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ner. “So I shopped the idea around last year and wanted to see if it was of interest to the Black community.”

It’s an idea that stuck. With a small team of organizers and support from the offices of Rep. Janelle Bynum and Sens. Lew Frederick and James Manning — as well as Africa House, under the

al opportunities for the Black community.

Coming from a professional background in public health and policy, Fai said that health services are often under-utilized in Black populations.

“We invited the health organizations because there’s a lot of health disparity in our com-

“I picked Pioneer Square because I wanted to make a statement

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, and the city’s Office of Equity and Human Rights — Fai has managed to wrangle an influential group to kick start her effort.

The festival, which is free to enter, will offer live entertainment, art and crafts, African cuisine, panel discussions and even storytelling. But it also aims to showcase African entrepreneurship — and its strategic location will likely pull in curious passerby.

“I picked Pioneer Square because I wanted to make a statement about showing the magnitude of the Black community’s presence in Oregon,” said Fai.

Drawing around 30,000 visitors on any given day, the plaza is one of the most visited public sites in Oregon. So the festival is hoping to boost profits for local business vendors.

The event’s largest sponsors, however, are a number of health organizations, including Kaiser Permanente and Providence. The providers will be on-hand during the festival to offer health screenings as well as information on programs, careers and education-

munities,” said Fai. “One way to address this is to provide the platform for these organizations to reach out to people directly.”

With close to 18,000 Africans in the Multnomah County, the majority comes from Somalia, Egypt and Sierra Leone.

According to 2013 report from the Coalition of Communities of Color, while the county’s African population is highly educated, most of the attained degrees were earned overseas and are minimally recognized in Oregon, leading to low incomes and poverty.

Moreover, the report found that the African community is uninsured at a rate almost double that of White people.

It’s why Fai is looking at the festival as a cultural vehicle to unify and strengthen the African community in Oregon, both socially and economically.

“We as Africans believe that people who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution,” said Fai, who landed in Portland as a refugee 20 years ago, after fleeing war-torn Somalia with her family.

Read the rest of this story at TheSkanner.com

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But the majority of what I did during my time there was criminal defense work and plaintiff personal injury.

Part of the reason I wanted to be a lawyer was so I could be a litigator, because I love being in the courtroom. So being a defense lawyer was a fantastic experience — you get to help people, there’s never the same case twice, you go to court daily. It was amazing. Before law school,

I did juvenile delinquency work and I really loved that because you have contact with kids and you can be a mentor and help them out of their situation. I loved defending people. It was rewarding for me knowing that I got to help people through a tough situation and got the best results for them that’s possible.

When I came to GEICO, I started doing person injury, but on the defense side. As the managing attorney I worked long hours and was responsible for every file in the office. If you have GEICO

insurance and someone hits you in a car accident, then my office would represent you in court and defend you on that lawsuit.

“It was rewarding for me knowing that I got to help people through a tough situation and got the best results for them that’s possible

TSN: Gov. Brown appointed you a judge of the Clackamas County Circuit court. How does one go from being a lawyer to a judge?

UW: You are either appointed or you run for office. In my case I was appointed. For me, I think all of the times I’ve spent in the courtroom are going to help. Being familiar with how trials are



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

March for Charleena Lyles

Charleena Lyles’ father leads a march to the Seattle Police Department’s East Precinct July 29 after a benefit and rally sponsored by Seattle Seahawks defensive lineman Michael Bennett, along with the Seattle NAACP and Not This Time for Charleena’s family at Judkins Park. Several other families who lost family members to law enforcement spoke at the event including the mother of Giovonn McDade, who was killed by police in June, and the parents of Leonard Thomas, who was killed by a police sniper 2013. Thomas’ family was recently awarded \$15 million dollars by a federal court for his wrongful death.

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group formed after the election of President Donald Trump, announced Monday it would pursue an effort to recall Mayor Wheeler if Marshman is selected for the position.

Marshman was appointed in June of 2016 following the retirement of Larry O’Dea. He was placed on administrative leave in March of this year after accusations of falsifying training records, and reappointed to his post in April when colleagues changed their story. Just weeks after Marshman was appointed, *The Oregonian* reported he had been investigated for a 2002 incident involving violence against his stepson, who was then 16. More recently, Marshman has come under fire for his department’s handling of large protests, which have increased since the Presidential election.

Public input

The final four candidates were whittled down from six who were interviewed by a panel of city-se-

lected volunteers affiliated with some community organizations. The job opening was posted in May.

One of the six who apparently didn’t make the cut is Charles Moose, 63, who led the Portland

“[Marshman] was placed on administrative leave in March of this year after accusations of falsifying training records

Police Bureau from 1993 to 1999, serving as the city’s first African American police chief. *The Oregonian* reported last week that Moose had been seen downtown wearing a suit during the week candidates were being interviewed, and later quoted a Face-

book post from Moose’s wife, Sandy, saying he had failed to make the cut.

A community panelist who spoke with *The Skanner* said the majority of the six candidates — including Scirotto, who is bi-racial — were people of color, as were the majority of those serving on the panels. During the interview process, the group of 15 volunteers was broken into three groups, and all had an hour to speak with each candidate.

A city staff member provided them with questions to ask — based on the posted job description and survey results — and collected their notes and feedback at the end.

E.D. Mondaine, first vice president of the NAACP Portland Branch and one of the community panelists, said he was impressed with the breadth of experience his fellow panelists brought to the interview process.

Read more at TheSkanner.com

African American female judges of the Oregon State Bench

Mercedes Deiz was the first Black woman to practice law in Oregon, the first to serve as a district court judge and the first to be elected as a county circuit court judge.

Adrienne Nelson’s judicial appointment in 2006 made her the second female African American judge in Oregon. She’s currently a judge with the Multnomah County Circuit Court.

Ulanda Watkins is a newly appointed judge of the Clackamas County Circuit Court and the third female African American judge in Oregon.

other and further the goal of diversifying the state of Oregon.

Since then, we have so many more organizations — the Black Lawyers Association, the Filipino American Lawyers Association, the Asian Pacific American Bar Association, and the Hispanic Bar Association.

conducted and how people are charged, and what it takes to have probable cause and understanding the rules of evidence, all that is going to make this an easier transition for me. Clackamas judges all handle family law and that’s an area I’ve never practiced, so there’s going to be a learning curve for me in that respect.

All of the judges in Clackamas do a rotation, so they all hear criminal cases — civil cases and family law cases; unlike Multnomah County, which separates the cases. But every single judge in that court has already reached out to me and offered to help in any way. It’s amazing how supportive this group of judges is.

TSN: You’re a member of Oregon Minority Lawyers Association. What does that entail?

UT: It was one of the first minority lawyer organizations that we created for lawyers of color to support each