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First Mini URAs Get Funds

Chase Bank donates \$50,000 to new 'prosperity initiative'

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

J.P. Morgan Chase Bank has made a \$50,000 donation to the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative to support development in six Portland neighborhoods. Created by the Portland Development Commission, the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative created six small urban renewal districts across Portland's Eastside.

Each neighborhood is creating a development plan that aims to improve the environment for small business, to spur job growth and increase livability for residents. The six prosperity initiative districts are: Our 42nd Avenue; Cully Blvd.; Parkrose; 82nd Ave. at Division, (also known as the Jade District); Division Midway; and Rosewood.

"I want to thank Chase, and I really do think it's going to be the first of many donations," said PDC executive director, Patrick Quinton at PCC's Workforce Development Center on Northeast Killingsworth Street. "We'll look back and thank Chase for being the first to step forward."

The Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative was created to help struggling neighborhoods using urban renewal money, with the goals of growing jobs, supporting small businesses and filling in vacant space. The development commission supplied each district with seed money of \$10,000 to get started, and with technical assistance to develop a plan. The commission also asked each district to raise \$30,000 in private sector funding, and promised matching funds to help run the program and to hire district managers.

Instead of competing against one another for corporate funds, the prosperity districts decided to solicit donations as a group.

"We've been very supportive of that effort and we think it's right to have one voice for this whole initiative, Quinton said. "We hope this is the first of many such announcements like this."

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GET READY



PHOTO BY NAOMI PIERCE

FOCUS EAST presented Get Ready at the Midland Library Saturday, Aug. 4. The event brought in people interested in gaining information and connecting with neighbors to discuss some of the issues facing East Portlanders. Three workshops on Crime Prevention, Business, and Health were offered, and Multnomah County provided blood pressure checks. Sponsored by The Skanner News Group and East Portland Action Plan.

VOA Program on Youth Re-Entry

Young men leaving prison get help from others who've done it too

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

CPR stands for Community Partnerships Reinvestment, but it's tempting to think of it more in the medical sense, as CPR for young offenders. Because, while it doesn't actually kickstart hearts that have stopped beating, it does seem to stop young men from throwing their lives away.

DeAndre Frison is completely open about his troubled teen years. He was just 13 when he

was sentenced to juvenile detention for assault. And just before his 18th birthday he went to prison for shooting at a car full of rival gang members. Legally an adult when he started his 60-month mandatory sentence, he says, inside he was just a boy.

"It was definitely scary, the uncertainty of what would happen," he says. "I'm not really a man, though I am in the eyes of the state."

Released in 2009, Frison was one of a group considered at high-risk for reoffending: young

people under 25 who have a history of crime and incarceration as a youth. But in 2010, he graduated from a program designed to reduce that risk, the CPR re-entry program, run by Volunteers of America.

Today, Frison holds down two jobs. From 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. he is a tradesman with a local Steel company. From there he goes back to CPR — this time as a mentor, helping other young men leaving prison.

"He's a really solid young man and I am so proud of him,"

says Kathy Sevos, the CPR program director. "These young men are really beating the odds. It's tough out there."

CPR stands for Community Partnerships Reinvestment, but it's tempting to think of it more in the medical sense, as CPR for young offenders. Because, while it doesn't actually kickstart hearts that have stopped beating, this program does seem to stop young men from throwing their lives away. A five-year follow up study by Portland

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EASA Program Helps Mental Illness Now

Contrary to popular belief, there is help for psychosis -- and it works

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

Plenty of us have days when we feel as if we're losing our minds. Three out of every hundred people, won't just feel that way; they will slide into a psychosis. The younger you are, the higher the risk. Teens and young adults are most likely to be hit with psychosis. That's the bad news.

But the good news is that two of every three people who develop psychosis, will recover completely. They will never have another attack. And it gets better. That one person in 100 who has repeated bouts of psychotic illness, usually can learn to cope with the symptoms and live a normal life.

Yet mental illness gets such a bad rap that most of us falsely believe that the most extreme cases are typical, says Neil Falk

M.D., a psychiatrist with the Multnomah County's Early Assessment and Support Alliance, known as EASA.

"The fear for families is that when they hear the words psychosis or schizophrenia, they assume their child is or family member is going to become a homeless street person," Falk says.

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