville, Ohio who is a senior electrical engineer technician over special projects here with the Quality Assurance Branch and deployed from the Huntington, W. Va District Corps of Engineers.

"I sent out emails and posted on Facebook that we were looking for puzzle donations,"

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## Army Will Review Medal of Honor Bid

### Will Black WWI hero finally receive America's highest military award?

By Helen Silvis  
Of *The Skanner News*

Last weekend, Sen. Charles Schumer of New York sent a letter to Army Sec. John McHugh requesting America's highest military award, the Medal of Honor, for WWI hero Sgt. Henry Lincoln Johnson. It was 93 years to the day after Johnson fought off a band of 20 enemy

soldiers in the dead of night. A member of the famed 369th, the Harlem Hellfighters, Johnson fought on after his rifle jammed and despite his wounds, using his bolo knife, rifle butt and bare hands to save a comrade and repel the attack. PHOTO: Sgt. Johnson's son Tuskegee Airman Herman Johnson (right) accepting the Distinguished Service Cross for his father with Vietnam Veteran John Howe (left)

"On this momentous occasion of the 93rd anniversary of the legendary Battle of Henry Johnson, I am deeply honored and humbled to recommend this brave and selfless hero of World War I for our nation's highest award: the Medal of Honor," writes Sen. Schumer in the letter.

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