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RESOURCES



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Tone' Armstrong tries her hand at assembling an airplane part at the Boeing table during a Youth Education, Career & Resource Fair on Feb. 15, at the Rainier Community Center. Dozens of employers, colleges and other resources were represented at the event.

Court Violence Penalties

Legislature considers more charges for courthouse assaults

By Gene Johnson
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — It's already a felony to attack judges, court employees and county clerks doing their jobs in Washington State.

Now lawmakers want to make it a felony to assault anyone else at a courthouse, too.

Recognizing that many people who visit courthouses are stressed out or scared, Republicans and Democrats in Olympia have introduced bills in the House and Senate that would automatically elevate charges of fourth-degree assault — a gross misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail — to third-degree assault, a felony punishable by up to 5 years in prison, when an attack happens at a courthouse.

The measures would also give judges the option of imposing extra time behind bars for more serious assaults.

"Courthouses by their very nature are dangerous places," Attorney General Bob Ferguson testified during a hearing in the House last week. "We believe all citizens should have equal protection as they access our courts — victims, witnesses, jurors and family members."

Two cases in Washington state in the past year highlight how volatile people can be when they're in the courthouse, Ferguson said. Last March, a man shot a Grays Harbor County sheriff's deputy with her own weapon at the courthouse in Montesano, then stabbed a judge who tried to save her. And last month, a man assaulted a plainclothes police detective at a courthouse in Kent after the detective asked him to stop intimidating witnesses.

Posting signs warning people that they could face enhanced penalties for an assault could help deter courthouse violence, Ferguson argued.

Though courthouse attacks remain rare, he referenced a report by a Minnesota-based company that provides court security con-

New Home in the Central District

Ernestine Anderson Place offers a new lease on life for the houseless

By Elliot Suhr
Special To The Skanner News

For homeless veterans and senior citizens looking for a second chance, Seattle's Ernestine Anderson Place offers a new lease on life and a place to call their own.

The facility, which opened its doors Feb. 8, is a newly built low-income housing development in Seattle's Central District. It will provide permanent housing for 60 homeless indi-

viduals, age 55 and older, who have some type of mental disability or substance abuse issue. Residents will have their own bed, bathroom and kitchen.

The building, located at 2010 S. Jackson St., is dedicated to Ernestine Anderson, a jazz icon who grew up in the Central District. "She was not only a great musician, but she also opened up her home to hundreds of people that were homeless, that needed a place to stay," says Zena Dodson, area manager for the Low Income Housing Insti-

tute, a Seattle nonprofit that was instrumental in developing the facility.

As of now the building is still vacant, but Dodson hopes to fill it by the end of April. For the chronically homeless — who have spent years or even decades on the street — Ernestine Anderson Place will be a dramatic change from the makeshift, temporary arrangements they've dealt with to survive.

"It's going to be such a great honor to see them when they

come in and they see that they have a bed and it's not a cot. It's a twin-sized bed. With covers," says Dodson.

Homelessness in King County is on the rise. However, many day centers for homeless people in the area are facing funding cuts. Without crucial resources, some of the most vulnerable members of the homeless populations—the elderly—could be affected. The Low Income Housing Institute hopes to slow the upward trend by offering

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Rappers Launch New Photo Show

Geo named Artist-in-Residence for Town Hall Seattle

By Simon Thwaits
Special To The Skanner News

You may have heard Geo's music as half of the Seattle-based hip-hop group Blue Scholars, but now he's also working in photography for the "Rappers W/ Cameras" project and is the artist-in-residence at Town Hall Seattle.

Geo is short for Geologic and his full

name, George Quibuyen, but he is also known as Prometheus Brown.

Another local rapper, Thig Nat (real name Gathigi Gishuru), of The Physics, founded the project with Quibuyen, which includes both a photoblog at rapperswithcameras.tumblr.com and the publication of photo zines with the same title.

"It goes back to when The Physics had a studio in the old OK Hotel," Quibuyen told

me over the phone, talking about when Blue Scholars were working on some songs with The Physics. "During that process Thig and I would always bring cameras around."

They also took in the First Thursday Seattle Art Walk in Pioneer Square and took inspiration from how music and visual art were happening at the same time. Eventual-

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