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MLK BREAKFAST



Justice Adrienne Nelson

Justice Nelson Sworn In

Adrienne Nelson, the first Black Supreme Court Justice, talks about her record and new role

By Christen McCurdy
Of The Skanner News

Oregon's first Black Supreme Court Justice went to work last week.

Adrienne Nelson is the African American to serve on the Oregon Supreme Court. She was appointed to the position by Gov. Kate Brown on Jan. 2 to fill a vacancy left by retiring justice Jack L. Landau.

Prior to this appointment, Nelson served as a Multnomah County Circuit Court judge starting in 2006. Before that, she worked at Portland State University as a senior attorney and coordinator of student legal and medication services, and in private practice for the Portland firm Bennett, Hartman, Morris and Kaplan, LLP, from 1999 to 2004. She began her legal career as a public defender at Multnomah Defenders, Inc., and served from 1996 to 1999. Judge Nelson grew up in Arkansas, and earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Arkansas and her law degree from the University of Texas.

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NAACP Image Awards page 9

Leaders React to Trump's 'Sh-hole Countries' Remarks

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PHOTO BY ANTONIO HARRIS

Cheryl Grace addressed an audience of about 1,000 people at the Red Lion Hotel on the River on Hayden Island for The Skanner Foundation's 32nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast. Twenty-two Oregon students received scholarships at the event.

'Use Your Power,' Grace Tells Breakfast Attendees At MLK Breakfast, Nielsen VP urged audience to move past fear

By Christen McCurdy
Of The Skanner News

Twenty-two Oregon students received scholarships Monday morning at The Skanner Foundation's 32nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast — the highest number in the foundation's history.

About 1,000 people gathered Monday at the assembled crowd of 1,000 at the Red Lion Hotel on the River on Hayden Island for the breakfast, which was keynoted by Cheryl Grace, the senior vice president of U.S. strategic community alliances and consumer

engagement at Nielsen. Mayor Ted Wheeler, Gov. Kate Brown and Daisy Santos, corporate trainer at Northwest Natural all shared brief remarks at the beginning of the event, as did representatives from several sponsoring organizations.

"I cannot recall a time in our history more urgent than right now. Our nation is at a crossroads," Wheeler said. "Now more than ever, we must take Dr. King's words to heart."

Grace started her keynote address with a five-question survey about Black culture. After asking the audience to fill in the

blanks on the aphorism "Black don't crack" and asking where Black people go for therapy (church), Grace remarked her adult son knew the answer to every single one of the questions on the list, even though she didn't recall explicitly teaching him any of them.

"Black culture is bigger than all of us," Grace said. "Being Black is kind of cool."

At Nielsen Grace has spearheaded several years of research on Black consumers and their influence on consumers of other races. At the same time African Americans are regard-

ed as tastemakers, Grace said, conversations about the Black experience are increasingly about something else: fear.

"Lately when any conversation about African Americans is had, it's about fear. It's about what we are afraid of or who is afraid," she said.

She went on to recite a quote from King: "People don't get along because they fear each other. People fear each other because they don't know each other. They don't know each other because they don't communicate."

Grace shared a personal See BREAKFAST on page 3

Minority Business Owners Talk Capital at Feb. 2 Event Public event on securing funds for minority and women entrepreneurs

By Melanie Sevckenko
Of The Skanner News

Ask any small business owner and they'll likely tell you securing a loan is no easy feat. And if the proprietor is a minority or a woman, the barriers to capital are often tougher to break.

According to 2015 figures by the U.S. Small Business Association, minority-owned businesses make up

30.9 percent of all small businesses in Oregon.

But while that number is a slight increase from previous years, the financial challenges facing these groups far outpace non-minority entrepreneurs.

It's the reason Ascent Funding formed back in 2008. Originally called Albina Opportunities Corporation and headed by Terry Brandt,

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PHOTO COURTESY OF ASCENT FUNDING

If a proprietor is a woman or person of color, the barriers to capital are often tougher to break