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Dispute Over Expenses

Brothers and Sisters Keepers asked to return city funds

By Helen Silvis
Of *The Skanner News*

The gang outreach nonprofit Brothers and Sisters Keepers is no longer contracted with the City of Portland. The city and the nonprofit say they have ended the contract, "by mutual agreement."

But a letter and documentation obtained by The Skanner News reveals the nonprofit's use of city funds is at issue.

City Auditor James Van Dyke wrote April 17 to Tonya Dickens, BSK's director and a longtime gang outreach worker.

"I am writing to inform you that the Mayor's Office of Youth Violence Prevention on behalf of the City of Portland demands the return of \$20,934.68 in funds that have not been spent in accordance with the above-mentioned grant agreement," writes Van Dyke in the letter.

Dickens, who spoke to *The Skanner News* before receiving the letter, said she did not want to be quoted directly about the dissolution of the contract. She said the nonprofit would continue its gang outreach work, paid or unpaid. She said the city wanted too much documentation on how the grant was spent.

The entire 2011-12 budget for the Office of Youth Violence Prevention was \$592,272. Brothers and Sisters Keepers were budgeted to receive \$96,813, for outreach workers, phones and administration costs.

But a budget reconciliation document from the city shows that Brothers and Sisters Keepers reported spending more on cell phones and personnel than it could document. The nonprofit's documented expenses were \$75,878.

The city currently funds 10 gang outreach workers through five different agencies. Three outreach workers formerly employed by BSK under the city's program have been transferred to Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center.

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THE RICH & THE REST



Tavis Smiley and Cornell West answered questions at the Neptune Theatre in Seattle April 24 as part of their "The Rich and the Rest of Us: A Poverty Manifesto Tour."

The Skanner News Goes to New York

Juvenile justice fellowship serves as focus for 2012 reporting project

By Helen Silvis
Of *The Skanner News*

During the last five years New York state has closed 18 youth prisons. Some 900 young people incarcerated in those prisons were placed in home-based and home-like treatment programs, within their own communities. And under Gov. Cuomo's "Close to Home" initiative, most youth offenders will follow suit.

"Only the most dangerous

young people who pose a risk to public safety should be in our juvenile justice system," says Commissioner Gladys Carrion, who leads the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. "The vast majority are not a risk to public safety and we had evidence that low-level interventions were more effective."

Carrion spoke at a symposium, "Kids Behind Bars: Where's the Justice in America's Juvenile Justice System? Covering the Juvenile Justice

Reform Debate in 2012." This reporter, Helen Silvis, represented *The Skanner News* as one of 31 journalists who received fellowships to attend the symposium, at John Jay College's Center on Media, Crime and Justice in New York City.

The journalists represented news outlets around the country, publications as varied as *The Salt Lake Tribune*, *The New York Daily News*, *The New York Times*, *Witness LA*, NPR, *The Baltimore Sun*, the Center for Public Integrity, the Juvenile

Justice Information Exchange and the New England Center for Investigative Journalism. Each publication, including *The Skanner News*, will develop original work about children and youth in the justice system over the next year.

Veteran investigative journalists Stephen Handelman and Joe Domanick organized the event, highlighting common issues affecting youth across the country, as well as efforts to reform juvenile justice systems and

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ACLU Sues Border Patrol Over Traffic

'People are stopped based solely on their appearance, ethnicity'

By Manuel Valdes
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit Thursday against the U.S. Border Patrol seeking to bar agents from making traffic stops, saying people are being pulled over and questioned for the way they look and without reasonable suspicion.

The lawsuit stems from tensions between immigrants and the expanded presence of Border Patrol agents on Washington state's Olympic Peninsula, which shares no land border with Canada.

"People are being stopped based solely on their appearance and ethnicity. This is unlawful and contrary to American values," said Matt Adams, legal director of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, which

also joined the lawsuit. "No one in a car should be stopped and interrogated by government agents unless the law enforcement officer has a legal basis to do so."

The ACLU and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project filed the lawsuit on behalf of three peninsula residents who have been stopped by Border Patrol agents.

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