

Islamophobia cont'd from pg 1

tercultural Organizing called "Stand for Love, Interrupt Hate," drew hundreds to City Hall to memorialize victims of Islamophobia, homophobia, racism and other forms of bigotry.

Several speakers, one being Baher Buti, founder of the Iraq Society of Oregon addressed debates around Syrians

and anti-immigration rhetoric in the national media, with the intended outcome of increasing patriotism and loyalty through inciting fear and hatred," the document reads, before calling recent demands to ban Muslims from entering the country 'unsociable.'

Recently, Dallas, Ore., city councilor Micky

“When people say, ‘I’m your neighbor, I am your friend, I welcome you to my city,’ if you say that, they will feel and remember that

seeking refuge in United States as their country finds itself embroiled in a bloody civil war.

"You can find Iraqi and Syrian professionals all over America," Buti said, before claiming that since 2012 America has received less than 1 percent of refugees from Syria.

Mayor Charlie Hales, was also in attendance and offered an anecdote about students at Sunnyside Environmental School requesting to welcome Syrian families at the airport.

"They said, 'I want to go to the airport, and greet those new families as they come to our city.' That's who we are," Hales said. "When people say, 'I'm your neighbor, I am your friend, I welcome you to my city,' if you say that, they will feel and remember that and they will know who you are."

According to a resolution passed by the Portland City Council in December "affirming its commitment to the Muslim community," there are an estimated 20,000 practicing Muslims in the metro area right now.

"There has been an increase in anti-Muslim

Garus came under fire after for comments he made on social media about three Muslim men who'd been elected to public office in Detroit. The post, which has not been deleted, drew scores of comments in support of his remarks, with comments.

Once a resident of Iraqi refugee camps, area resident, Hussein Al-Baiaty came to the United States back in the early 1990s as a child, not knowing a word of English.

Today, Al-Baiaty is an entrepreneur, managing both a successful screenprinting business and his own clothing line, Almaic. With "Almaic" – a portmanteau of the words Aramaic, the language that gave birth to Arabic, and his last name – he fuses his religion and his love of hip-hop.

Al-Baiaty's thoughts on Islamophobia? It's irrational.

"It is convenient for people to fear what is misunderstood," Al-Baiaty said. "Sadly, the mainstream media is addicted to wars and protecting 'our interests.'"

Read the full story at
TheSkanner.com

Lodge cont'd from pg 1

contact with the city and rallied neighbors and businesses alike to help.

"Really, the overall goal from my perspective – and, I think the reason why people have stepped up with private monies and I think certainly why the PDC has as well – is that we want to stabilize one of the last Black-owned properties and organizations on the street," Gomez said.

Once this projection is completed, Gomez told *The Skanner*, the neighborhood association and the lodge intend to meet with the city to have the fines reduced or waived completely.

Portland Development Commission's Tory Campbell was instrumental in getting his agency's help.

"This should be a normal rhythm for us as an agency to want to help," Campbell said, adding that this project is a nod to the changes the neighborhood has undergone in recent decades. "I

think it is incredibly important to acknowledge significance of this project. Beyond just doing normal good work, which is this being one of the last remaining Black-owned organizations

“One of the last remaining Black-owned organizations and properties on that street which has been impacted quite dramatically by displacement and gentrification

and properties on that street which has been impacted quite dramatically by displacement and gentrification – it has a different weight to it."

Lodge members aren't the only ones who will benefit from the upgrades.

Though the space – which is more than 3,000 square feet in size – primarily functions as the meeting lodge for a historically African American faction

of the Freemason fraternity, it's also used as space for kids' karate classes and Sunday church services.

In a recent Facebook post, Bryant is seen handing over the first payment, a

check for \$10,000, to the lead contractor outside of the Sons of Haiti building.

"God is good," Bryant wrote. "Today after running into many issues during the course of preparing the work site for excavation – that included removing all food carts' storage sheds – with God's help we got the job done excavation will start on schedule...thank you Jesus."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOLLY RENAUER

Peace Projects

The 6th Annual Mt. Tabor Middle School Peace Projects were created by 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students in Mrs. Molly Renauer's 1st and 2nd quarter Art and Ceramics classes. All students researched, presented on, voted on, wrote scripts, created the projects while filming and editing the videos. This year students chose to honor the Paiute Native American Tribe, Bob Marley, Barack Obama, and Marriage Equality. The project also included an original anti-bullying song by student Cece O'Connor, performed at the school's 13th Annual Peace Prize Assembly.

Equity cont'd from pg 1

sion.

"Our communities had an unprecedented level of presence and engagement in the 2015 session," Miller said.

The report was issued by the Racial Equity Report Working Group, a coalition of 32 community-based organizations.

The group includes the Urban League of Portland, the Coalition of Communities of Color, the Partnership for Safety and Justice, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon and the Center for Intercultural Organizing among others.

Facing Race analyzes the 2015 session, sorting bills into four areas: civil rights and criminal justice, economic justice, education and health equity.

Notable civil rights and criminal justice bills include the Motor Voter bill which registers voters through the Department of Motor Vehicles, the law to end police profiling and the bill to protect the rights of bystanders to record law enforcement.

Economic justice laws include the new paid sick days requirement, a bill to protect against wage theft and the "Ban the Box"

legislation which bars employers from asking about criminal histories on job applications.

To read the entire Facing Race report, you can do so online: <https://facingraceoregondotorg.wordpress.com/>.

“Our communities had an unprecedented level of presence and engagement in the 2015 session

Nkenge Harmon Johnson, President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland, told *The Skanner News* the "Ban the Box" bill is one of the most impactful bills for the Black community.

"A White young man with a high school diploma has better chances of getting an interview and, in fact, a job offer than does an African American man with the same level of education," Harmon Johnson said.

"If you throw in the barrier of having had a past of being convicted of a crime, that barrier is greater."

Harmon Johnson said the bill will help people overcome their past and get people working.

Previous racial equity reports in 2011 and 2013 issued report cards for each legislator.

The 2015 report does not give grades; instead it focuses on legislation and lawmaker voting records.

Harmon Johnson said this new format invites people to take a closer look at the laws.

"We chose not to give grades this time around was because we didn't want folks to be fixated on their GPA when it comes to service for people of color," Harmon Johnson told *The Skanner News*.

The racial equity bills had a lot of bipartisan support.

There were bipartisan sponsors for major legislation to support English language learners, to increase access to 12-month supplies of contraception and to "Ban the Box" on job applications.

Read the full story at
TheSkanner.com



The Sons of Haiti Masonic Lodge – threatened with closure due to building code issues and fines – will stay open after a community fundraiser and assistance from the PDC.