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Passage Program in Limbo

PCC officials pull plug on respected community educator

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Some 300 students attended the first-ever Portland Community College Black Student Success Summit on March 1 – a resounding victory for organizer Noni Causey, director of the Passage to Higher Education program.

Both the conference and the Passage program are Causey's brainchildren, developed over the past four years to help students of color navigate the college system and stay in school.

Imagine Causey's dismay, then, when she reported to work on Monday, March 3, to be told that all her funding was used up and that her services with the program are no longer required.

In fact, PCC officials say the program is not dead and that Causey has not been fired; they do however admit that there is no funding for its activities, and the rest of its current staff are on the verge of running through their funding as well.

The Passage program, as profiled in PCC's magazine, offers tutoring, mentoring and scholarship application help to students, free of charge, on the Cascade Campus.

Designed specifically as a culturally competent focus on African and African American college students, the program was named for the Middle Passage that kidnapped Africans endured during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

"The Passage grew out of a focus group of female students of color that Causey assembled in 2010," according to PCC's article.

"It's really about, 'Can I please have a place where I can talk about my fears and insecurities? Can I have a safe place where I can say I'm scared without being judged?'" Causey says in the article.

The notice to Causey came about 72 hours after newly-hired PCC President Jeremy Brown assured *The Skanner News* of his commitment to students of color and diversity at the institution as he seeks to fill the

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WINNERS



Garfield High School Basketball coach Ed Haskins and senior point guard Tramaine Isabell stand by the trophy they won as Washington State 4A champs. Isabell was also the MVP of the State tournament. Experts say that Black teens and preteens targeted by racist cyberbullying are vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and related problems over time.

Racial Bullying Impacts Youth

Expert on racist cyberbullying seeks solutions for kids and families

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

News last week that Garfield High School's varsity basketball team was targeted with racist Twitter comments from students at an opposing team's school caused outrage, followed by shrugging. What is there to do about such things? It happens every day in modern society so – why worry about it? It turns out that for kids and their families there are plenty of reasons

to worry, including poor academic performance and depression.

Brendesha Tynes, PhD, of the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California, is one of the nation's foremost experts on racist cyberbullying and the role the internet plays in child development. A researcher on educational psychology since the early 1990s, Tynes' work on the issue offers a fascinating glimpse at the long-term mental health impacts online

racist harassment has on children and youths.

The Skanner News: This is the kind of topic that many of us assume is more researched than it is. Can you talk about your work and how you are digging into this growing problem?

Brendesha Tynes: I have conducted a longitudinal study of online racial discrimination, and we can now look at three waves of data and see if over time these experiences are

impacting our kids' academic performance, their mental health, and their behavior. Interestingly we've just analyzed waves one and two, and we showed that experiencing online racial discrimination at time one, is associated with increased depressive symptoms at time two, which is one year later.

Increased anxiety, and increased problem behavior – aggressive behavior. It's not longitudinally related to GPA,

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ACA Cuts Best Quality Cancer Centers

Hospitals in a quandary over lack of Affordable Care Act coverage

Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some of America's best cancer hospitals are off-limits to many of the people now signing up for coverage under the nation's new health care program.

Doctors and administrators say they're concerned. So are some state insurance reg-

ulators.

An Associated Press survey found examples coast to coast. Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is excluded by five out of eight insurers in Washington's insurance exchange. MD Anderson Cancer Center says it's in less than half of the plans in the Houston area. Memorial Sloan-Kettering is included by two of nine insurers in New York City and has out-of-network agree-

ments with two more.

In all, only four of 19 nationally recognized comprehensive cancer centers that responded to AP's survey said patients have access through all the insurance companies in their states' exchanges.

Some state insurance regulators see a problem.

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