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# BIG BLUES BLOWOUT



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Seattle singer Josephine Howell sings with Jackson Mississippi Blues guitarist, singer and producer Dexter Allen at the Big Blues Blowout April 22 at Café con Leche. In addition to Mr. Allen the event featured 2017 Grammy Winner Bobby Rush, Chicago Southern Soul/Blues artist Nellie "Tiger" Travis and local Pacific Northwest Blues/Soul Diva Lady A.

## BPI, Family Care Partner on Doula Program

### Two-year project will pair expectant Black mothers with doulas

By *Christen McCurdy*  
*Of The Skanner News*

**K**imberly Porter grew up in the Midwest and had never heard of a doula until she moved to Oregon.

But as a mental health therapist working in early childhood development and the program manager for the Black Parent Initiative, and after accompanying expecting mothers on doctor visits, Porter began to see the potential benefits of doula care, especially for marginalized populations.

The international doula training and certifying organization DONA International describes doulas as "like travel guides in a foreign country." They provide continuous physical and emotional support for women throughout pregnancy, birth and sometimes in the early stages of caring for a baby.

Conventional medicine has traditionally focused solely on the physical aspects of prenatal development and delivery, but a growing body of research supports the idea that when new mothers have

support from coaches who are neither hospital staff nor part of the woman's social network – and insurers, hospitals and policymakers have come to take the doula role more seriously as a result.

In 2012 the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3311, which required the Oregon Health Authority to use doulas to improve birth outcomes for women who experience disproportionately greater outcomes. After its passage, Family Care – a coordinated care organization that serves Oregon Health Plan

patients in the Portland metropolitan area – began investigating ways to improve birth outcomes for Black women, who are disproportionately represented on Oregon's Medicaid plan. In 2014, BPI President and CEO Charles McGee told *The Skanner* Porter approached him about "getting into the doula business" to better support Black families.

Now FamilyCare and BPI have entered into a new partnership to improve birth outcomes among Black families in the Port-

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## PSU Welcomes New Dean of School of Education

### Marvin Lynn talks about how diminishing racial and education disparities can start with teachers

By *Melanie Sevckenko*  
*Of The Skanner News*

**P**ortland State University's Graduate School of Education has recently named its new dean, Dr. Marvin Lynn, an internationally recognized expert on race and education. Lynn served as associate dean for teacher education at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, and as associate professor at the Uni-

versity of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Maryland at College Park.

With over 50 programs, PSU's Graduate School of Education prepares and trains more educators than any other institution in the state. Ninety-five percent of its graduates work in a position related to their degree in the first year after graduating, with Portland Public Schools being



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Dr. Marvin Lynn



Commissioner Loretta Smith at a launch for Multnomah County's 'Flip the Script' program in February.

## Smith Files Claim Against Multnomah County

### Commissioner calls investigation into staff complaints 'politically and racially motivated'

By *Melanie Sevckenko*  
*Of The Skanner News*

**C**ommissioner Loretta Smith filed a tort claim notice Tuesday, calling for a cease and desist of Multnomah County's investigation into complaints against Smith, made by two of her former employees.

The tort claim, obtained by *The Skanner*, explains how Commissioner Smith intends to pursue all available avenues of action against the county, Chair Deborah Kafoury, and any other county official participating in the current efforts against Smith, if the investigation does not come to an immediate end.

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Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, the president and CEO of the NNPA, said that the "NNPA continues to represent the resilient, trustworthy tradition of the Black Press that is indispensable to Black America." Photo taken at 2016 Black Press Week in Washington, D.C.

## The Black Press

### 200 U.S. newspapers serve as a voice for the Black community page 10

## Kam Interviews Ludacris

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