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Urgent Housing Funds

What the city's housing fund means for people of color

By Donovan M. Smith
Of The Skanner News

There's a housing crisis in Portland, and now Mayor Charlie Hales is pledging \$30 million from the City and County's budget to help some of the people most in need.

Mayor Hales made the promise during a press conference last week, saying the prime focus would be houseless women, children, and people who have disabilities and mental illnesses.

"For too long I think we've stayed rooted in a realization that these problems can't be solved overnight, and some of them can't be," Mayor Hales said. "But I also want us to recognize that there are some things that we can move."

According to the mayor's office, the funds will be distributed in several ways: \$12.5 million for help in finding housing, assisting in paying rent and other support services; \$10 million to build 250 units for the homeless; \$5 million for shelter operations and \$2.5 million for eviction prevention.

The city has pledged \$20 million toward the cause, with Multnomah County contributing the other \$10 million.

Neither have offered specifics yet as to where the money is coming from.

"We're not rolling in money. We don't have \$30 million in a desk drawer but what we do have is the ability to reprogram some of the money in our general fund," Mayor Hales said at the press conference last week.

Because the financial specifics have yet to be ironed out, the plan likely won't start being implemented until the top half of next year.

The Skanner News spoke with African American Housing Association head Cheryl L. Roberts for her take on the plan.

Roberts said that while she wasn't well versed on the specifics of the mayor's plan announced last week, as long as there are no rent caps and no-cause evictions are legal,

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DEBATE



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant and Seattle Urban League CEO Pamela Banks met for a debate Oct. 4 in Piggett Hall at Seattle University. In a slightly contentious debate, the two candidates discussed numerous issues important to District 3 voters, including the availability of affordable housing, the loss of small businesses in the area, transit and municipal broadband.

Alzheimer's Study Seeks Diversity

New OHSU trial requires more participants of color to move forward

By Arashi Young
Of The Skanner News

In an op-ed for *The Washington Post*, former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher said health disparities are an injustice that plagues African Americans. He described a deep-rooted mistrust of the medical establishment which leads to worse outcomes for Black patients.

Satcher called for more diverse participation in clinical

trials to reduce health disparities. These trials include experimental research on new drugs, vaccines or supplements that would provide data on health interventions.

As Oregon Health and Sciences University begins recruitment for a landmark study on Alzheimer's disease, a social intervention is needed to bridge the gap between the Black community and the medical establishment.

OHSU has hired Harvey Rice as a community ambassador to talk about his experiences in

clinical trials and the upcoming A4 Alzheimer's Disease study. Rice will meet with community members at the Urban League of Portland Multicultural Senior Center at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9.

Rice is the Board Chair of the Sabin Community Development Corporation, which works to improve livability in diverse neighborhoods. He said his interest in health care advocacy is inspired by his wife, who is a registered nurse and his volunteer work helping seniors deal with health issues.

"A lot of people have (health care) myths. If I can help them in any way, dealing with those myths, I'll do it," Rice said.

The A4 Study is a multi-site investigational trial that is aimed at preventing Alzheimer's disease. The study focuses on amyloid protein deposits in the brain that can build up in older people and contribute to memory loss and dementia.

The challenge is recruiting study participants who have am-

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'Mystery Models' Reconnect for Show

Reunion sparked assistance from The Skanner's readership

By Donovan M. Smith
Of The Skanner News

At the end of September, the top floor of North Portland library was transformed into a runway for a group of seasoned African American models as they strutted for what photographer Bruce Forster said was a crowd of about 50.

With live music playing, food and an ap-

pearance by the "Mayor of Northeast Portland," Paul Knauls, Forster chalks the day up as a success.

"I'm at a loss of words on how to describe it," Forster said. "They had great attitude. They all just loved to sashay, and the music was really just perfect to help them parade around."

In June, *The Skanner News* published a feature on Forster's photo shoot with the

models, which took place in 1975. Forster didn't know the women's names and had lost contact with them, so he put out a call to the community to help identify and reunite them.

With readers' help, almost all the women were identified within a matter of weeks. However, not all were able to participate in the Sept. 27 show at the library.

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