

Podcast cont'd from pg 1

at camps with refugees from places such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Rwanda, capturing their stories in collaborative images between the artist and his sitters.

“Common Ground” combines photographs from eight of his series, and for Portland Meet Portland – a local orga-

to him, is still culturally, socially and economically divided, largely due to its history of racism and exclusion.

“Youth, like those in the RISE program, have to navigate the terrain of both the cultures of their countries of origin and the dominant culture here in Portland,” said Padilla, adding that

“It’s not just a picture we see, it’s part of our reality and our history

nization that connects immigrants and refugees to mentors – the exhibit was the catalyst for a discussion on refugee life in Portland.

Hosted by Manuel Padilla, executive director of Portland Meet Portland, the podcast speaks with eight students in the RISE program – run by the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – on how their own experiences are reflected in Sheikh’s photographs.

As for creating a podcast around the talk, Padilla told *The Skanner* that the audio format strikes the perfect balance. “In many ways, it complements the visual nature of the photography exhibition by putting voice to the silence of an image,” he said.

“For this particular group, I think the podcast is the best way for them to be able to express themselves fully, their thoughts and feelings about ‘Common Ground,’ without the nervousness and apprehension that comes with being in front of a large group of people. It provides both intimacy and the projection of their voices to a mass audience.”

For Padilla, speaking to the students of RISE is one small way toward desegregating Portland – a city which, according

he wanted to give these students the first crack at commenting on the exhibition.

In the first of three podcasts, Saman, who came to Portland from Somalia in 2015, says, “The pictures are like a flashback of our lives, the stories our parents have been through. It’s not just a picture we see, it’s part of our reality and our history. Seeing this is very deep and emotional for us.”

In certain instances, explained Padilla, Portland refugees who visited Sheikh’s exhibit actually knew some of the subjects in the photographs.

“These youth, then, can help translate what we are seeing and fill in the gaps of what we are not seeing, because these aren’t just photos, they are family,” he said.

Likewise, Bedour, who left Iraq with her family in 2014, immediately connected with a portrait of a young girl.

“There was one picture with a girl who was holding a flower, she was about three or four years old,” says Bedour in the podcast. “She was staring at it with no facial expression. It’s kind of connected to me, when I was in Iraq, thinking I had no future.”

Read more at TheSkanner.com

African American Literature Symposium

Grant High School Teacher Courtney Palmer and Dr. Shirley Jackson, chair of the Portland State University Black Studies Program, collaborated on the first annual African American Literature Symposium for PPS students, held May 3 at PSU. Students in Ms. Palmer’s Dual Credit African American Literature course were selected to present their work at the University. Students from PSU’s Black Studies Program supported the event by providing moderation, feedback, and connecting with the high school students. Topics ranged from “The Relationship Between the National Football League and Slavery” (senior Damon Hickok) to “Colorism’s Roots in Slaveholder’s Practices” (Rosey Sams). Sixteen Grant seniors presented their work. Grant High School Vice Principal, Diallo Lewis, who supported and attended the event, remarked, “It was a great opportunity for students to educate other students on the history of Black people in America.” Presenters Paige Ball-Strickland & Damon Hickok are pictured here.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSIE ANGLADA BARTLEY

Housing cont'd from pg 1

It also shows that due to a combination of rapidly rising rents and stagnant wages far below the median for the metropolitan area, African Americans are more likely than other Portlanders to be housing burdened, meaning they pay more than 50 percent of their income in rent.

“It’s unacceptable. It really is,” said Katrina Holland, executive director of the Community Alliance of Tenants, which advises and advocates for renters around the state. “The data shows that we as a city have a huge responsibility on our hands to think about the way in which we are crafting policy that either helps increase a range of choice for families or decreases a range of choice of families.”

Among the report’s findings: Rents rose by an average of 2 percent in 2017. That’s the first time since 2012 that Portland rents have increased by less than 5 percent, and the average rental unit now charges \$1,398 – \$31 than the previous year;

The average Black household in Portland, with a median income of \$27,412, cannot afford to rent anywhere in the city without being cost-burdened;

Neither can Latino households (with a median income of \$38,901) or Native households (with a median income of \$28,373) or households headed by single mothers. The average senior household (with a median income of \$39,328)

“It’s unacceptable. It really is

can only afford rent in one Portland neighborhood, located in East Portland.

Though most neighborhoods saw increases in rent, the average rents stabilized in MLK-Alberta, Interstate, Northwest and West Portland;

The number of residents of color increased in almost every neighborhood in the city between 2000 and 2015 – with the exception of MLK-Alberta and the Interstate corridor, which are historically Black neighborhoods where the percentage of residents of color decreased in that period;

Communities of color are increasingly concentrated in East Portland and outer Southeast Portland;

Rents in some East Portland neighborhoods – including Park-

rose-Argay and Pleasant Valley – experienced larger rent increases than the rest of the city;

The average senior household can only afford to rent in one Portland neighborhood;

Homeownership rates fell in a majority of Portland neighborhoods in 2017, and there are no neighborhoods where low-income Black, Latino, Native American, senior or single-mother households can afford to purchase a home.

The report draws in part from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, according to which the number of Black Portlanders decreased from 41,589 to 35,667 between 2000 and 2015; also in that window, the number of Black Portlanders living in poverty increased from 25.9 percent to 39.1 percent.

According to Shannon Callahan, the housing bureau’s interim director, the city also used CoStar, a proprietary real estate database, to ascertain changes in the housing market, including median rents.

“For communities of color, Portland is out of reach,” Holland said.

Read more at TheSkanner.com

Mothers cont'd from pg 1

Spencer noted that organizers considered a bailout campaign for Clark County, but bail amounts there tend to

jails and prisons, and Black women are disproportionately represented in correctional facilities nationwide: in Mult-

“If a judge has deemed that you can be released and you are able to be part of society, money should not be the thing that keeps you from doing that

be much higher – but she hopes to organize a Clark County fundraiser in the future. She noted the National Bail Out website has a tool kit that allows people anywhere to create bailout campaigns in their communities.

Women in general are the fastest-growing population of people in

nomah County, Black people represent 27 percent of people in prisons and jails and six percent of the population.

Spencer said participating in the Philadelphia helped shine a light on the inequity inherent in the money bail system, which she said unfairly penalizes poor people in jail.

“If a judge has deemed that you can be released and you are able to be part of society, money should not be the thing that keeps you from doing that,” Spencer said.

According to a press release from Portland’s Resistance announcing the fundraising campaign, organizers are planning another bailout in June for Juneteenth and Father’s Day. Any funds raised that exceeds this week’s need – including bail



PHOTO COURTESY OF MULTNOMAH COUNTY

A group of Portland-area activists is raising money to bail Black mothers out of jail so they can be with their families for Mother’s Day – and wants an end to the money-bail system.

amounts that may be returned at women’s court dates in some circumstances – will be rolled over to that campaign.