

KairosPDX cont'd from pg 1

Academy – a K-8 school for exceptionally gifted (and predominately White) children – would move to KairosPDX's current location, the former building of Humboldt Elementary School.

In the reshuffling, KairosPDX would be left without a home.

Opened with the intention of helping to close

KairosPDX as a pipeline through which to feed students into Tubman Middle School, thereby allowing students of color to continue their education in their own community.

Hernandez also makes clear his unwavering commitment to racial equity. "We have no tolerance for decisions made

“As is known but often forgotten, the founding of Portland Public Schools was itself based on Black segregation and institutional racism

the racial achievement gap, the K-5 charter school serves 126 students – 75 percent of which are youth of color – and incorporates Black history and an Afro-centric approach to its curriculum.

According to recent data released by the Oregon Department of Education, only 30 percent of Black children in grades three through eight can read at a third-grade level.

Citing this statistic in a letter to the PPS board, dated Oct. 2, Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-Portland) urged members to allow KairosPDX to negotiate a longer-term lease at the Humboldt site.

"PPS has a tragic and unfortunate history of displacing Black students and their families, and of excluding Black communities from the decision-making process," wrote Hernandez, who also sits on the board of the Reynolds School District. "As is known but often forgotten, the founding of Portland Public Schools was itself based on Black segregation and institutional racism."

In his letter – signed by nine other board members of color from neighboring districts – Hernandez portrays

"for others," he wrote. "Our identities as members of marginalized communities require that we make ourselves accountable to directly impacted communities. We hold you to the same standard."

Mayor Ted Wheeler and House Speak Tina Kotek have also voiced their support of allowing KairosPDX to keep its building.

PPS Board Chair Julia Brim-Edwards, too, is vehemently opposed to displacing the charter.

"Since last spring, I shared with district staff that displacing Kairos students from Humboldt as part of the middle school openings plan was not something that I would support, and given Portland Public Schools history in Albina would not likely be supported by the community," she said in an emailed statement to *The Skanner*.

Brim-Edwards noted that the board is to receive a final staff plan later in the week. "If Kairos is still scheduled to be displaced," she continued, "I will offer or support an amendment to the plan so that Kairos can remain in Humboldt and negotiate a reasonable lease extension with the school district."



PHOTO BY BERNIE FOSTER

Oregon History Makers Awarded

The Oregon Historical Society hosted its annual dinner at the historic Montgomery Park building in Portland Oct. 8, during which recipients were presented with the 2017 Oregon History Makers Medal. First awarded in 2009, the History Makers Medal is presented annually by OHS to individuals and organizations that are positively shaping the history, culture, and landscape of Oregon. Proceeds from the History Makers Dinner support every aspect of the Oregon Historical Society's important work to collect, preserve, and interpret Oregon's past. Pictured here are OHS board president Carl Christoferson (left); recipients Mark and Pat Reser (owners, Reser's Fine Foods, family-run manufacturer and distributor of fresh and frozen prepared foods); recipient Bill Schonley (sports broadcaster who was the play-by-play announcer for the Portland Trail Blazers for almost three decades), recipient Nathalie Johnson (practicing surgical oncologist and medical director of the Legacy Cancer Institute and the Legacy Breast Health centers), recipient Nicholas Kristof (columnist for *The New York Times* since 2001, a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner who writes op-ed columns that appear twice a week), and OHS executive director Kerry Tymchuck.

Sticker cont'd from pg 1

land neighborhoods, including Alameda, where Wells lives. Transposed against an American flag-like background, they read, "In our America, all people are equal, love wins, Black lives matter, immigrants & refugees are welcome, disabilities are respected, women are in charge of their bodies, people & planet are valued over profit, diversity is celebrated."

The sticker used a similar design and read, "In our America, all 'men' are created equal, Trump wins, all lives matter, legal immigrants are welcome to assimilate, individual rights are respected under the law, reproductive choices are a private matter, free market capitalism determines value, Western culture is celebrated."

Wells told *The Skanner* she talked to her letter carrier, who encouraged her to file a complaint, which she has not yet done, and also to her neighbors, none of whom received similar messages. She is African American and her wife is White; most of their immediate neighbors are also White, and have lived for 20 years in a

neighborhood Wells describes as "pretty homogeneous" and has been the entire time she's lived there.

“I just wanted to let people know that this is happening and that we must continue to be vigilant in our resistance to it

Wells thinks her household – which bears signs with political slogans including "Black Lives Matter" and "Love Wins" – was targeted specifically. The sticker has appeared twice more in her mailbox, she said. Last fall, before the election, she said, someone posted pro-Trump flyers to her fence.

An early childhood educator, Wells has also written columns about bullying for the *Concordia News* – and early this year helped draft a statement about inclusion

on behalf of the neighborhood association.

"I just wanted to let people know that this is happening and that we must continue to be vigilant in our resistance to it," she told *The Skanner*.

Wells has lived in Portland for 40 years and when asked if she's encountered anything like this before, she initially said no. Then she said, "Let me back up."

"Years ago, and by years ago I mean the '80s, I was walking with a friend near Shemanski Park, near the Schnitzer. Something flew past me and went splat," she said. It was an egg. She turned around and saw a group of young White men shouting racial slurs.

Part of what troubles her about the flyers – and reminds her of the downtown incident from so many years ago, when the young men quickly ran away – is the anonymity, the refusal to engage.

"It's always in motion or under cover of night or anonymously," she said. "If you're going to do it, then good gracious, stop and have a conversation."

Read more at TheSkanner.com

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owned by women, people of color, and especially African Americans – by helping them promote an equitable local economy.

"The business mix is also important," Wicks told *The Skanner*, which means the agency is looking for "an active destination business or something that's going to add a needed service to the area."

The program is in alignment with the North/Northeast Community Development Initiative Action Plan which, through the guidance of communities of color, uses tax increment funds to create economic opportunities for businesses, property owners and resi-

dents in the Interstate Corridor.

That's why Alberta Commons, in the heavily gentrified Northeast neighbor-

“The agency is looking for 'an active destination business or something that's going to add a needed service to the area'

hood, is an ideal model for the program, according to Prosper Portland.

"It was driven by the community," said Anne Mangan, senior communications coordinator at Prosper Portland.

"They wanted to have this kind of a program in place for Alberta Commons ahead of time, for disadvantaged businesses and business that could get a foothold here that otherwise might not be able to."

In addition to the Alberta development, the Affordable Commercial Tenting Program is also available at two sites in Lents Town Center in southeast Portland.

For more information, visit <http://prosperportland.us>. Prospective tenants can submit an application online.



PHOTO BY COURTESY OF PROSPER PORTLAND

Colas Construction, general contractor of Alberta Commons.