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INSIDE:
BLACK HISTORY MONTH
Special Edition

STATE OF AFRICATOWN



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

MC Dr Renee McCoy, jokes with Chukundi Salisbury, with Showing Up for Youth after introducing him at the 5th annual "State of Africatown: Team African American African Diaspora" gathering held Feb. 17 at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute. It featured presentations on the accomplishments of the last year, as well as vision, opportunities, and challenges facing the African American and African Diaspora community in 2018 and beyond.

Business Funds Start-Ups with T-Shirt Sales 'Fund a Founder' raises capital for Black and female-owned tech companies

By *Melanie Sevcenko*
For *The Skanner News*

Local tech entrepreneurs Marceau Michel and Kathryn Brown have recently turned a simple retail transaction into an innovative means of bankrolling start-ups.

Launched last fall, Fund a Founder works by offering anybody a chance to fund small companies through the purchase of a custom T-shirt or hoodie. Shoppers can choose between the 'Black Founders Matter' line or the 'Fund Female Founders' collection, designed by artists Zephani

Knaus in Portland and Atlanta resident Will Henry.

Through apparel sales, Michel and Brown are looking to take down the barrier to capital — one T-shirt at a time.

While offering gifts or incentives to public donors is nothing new in the crowdfunding sphere, Michel said he's yet to hear of a tech company that's doing it with t-shirts.

"It's definitely a different approach to fundraising and supporting minorities and women in tech," Michel told *The Skanner*.

Yet the genesis of the campaign came naturally

between friends. "(Kathryn and I) both faced the same challenges when it came raising money for our business. And we both have celebrated, award-winning businesses that no one wants to fund," he joked.

Michel's on-demand staffing platform, Werkhorse, won him the Techstars Startup Weekend, Portland Pitchfest, and a grant from Prosper Portland. It was also selected to present at last year's AfroTech, the largest Black tech conference in the nation. In 2018, Michel will be taking Werkhorse to

TiE Oregon, an incubator for the state's newest tech start-ups.

Likewise, Brown's ScoutSavvy — a career finding tool for women in tech — scored her the 2017 Company of the Year: Pre-revenue Award at the Oregon Technology Awards and was a finalist for the Top Social Impact Startups for the 2017 Bend Venture Conference.

But regardless of the accolades and the demand for their products, the two Portland entrepreneurs have run into the same trying circumstance time and

See **START-UPS** on page 3

Minding the Business of the USDA Forest Service

Contracting officer Stevonne Fuller manages contracting agreements and logistics

By *Christen McCurdy*
Of *The Skanner News*

Stevonne Fuller majored in business and initially considered a career in finance before a chance encounter with a recruiter from the USDA Forest Service changed her mind.

Originally from Englewood, New Jersey, Fuller attended Florida A & M University and graduated from its

five-year master of business administration program, which grants students a combined bachelor's degree and MBA after five years of study. She considered careers at financial services firms like Ernst & Young, but then attended a career fair held by the university and met a Forest Service recruiter who was also a FAMU graduate.

"She explained the type of work

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PHOTO BY CHRISTEN MCCURDY

Stevonne Fuller is a contracting officer for the USDA Forest Service.



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Longer-term residents of Lake Oswego say last month's racist incident targeting an African American student was not isolated.

Racism in Lake Oswego

Families talk about their experiences in Lake Oswego Schools

By *Christen McCurdy*
The Skanner News

Families affected by racism in the Lake Oswego School District have organized a meeting to be held on the morning of Feb. 26 to talk to students about Black History Month and address racist behavior at the school.

The event comes exactly one month after an African American student was handed a note with a racial slur written on it, sparking local and national media coverage, a Feb. 5 student walkout and scrutiny of racial politics of the wealthy, predominantly White suburb southwest of Portland.

The district has also seen a shakeup
See **LAKE OSWEGO** on page 3



PHOTO BY KAYLA IRBY HUNS

Former FBI Director addresses spying on Black activists in a discussion with Howard University students.

Comey Visits Howard University

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Kam Gives 'Black Panther' 4 Stars

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