

OHSU

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deep history of Black Portland, but there are fewer collections of modern images.

“Those are our two main sources, however with the Oregon Historical Society, we don’t have very much from the

The SHARP study would like to expand the collection of photos to include as many family histories as possible

1970s to 2010, because people aren’t giving those yet,” Croff said.

The SHARP study would like to expand the collection of photos to include as many family histories as possible. The collection is open to a wide range of image types from political rallies to street views, community events to birthday parties. Event fliers, old business advertisements, theater programs are welcome as well.

Donating images does not mean giving up family keepsakes, Croff said. She had previously visited a donor’s

house and scanned the images right there. She would like to make sure that any donated pictures are returned as soon as possible.

Selected photos may become part of a community website for the SHARP program which will be an archive for the black experience in Portland as well as a community resource for brain health.

The SHARP study will be looking for participants in July. The study will last six months long and require three and a half hours a week. Participants will go on moderate 45 minute walks three times a week and have one weekly health education session via the internet in their homes.



A street view of Williams Avenue in 1970

If you would like to contribute your family images to the SHARP program, contact Raina Croff at croff@ohsu.edu or 503-494-2367.

Saadat

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one so far to have a Community Oversight Advisory Board made up of citizens, and encouraged members of the public to get involved.

COCL is soliciting public feedback on its first quarterly report, downloadable at COCL-COAB.org. The Community Oversight Advisory Board meets from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at Montavilla United Methodist Church (232 SE 80th Ave). Members of the public may also submit written comments are by 5 p.m. Saturday, which can be emailed to rosenbaumdwatsonllp@gmail.com.

The Skanner News: Start by talking about your role and your vision for what you hope to accomplish with COCL.

Kathleen Saadat: The effort to include the community in the development of policy and institutional change, for our local police department, is brand new. It’s an opportunity for the citizens of Portland to come and learn how things work, including the local police, and to express their responses to the implementation of the settlement agreement. That’s huge. That’s big. That’s not small. And we are being watched to see

how that goes. There’s been some mistakes made at the beginning but right now a lot of effort is going into resolving complicated issues. A lot of effort is going into developing a clear focus on what the tasks are. My vision is that we, Portland, the people who

live here and care about what happens, have a chance to make a real difference in the world. It is what comes about when one is relentless in the pursuit of justice. One begins to shape the culture. Part of this is to shape the culture of the police department and our response to the police. Because if they change, we can too. If they get better at how they treat us, we can get better at how we treat them.

I’ve spent much of my life advocating for justice for marginalized people and this is a part of that struggle, that we should have justice, we should have fairness. We should be regarded as worthy of respect and pro-

tection. This is not a new struggle — that is, the one between the community and the police. But it is a new step in trying to get a better understanding. My whole thing is to get everybody to come out to our public meetings to listen and learn and express

their opinion. We’re not going to resolve individual cases, but we have taken the stories of the many who have given them to us and tried to shape them into recommendations for policy changes in the police department. Right now we’re looking at the first report, quarterly report of the implementation of the particulars of the settlement agreement and we’ve taken public testimony. We want to hear from people about what their recommendations are for change.

TSN: You have a lot of background in advocating on LGBT issues and for communities of color. Have done criminal jus-

tice-specific work?

KS: No. What I’ve done, I’ve worked in bureaucracies enough to have a skill at understanding how it works, how a lot of it works, intuitively. I’m not the voice. I’m the conduit for the voices. I’m a person to help build the structure so the voices can be heard. And that’s all the voices — that’s everybody that’s a stakeholder in this process.

TSN: How much contact have you had with the Rosenbaum group so far?

KS: They’re my boss. I’m hired by COCL. So let’s say every other day. A part of my job is to give them my opinion on how we are affecting the community, how to get better input from the community, how to work with the community to get the input that we want. Bottom line, what that means is listening to the people who are talking to us.

TSN: Who have you heard from so far?

KS: We had a public hearing, so there were lots of people there. I’m not sure I want to single anybody out. There was a public hearing not long ago, three weeks ago, at

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Baccalaureate

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ing us all back together in a very exciting way and saying we’re here for you, we support you, we believe in you,” Edwards said.

The Black Baccalaureate welcomes graduating Black students from all schools in the area, high schools and alternative schools — including students who are getting their GED.

C.J. Robbins of the Black Male Achievement program said an important part of the ceremony is the recognition of youth in the Oregon Youth Authority who will be receiving a GED or diploma while incarcerated.

There is no limited seating for attendees either, the event is free of charge and open to the public.

“As long as you are there to celebrate the shared value, the young people, you are more than welcome,” Robbins said.

“That’s your ticket in, there’s no reserved seats,” Edwards said, laughing.

The keynote speaker is Dr. Alisha Moreland-Capua, director of the Avel Gordly Center for Healing at Oregon Health & Sciences University. The ceremony will also honor an elder of the community, Dr. Harriet Adair, assistant Superintendent Office of

School Operations & Support with Portland Public Schools and an advocate for school diversity.

The baccalaureate will celebrate of African ancestry through traditional Ghanaian drumming from the Okropong ensemble, as

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well as graduation sashes made from Ghanaian kente cloth.

Black Education Achievement Movement Director Noni Causey said the celebration of ancestry is important because it helps students take pride in their history.

“If you don’t see yourself in the big picture of things, then you don’t believe that you belong there,” Causey said.

Edwards and Robbins said the event was important, because the achievements of the Black community are often overshadowed by the challenges. The celebration is an op-

portunity to rewrite the story of Black youth. “When you talk about rebuilding a village, I think that celebrating is often lost. We tend to focus on the negatives,” Robbins said. “Celebration of the positive is what provides that hope that we need.”

According to Causey, the Black Baccalaureate had thrived in Portland because of the work of Kevin Fuller, who founded the Bridge Builders Black male achievement non-profit. His work with Bridge Builders and Prospective Gents kept the event going for a number of years. Causey said when Fuller moved on to other work, the event was lost.

Edwards said that PAALF, SEI, Portland Public Schools and BMA were all looking for a way to honor graduating students. When the organizers spoke with each other,

it became evident that there needed to be a larger all-inclusive ceremony.

“Collaboration is the only way we get any progress. When we are siloed off and doing our own thing, we’re often trying to do the same thing,” Robbins said. “We often have way more common ground than we think.”

Organizers hope that the Black Baccalaureate will grow in future years and become a local institution. There are plans to reach out to students farther away from Portland who may feel disconnected from the Black community.

There are also plans to hold the ceremony in May so that graduates could take their kente cloth graduation sashes back to their own high school graduations to represent their community.

Edwards said the day is ultimately about honoring the youth and instilling a sense of pride to those embarking on their journey.

“I think it’s important for our young people to have that sense of history, greatness and that you are special to us. You are special to us and we speak your names,” she said.