

**NAACP** cont'd from pg 1

all of which have larger populations of racial minorities than Portland.

"There is a lot that we do well in Portland and I want to highlight that, but we continue to also suffer from our legacy as an unwelcoming place for Blacks, immigrants and Native populations," Hardesty said in the release. "While I will sell

sanctions against racial segregation in South Africa, affirmative action and unfair treatment of African Americans in the local job market.

NAACP conventions attract high-profile speakers, particularly in election years. Though President Donald Trump declined to address this year's event, in 2012 Re-

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all the positives I will also seek assistance in addressing the systemic inequality built into the fiber of our state.”

James Jessie, the senior vice president of sales for Travel Portland, who helped put together the Portland team's bid, said historically, NAACP conferences have been held in cities that may have problems or issues organizers want to highlight. "Our platform will be built on how welcoming this community would be but also recognizing there are problems -- and certain tags of Portland being the whitest city in America, of having a racist past. There are certain things that you recognize are out there," Jessie told *The Skanner*. "We look at it from a standpoint for opportunity and use that platform to address those issues."

This also wouldn't be the first national NAACP convention Portland has hosted. In 1978, more than 8,000 people attended the NAACP's 69th national convention, which was held at Portland's Memorial Coliseum. Topics discussed that year included economic

publican Presidential candidate spoke, as did then-vice president Mitt Romney.

Then-President George W. Bush declined to speak in 2004 but did address the convention in 2006.

The organization's national conferences also bring in large numbers of delegates -- about 6,000 -- Jessie said. Travel Portland estimates the conference would bring about \$6.7 million to Portland's economy.

It would come on the heels of two other large conventions scheduled for the same time period: the Church of God in Christ will hold a Portland conference May of 2020, which 9,000 people are expected to attend; the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity, facilitated by the University of Oklahoma, will bring about 1,800 people to Portland in May of 2019.

Jessie said the bidding team expects to find out within two to three weeks whether the bid made it to the next stage, but doesn't expect a definitive answer for several more months.

**Chief** cont'd from pg 1

tent calls" (emergency calls that turn out to be non-urgent, such as reports of controlled burns or people sleeping), which made up 16 percent of calls; service calls (such as assisting seniors who have fallen or responding to animal problems or rescues), which made up 8.7 percent of calls; false alarms (7.9 percent) or reports of hazardous conditions such as gas leaks or downed power lines (2.6 percent). Just 3 percent of incidents involved fighting fire.

Since fire department personnel are often the first to respond to 911 calls of all kinds, they get a firsthand glimpse of major social problems -- many of which paramedics and firefighters aren't well suited to address.

"I can do everything for the cardiac arrest patient," Myers said, or for a family whose kitchen has caught on fire. But for residents whose needs may be more complex, it's necessary to go upstream and look at the underlying causes of public health issues.

Myers also noted that each fire station is staffed, equipped and trained the same way, though the neighborhoods they serve may have different needs.

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With both of those problems in mind, he's proposed the creation of "fire management areas," which would overlay several neighborhoods. According to Aaron Johnson, communication director for Portland Fire & Rescue, the agency currently has a three-person team working on data collection for each fire station's response area. And the team is working with Multnomah County Public Health, and local and regional nonprofit and neighborhood organizations to create prevention and response plans specific to each neighborhood.

"This will help us tailor our mission directly to the neighborhoods and treat the neighborhoods the way they want to be treated," Myers told *The Skanner*.

well-established groups on emergency response -- and while Portland Fire & Rescue is concerned with many public health issues, reducing fire deaths is still a top priority.

It's new -- Myers said no other fire department in the country has tried it -- but not without precedent. The fire management area concept is in fact derived from a model in the United Kingdom. The agency is planning a work session for Sept. 26 which will include personnel from Harvard's School of Public Health, Multnomah County Public Health and the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

Myers expects the program won't increase costs -- and should lead to savings down the road: "The intent is that this project over time will not increase costs and is intended to reduce long-term spending projections. It is less expensive to prevent a call from happening than it is to continuously add more reaction-based capital."



PHOTO COURTESY OF DE LA SALLE NORTH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

**De La Salle North Students Take Flight**

During the last week of June, two De La Salle North Catholic High School sophomores attended the Introduction to Aviation camp at Pearson Airfield in Vancouver. The students, Deovia Morales and Jacobi Lacey, were selected by the science department faculty. The camp uses projects and field trips to help students learn about different aspects of aviation and the basics of flight. Activities included flying a radio-controlled airplane, practice flying with a flight simulator, and a behind the scenes look at the Portland International Airport control tower. On the last day, each student went up in the air in a small plane with a flight instructor, and were able to take the controls of the plane once up in the air.

**TriMet** cont'd from pg 1

established," said Roberta Altstadt, manager of communications at TriMet.

The low-income fare program is the work for TriMet's task force, along with community stakeholders and advocacy groups like Bus Riders Unite, which together have pooled data on the costs and feasibility of such a program.

Once implemented, the low-income fare will cut the regularly priced ticket in half, from \$2.50 to \$1.25. Individuals that make less than double the federal poverty level, or \$24,120, could be eligible for the reduced fare. Likewise, a family of four with earnings up to \$49,200 would also qualify.

BRU, a project of Environmental Justice Oregon that represents transit-dependent people, has been advocating for a fare reduction for years, launching an official campaign in March 2016. Last September, the group met with TriMet's board to share its ideas.

"We know that the cost of living here in Portland has been increasing dramatically, so we decided to

push for a low-income fare," BRU organizer Orlando Lopez told *The Skanner*. "With that, we did an extensive amount of outreach to our community members to get

**“The low-income fare will cut the regularly priced ticket in half**

the experience of folks on how transit is unaffordable."

BRU's advisory committee looked at the low-income programs of other transit agencies, such as Seattle's ORCA LIFT, which allows up to a 50 percent discount on fare for income-qualified riders.

Riders' incomes could be verified a number of ways, said Lopez, suggesting proof through submitted tax returns or automatically qualifying those who collect food stamps or are on the Oregon Health Plan.

TriMet already offers reduced

ticket prices through fare assistance and fare relief programs for organizations that serve low-income clients. Seniors and people with disabilities can also qualify for reduced fares through TriMet's honored citizens program.

Even so, said Lopez, those assistance programs are "not enough to cover the demand we currently see in our communities."

The bus-riding group is also proposing that the low-fare program offer a monthly pass at a maximum of \$28. The standard monthly pass currently goes for \$100.

The transit agency asserted that its program is not based on BRU's proposal, but rather it will be working with community partners to build off the work of its task force.

TriMet also noted that it will look to Seattle to better understand the implementation of a low-income program.

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