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Pacific NW

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our new regional edition,
featuring more news and
local information.

Head Start Uproar

Albina program questions state funding decisions

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

The Albina Head Start community has been deeply shaken by the partial loss of grant funding through the new state agency in charge of early childhood education programs.

Started in 2012 as part of Gov. John Kitzhaber's education reform crusade – and the over-arching effort initially headed by now-departed “education czar” Rudy Crew – the new Early Learning System headed by Washington resident Jada Rupley has launched a reorganization of how preschools and kindergartens are funded and evaluated using regional “hubs” to coordinate services.

Rupley, brought out of retirement by Gov. Kitzhaber to start up the new preschool and kindergarten department and its Early Learning Council, leaves the post in mid-August to go back into retirement. Her successor has not been named.

Last week Albina Head Start officials learned they had been graded next to last by the Council's evaluation panel among statewide Head Start programs applying for the “expansion” component of a state money pot designed to expand the number of seats in Head Start classrooms.

It is the first time since the state started funding Head Start programs in the 1980s that they have failed to win an expansion grant, Head Start Director Ron Herndon says.

Rupley told *The Skanner News* this week that Albina's grant application was “not competitive enough.”

The move has turned heads as the state's biggest and most successful early learning program serving Black children is left wondering how to navigate the unstable waters of Oregon education reform.

According to Herndon, it's not just that Albina Head Start was passed over for funds that would have allowed more children in

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CONFLUENCE



PHOTO BY HELEN SILVIS

Antone Minthorn, an elder from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, stands on the banks of the Columbia River at Celilo Park. The Confluence Project plans to site a curved walkway designed by artist Maya Lin at the spot, to commemorate its history as a traditional fishing, trading and gathering place. Celilo is one of the oldest continually inhabited places in North America.

Celilo Arc to Honor Lost Way of Life

Can art be a part of justice? Organizers say yes it can.

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

Antone Minthorn stands at the water's edge in Celilo Park looking out across the broad expanse of the Columbia River. On the opposite bank you can see the village of Wishram, sheltering beneath sheer basalt buttes and the vast expanse of sunburned hills that stretch north into Yakama territory.

The view is stunning. But what's most remarkable about

this place is not what you see, but what you can't see. Hidden beneath these windswept waters lies an older landscape, with a massive waterfall, an ancient settlement and a trading center that for thousands of years was one of the most visited places on the continent.

“The Celilo Falls fishery was an important gathering place for the tribes,” says Minthorn, an elder from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. “All the salmon would come

through here from the ocean and continue all the way through the interior up to Canada. This was the center of the tribal economy.”

Salmon were at the heart of that Northwest tribal economy for more than 11,000 years. Between 15 - 20 million of them would pass through the falls every years, some weighing more than 50 lbs. Treaties signed in 1855 with the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Walla Walla, Cayuse and

Umatilla people guaranteed tribal fishing rights.

At Celilo, fishermen worked from wooden platforms built over 12 miles of falls and rapids. It was one of the largest waterfalls on the continent, carrying a larger volume of water at its peak than Niagara Falls.

And thousands of people would come together at Celilo every year to trade and social-

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As Retail Pot Rolls Out, Worry About Kids

As Inslee tamps down teen access, prison system faces overhaul

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

State leaders this week made an effort to address the growing paranoia about teen pot use in the wake of retail legalization that goes into effect after the first sales licenses are handed out July 7.

The issue is key because teen drug use remains one of the most potent arrows in the

federal government's war on legalized cannabis, and officials worry that voter approval of Initiative 502 two years ago potentially opened up young peoples' access to it.

State elected leaders remain stumped by what seems at times to be their unwilling opposition to President Barack Obama's anti-pot stand – despite his campaign promises to the contrary.

According to Obama's official position on the issue, posted on WhiteHouse.gov, “The Administration steadfastly opposes legalization of marijuana and other drugs because legalization would increase the availability and use of illicit drugs, and pose significant health and safety risks to all Americans, particularly young people.”

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