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FAIR CONTRACTING



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Members of the business community, veterans and community activists visited the offices of Senators Murray and Cantwell to present evidence of the low utilization of African American Contractors on Federally funded construction projects and to insist that the 1964 Civil Rights Act is enforced.

Pushed Out, Left Behind?

'Kiddie racial profiling' feeds achievement gap, prison system

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Part 1: Defining the Problem

Tamberlee Tarver's son Camron has been suspended from his North Portland school nine times since last October.

He's run away from teachers, tried to run away from school, spit on a teacher and thrown papers on the floor.

Camron has a short list of disabilities impacting his coordination and his ability to focus – and now has been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder.

A kindergartner, Cameron is five years old.

"I'm currently looking for a therapist to undo some of the damage that's been done so far – because my son's turned into a whole different person," Tarver says.

Who knew that little kids could be kicked out of school? But a 2005 study by Yale University found that in Oregon, preschoolers are expelled at twice the rate of school-aged kids, and that black toddlers are expelled at about twice the rate of their white counterparts – even higher than the national average

Not only are the littlest African American students banished from classes at higher rates than their teenaged counterparts, but nationwide, Black students are punished with classroom dismissals at a far higher rate than any other group throughout the k-12 system – especially if they're in special ed programs.

Yet, many researchers say, there is no evidence that Black kids act out more than any others.

Despite the fact that the dynamic has been known and recognized for generations, many educational policymakers have been slow to move on the evidence that hundreds of millions of dollars could be saved by state and local governments with one simple policy: use suspensions and expulsions as

Investigation into Soldier Care

Army medical center commander removed during PTSD probe

SEATTLE (AP) — The Army has removed the head of the Madigan Army Medical Center in Washington state during an investigation into whether soldiers had diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder reversed to reduce medical costs.

"This is a common practice during ongoing investigations and nothing more," Maj. Gen. Phillip Volpe, who heads the Western Region Medical Command, said Monday about the removal of Col. Dallas Homas.

Homas is a West Point graduate whose career has included deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, where he served as command surgeon. His military honors include two Bronze Stars, The Seattle Times reported.

"I remain optimistic that the truth will come out with these investigations," Homas said. "I don't feel that I or my team have done anything wrong."

Homas was appointed commander at Madigan in March 2011. The center is on Joint Base Lewis-McChord near

Tacoma and serves thousands of soldiers who have been to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The focus of the Army Medical Command investigation is a Madigan forensic psychiatric team that has the lead role in screening soldiers being considered for medical retirement due to PTSD, a condition that results from experiencing or seeing a traumatic event, such as a battlefield casualty.

Symptoms can include recurrent nightmares, flashbacks, irritability and feeling distant

from other people. Soldiers diagnosed with PTSD gain at least a 50 percent rating of disability, and qualify for pensions, family health insurance and other financial benefits.

In 2011, an ombudsman investigated complaints from soldiers who said the forensic psychiatric team had reversed earlier diagnoses of PTSD and tagged some of them as possible malingers.

The ombudsman also wrote a memo about a lecture in which a

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Celebrity Journalism: Women's Roles

'The corporately defined standards of beauty remain very narrow,

By Sean Duncan
Special To The Skanner News

A journey to the grocery-store cashier often involves a trip down the celebrity magazine hall of shame. Whether you enjoy it or can't believe the hype, you are showered with sensational headlines about the most intimate details of celebrities' lives.

Susan Douglas, author and professor at University of Michigan, discussed this at the University of Washington on Feb. 15 in a special lecture entitled, "Starstruck: The explosion of celebrity journalism and corrosion of the nightly news since 9/11."

"Beginning in the 1990s and accelerating wildly in the first decade of the 21st century, celebrity culture has moved from the margins of the mass media, into its oracles

and ventricles," Douglas said, contrasting it with the decline in international news content.

Douglas said one reason celebrity culture became popular is because, after 9/11, women were not celebrated in the world of politics, but their opinions and presence were valuable in celebrity gossip culture.

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