



THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



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Black Student Unions

Youth leaders are finding new support in BSU organizations

By Bruce Poinsette
Special To *The Skanner News*

In recent years, as Portland has seen the loss of organizations for youth of color, Black Student Unions have taken on greater importance in instilling cultural awareness and encouraging young people to be leaders.

“When you lose youth oriented groups and initiatives those losses have impact,” says Madison High School BSU co-adviser Wade Nkrumah. “When you have something to fill the void it is inspiring and hopeful.”

In an effort to foster youth-led initiatives, the Urban League of Portland sponsors a BSU Leadership Summit Saturday, Nov. 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Grant High School. The event will also be open to Latino Club students.

Coordinators say inviting both groups of young people to participate is important because African American and Latino students face similar challenges academically. They say it will also give all the students a chance to network.

“It’s the first time anything like this has happened in the region,” says Urban League Civic Engagement Manager Inger McDowell.

She says the goal of the event is for youth to produce their own initiatives to improve education and get more involved in community service.

According to McDowell, the idea grew from the previous Legislative Action Day in Salem, where students and community members interacted with legislators on issues that affected the Black community. Students from Portland area schools, including Grant, Franklin, Cleveland and Jefferson participated.

Since then, the Urban League, BSU advisers and students from Portland high schools have sought to coordinate the upcoming Leadership Summit.

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RIOT STANDOFF



PHOTO BY LISA LOVING

Portland Police and the Occupy Portland movement clashed Sunday as city officials wiped the two-month-old encampment off the map. The shut-down did not stop activists from protesting Wednesday afternoon, when a planned Portland State University walkout in support of the movement triggered arrests and a large General Assembly meeting in the rain at Pioneer Courthouse Square. More protests are planned Thursday, Nov. 17.

Are Newcomers Old Enemies?

Author speaks on origins of conflict for immigrants from Africa

Growing numbers of people from the Horn of Africa have fled war and violence by immigrating to the United States. But although Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Somalis share borders and history, they also come from centuries of conflict that made them enemies to one another. Here in the Northwest, they often find themselves living together as neighbors with their children meeting as classmates in school. In her new book ‘Seeking Salaam,’ author and former

University of Washington lecturer Sandra Chait talks about the challenges facing East Africans in the Pacific Northwest.

The Skanner News: What’s your connection to East Africa?

Sandra Chait: I used to teach African Literature at the University of Washington and I had this Eritrean friend who used to speak in glowing terms about her country. She’d tell me how everyone had worked together, united, to bring the

country to independence and how they were working together yet again to develop Eritrea. There was no homelessness there, she said, no beggars on the street, and unlike in many African countries, the government wasn’t corrupt.

She persuaded me and two colleagues to go out there and see for ourselves, which we did. At the time, 2001, we were incredibly impressed—things have changed since then – but then we were impressed enough that we formed a partnership

between the University of Asmara and the University of Washington. We worked with Asmara in different disciplines: computer science, nursing, and in my case literature.

TSN: How did you get the idea for a book about East Africans in the Northwest?

SC: I was teaching an online course with an Eritrean colleague from Asmara and my students were able to meet his students through the internet and

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States Worry About Consumer Rip-Offs

Former homeowners could be robbed twice -- by banks and cons

By Lisa Loving
Of *The Skanner News*

Federal officials say they are actively investigating consumer complaints on home foreclosures, but state Attorneys General are sounding the alarm to counter small-time fraudsters who may try to rip you off by pretending to help.

Washington Attorney General Rob

McKenna’s office is taking an active role in warning consumers – who may already have been ripped-off by their home mortgage servicers – not to get robbed a second time by opportunistic con artists posing as government agencies but charging thousands of dollars for mortgage negotiations.

Established as part of a negotiated settlement between the federal Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and more than

a dozen mortgage companies in April, the independent foreclosure review is designed “to correct deficiencies in their servicing and foreclosure processes and to engage independent firms to conduct a multi-faceted independent review of foreclosure actions that occurred in 2009 and 2010,” according to a statement.

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