

## Contractors

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Both Burch and Posey know the minority contracting landscape better than most. But they have played different roles as advocates. As a consultant Burch works on projects from the design stage forward, often for years before construction begins.

She recommends contractors based on their capacity, bonding and interest in different types of work, she says. And as an advocate, she often helps link NAMC members to projects in which she has zero financial interest.

"I don't believe we are successful unless everyone is working," she says.

Posey too has been a vocal, but more controversial advocate, opposing for example, the prevailing wage law that requires all contractors to provide union wages and benefits on public projects.

Currently Posey has retired his trucking firm Workhorse Construction.

Burch, Rahming and Colas say they don't want to go on record about the leadership disagreement.

But Burch admits she was blindsided at Posey's opposition, and hurt at the suggestion that she is not an equal member of NAMCO, after spending many years championing minority contractors.

After resigning, Burch says she received emails from more than 30 supporters, praising her work for the organization. Several said they were considering resigning from NAMCO. Some asked for their member-

ship fees to be returned.

Over the years, Burch has secured millions of dollars of business for Portland's minority contractors, who line up to praise her.

Take Nathaniel Hartley, a contractor who specializes in plasterwork.

"Both Faye and Maurice have helped my company tremendously," Hartley told The Skanner. "I received two major projects because of the work they did."

"I don't believe we are successful unless everyone is working"

Hartley says he has benefited from free classes Rahming offers contractors. "He will sit down and teach you whatever you need to know," he says. "Using the computer to improve your estimates, job costing and blueprint reading; how to understand contracts: a lot of people go to that class for free.

"And Faye works tirelessly, relentlessly to build business for contractors. She's one of the main reasons for NAMC's success."

Evan Williams of Tri Star Flagging and

SBG Construction, emailed The Skanner with a letter of support for Burch and Rahming.

"Faye and Maurice have taken time out of their day to go with me into meetings . . . , he wrote. "I cannot emphasize strongly enough how her support and encouragement has been what we needed to get past some very trying times and has helped us keep our doors open. In fact, our largest project to date has been due to Faye Burch working to get us that contract.

"They have worked behind the scenes in an amazing way to get work for NAMC members and work that did not directly benefit them."

Vicqui Guevara, a former board officer, and owner of the nursery and landscaping firm, Valley Growers, says she spent three months as NAMC president. The volunteer job consumed 30 percent of her time.

"I'm so sorry all this is happening," she says. "Maurice and Faye have unselfishly given to this organization. Faye has been a very good advocate for me. She's the brains of the organization. She's untiring and dedicated. I've known her work through the night to help people."

Guevara says she hopes NAMC members will give Colas a chance. It's important that NAMCO continue to succeed, she says, because minority contractors need those opportunities to show they can do excellent



Andrew Colas

work and compete at the highest level.

"Our members need a chance to build their capacity," she says. "We can do the job; we have the manpower, bondability and we have the integrity. We are competitive."

Despite the controversy, Colas has nothing but praise for both Burch and Posey. They both deserve a lot of credit for their work over the years, he says. "Faye's been a tireless advocate for the organization. She did a lot of things that opened my eyes to the disparities that exist. As a young person coming into this industry I definitely appreciate the work of all the people who have come before me."

Maurice Rahming says minority contractors have made progress, citing projects such as the Gresham Courthouse, the Sellwood Bridge and TriMet light rail construction.

## March

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Martin Luther King's dream and want to make their voices heard for equity for all Americans.

And Michael Alexander, executive director of the Urban League of Portland, says we know that action is needed locally as well as nationally.

"In Portland, unemployment for African Americans is often double the rate of the majority population, and a 2012 federal inquiry found that Police Bureau engaged in a pattern or practice of excessive force," he says. "The issues that compelled the 1963 March of Washington for Jobs and Freedom, including lack economic opportunity and police brutality, are still the pressing issues of today."

Between 200,000 and 300,000 people rallied at the mall in the U.S. capitol for the

1963 March on Washington. They came to demand jobs and freedom. They left with the words of Martin Luther King Junior's dream speech lighting up their hearts and minds. And they went to work for change.

One result of the mass protest was the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and

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the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

"This was the culmination of the struggles of the modern civil rights movement that

started in 1955 with Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott and led eventually to the Birmingham campaign," Rev. Haynes said. "The end of segregation, the voting rights act, President Obama in the White House: That would not have happened without the push of the civil rights

movement."

But as communities across the country celebrate how far we have come since the

60s, they also will be highlighting the continuing injustices and recent setbacks that have placed civil rights back on the national agenda. "For me as we reflect on the issues addressed by the March on Aug 28th 1963: Jobs, police brutality, education, housing, economic opportunity, I can't help have a heavy heart for the failure of my generation to pass on those lessons to our kids," says JoAnn Hardesty, of the Campaign to end the New Jim Crow.

"Today these issues are still the unfinished business of the civil rights movement and we must re-dedicate ourselves to protecting the civil rights of everyone because we see how quickly civil rights disappear under a culture of fear."

A broad range of civil rights organizations are sponsoring the march.

## Muange

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around," she says. "He was funny and encouraging. And he had a lot of friends. He knew how to make people feel good about themselves. That's why they wanted to be around him.

"Michael had a strong faith and he kept his word," she says.

A nurse, Grace explains how and why her family lost their beloved son and brother so suddenly last Tuesday evening. "Simon came home, but Michael's friend's parents wanted to take them to eat."

At the restaurant, Michael barely had time to take a sip of water before he slumped over," she said. His companions performed CPR and Michael briefly started breathing again, but gasped for air and shook so hard they feared he was having a seizure. Paramedics rushed Michael to Adventist Hospital, but it was too late to save him.

Grace says the family, who are devout Christians, prayed from 6 pm to 11 pm

before they could allow the medical examiner to take his body. Later the medical examiner explained that a heart problem, present since birth, had caused his death.

"Every time his heart beat, it would pinch his left coronary artery," Grace explains.

The shaking was not a seizure but caused by ventricular tachycardia, a problem that might have been reversed if the restaurant had had a defibrillator.

"I think every public space should have a defibrillator," she says.

While not common, the death of young athletes from heart abnormalities is a known problem. Immediate use of a defibrillator can save the person's life.

The death of Eddie Barnett Jr. in 2005 prompted his mother Teena Johnson to launch a campaign for defibrillators to be installed in all Portland high schools. The campaign reached that goal in 2009, and in 2010 the Oregon legislature passed a law

requiring defibrillators on all high schools and college campuses.

Businesses of 50,000 square-feet, or more, where 25 or more people congregate, also are required to have defibrillators.

Michael's father Pastor Simon Muange, came to the United States in 1995 after working with missionaries in Congo. The rest of the family left Kinshasa to join him in 1999. Despite the culture shock of moving to America from Africa, the family settled in Portland and quickly learned English. Their first languages were Lingala and French.

Michael's elder siblings all went on to college. Rebecca and Grace graduated from George Fox University. Simon attends Portland State University. His younger sister, Dorcas is following Michael to Warner Pacific. Divine, 13, attends Ron Russell Middle School. The youngest boys, Andrew, 11, and Emmanuel, 10, attend Mill

Park Elementary School.

A viewing will be held 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday Aug. 9 at Caldwell's Hennessey and Goetsch 20 N.E. 14th Ave., Portland 97232. Memorial service is 10-11 a.m. Saturday at the same location. After the service mourners will head to the burial at Skyline Memorial Garden, 4101 N.W. Skyline Blvd. Portland.

A reception will follow at 3 p.m. in the IRCO gymnasium, 10301 N.E. Glisan St.

A fund has been created to help the Muange family pay for the funeral. You can contribute directly to the family or at any Wells Fargo bank. Tell the cashier you want to contribute to Michael Ndanga Muange donation fund. Wells Fargo bank account number: 511500507 5586971839

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