

BMA cont'd from pg 1

sentences cannot be reduced for good behavior.

In the years after Measure 11 was implemented, the number of defendants seeking a trial dropped from 21 percent to 16 percent, according to a 2011 analysis from the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission. The number of defendants

the city of Portland, in Multnomah County, the parks department, the Portland Water Bureau, KBOO radio, SKANSKA and Trillium Charter School.

For the Measure 11 event, the group spent eight weeks researching the law and developing policy changes. Black

“Prison is no joke. Quite frankly you are not going to come out as the same person

who pled guilty or pled to lesser charges went up – leading to more people being incarcerated and serving longer sentences.

Dao's story stood in contrast to those participating in Black Male Achievement. Instead of being trapped in cycles of delinquency and recidivism, the BMA youth were steered into jobs, mentorship and civic engagement.

BMA participant Ben Smith gave animated testimony of the impact of the organization on his life.

He described substance abuse and needing encouragement to study and be the best possible version of himself he could be.

“Drugs, alcohol, bad habits just consumed my life – but when I found BMA, I found a group of Black young people who weren't trying to be thugs, who weren't trying to be hard,” Smith said. “They were trying to hit them books, they were trying to be successful people trying to change the world.”

The BMA youth were between 15 to 21-years-old.

They participated in the Summerworks program, working in jobs at

Male Achievement coordinator CJ Robbins said he encouraged them to dive deep and know the law intimately enough to make recommendations.

Here are the Measure 11 Policy changes suggested by the BMA:

- Raise the age that individuals can be tried and convicted as an adult to 18.
- Allow youth convicted of Measure 11 crimes to reduce their sentences based on good behavior. Currently those who have been convicted of a Measure 11 offense must serve every day of their sentence.
- Allow young people convicted of a Measure 11 crime to have a “Second Look.” The Oregon “Second Look” law allows young people who have been tried as adults to return to the community with post-prison supervision. Right now Measure 11 offenses cannot receive a “Second Look” or that right may be waived for a lesser sentence.
- Clarify the wording of Assault and Robbery II, III to differentiate the crimes.

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Vanport cont'd from pg 1

Many of the stories told in the “Wake of Vanport” series described life before and after the flood. The hastily-constructed town forced a grudging acceptance of racial integration. But after the war effort was over and Black families needed to relocate into Portland, the acceptance was over.

In the Vanport film community historian O.B. Hill spoke about moving frequently through segregated housing projects in North Portland. In Moore's Vanport history, he described having crosses burned on his front lawn.

In the short film “Scattered,” survivor Gloria Lavender faced harassment at school as Black children from Vanport began to attend Portland schools. Her teacher asked her how to pick cotton, a question that hurt Lavender and enraged her mother, who then confronted the teacher.

“Just because I had come from the South did not mean that I knew how to pick cotton,” Lavender said.

In addition to the showing of the “Wake of Vanport,” the event hosted local author Zita Podany who wrote the book “Images of America: Vanport.” The first 40 guests to register for the event online received a free copy of the book.

Podany told The Skanner News that she was intrigued by the history of Vanport as a child. At first she could

“The hastily-constructed town forced a grudging acceptance of racial integration

not believe that there was a city in the Delta Park area and thought adults were joking with her.

As a teenager, she researched Vanport at the library and discovered that the history was true. Over the years Podany collected more and more stories and felt compelled to write a narrative of Vanport that celebrated the lives of

those who made a home there.

“People need to hear about this story, they need to see the pictures, they need to see the whole thing and the flood shouldn't be the only thing that defines Vanport,” Podany said.

In addition to Moore, Vanport survivors O.B. Hill, Ethan Scarl and Mariah Taylor also attended the showing and offered to share their personal experiences with the audience.

Podany told The Skanner News that The Wake of Vanport and the Vanport Mosaic Project, a collective of storytellers and artists dedicated to remembering Vanport, have invigorated research and deepened the understanding of the history.

When she began her investigation, very few people were willing to talk about living in Vanport. She had information from archives and images, but

arrested and incarcerated on marijuana-related charges at a much higher rate than Whites, despite survey data showing racial minorities may be less likely to use marijuana than their White counterparts.

“Horton said his group is working on a study with the University of California investigating the demographics of the legal cannabis industry

ing on a study with the University of California investigating the demographics of the legal cannabis industry. He said while there is a perception that the industry is overwhelmingly White, right now there are no hard numbers available on who owns and works in the majority of legal recreational or medical businesses.

But decades' worth of statistics – from Oregon and the United States as a whole – show racial minorities, in particular African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans – have been



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

‘I AM’ Procession

Anastacia Renee' Tolbert leads a healing exercise during the I AM Procession an event organized by artist Kimisha Turner, and several others, with help from the Northwest African American Museum as a way to acknowledge colorism across multiple communities of color. A few dozen women walked from Daejon Park to the Northwest African American Museum, where they participated in several healing exercises and released butterflies to signify transformation. The project was a way of using an alternative method to create solutions for things like colorism, sexism, racism and other -isms.

Pot cont'd from pg 1

holders, the proposed language mostly funnels money into drug and alcohol education, public safety investments (including increased DUII training for officers) – but also small businesses, specifically businesses owned by women and minorities.

“It's really, for lack of a better term, a watershed moment in cannabis regulation,” said Jesse Horton, cofounder of the Minority Cannabis Business Association, who was involved in the drafting of the tax. “When you look at what's happening across the nation, people of color and the prosperity in the cannabis industry – people aren't seeing the benefit of cannabis regulation in their industry, in their neighborhood.”

Horton is African American and owns two cannabis businesses in Portland – a dispensary and a cultivation center. He estimates that just a fraction – between 5 and 10 percent – of the roughly 1,000 members of his organization, a nationwide trade group

founded just last fall are people of color who work in the legal industry. Others are curious about getting into the industry or advocating for racial minorities who want to get involved.

Horton said his group is work-

Disparities persist even in jurisdictions where pot is now legal: in Colorado, which legalized marijuana in 2014, arrests of White teens on marijuana-related charges fell 10 percent between 2012 and 2014.

But in the same time period, Latino teens were 20 percent more likely to get arrested on the same offenses, and arrests of African American teens went up 50 percent.

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PHOTO BY JERRY FOSTER

Vanport survivors O.B. Hill, Mariah Taylor and Ethan Scarl attend the showing of The Skanner News documentary series “The Wake of Vanport” on August 26, 2016.

she wanted to know the lived experience of the city – the sights, the smells, the day in and day out life of Vanport.

“All of these oral histories that are being collected are very fascinating, because that is the missing piece in our historical record,” Podany said.