

Income cont'd from pg 1

said. “This is not the way the government typically works. This is not the way major foundations typically work.”

Funding Hope

Brown Hope’s initial program has a \$500,000 budget, much of which comes from community donations. With

“We’re a healing justice initiative

a \$100,000 match campaign from the Oregon Community Foundation, the organization is more than halfway to its goal.

Applicants for the Black Resilience Fund’s basic income program must be at least 18, identify as Black, African American or African, and reside in Multnomah County. Priority is given to single parents, those who have been incarcerated, workers making within two dollars of Portland’s hourly minimum wage, and those who have been through the foster care system.

Single applicants are eligible for monthly payments of \$1,000, while adults with one or two children are eligible for \$1,500, and adults with three or more children can apply for \$2,000 a month.

The program’s income caps for applicants take into account the high annual costs of childcare. A household of four people or more, for example, can bring in up to \$74,745 a year and still be eligible.

Data from other such programs internationally arrives at the same conclusion: That providing guaranteed income – even income that is not enough to fully substitute a salary – takes participants out of the survival mindset, leading to improved physical and mental health outcomes and family stability.

“Brown Hope and the Black Resilience Fund,

we are not an economic justice initiative,” Whitten said. “We’re a healing justice initiative, and that is more encompassing than just finances.”

Similar programs tend to last about a year. Whitten explained how the Black Resilience Fund decided to create a three-year model.

“I think the biggest challenge that we’ve seen with basic income pilots and projects in the U.S. is that they’ve been one year, and also many of them have been \$1,000 a month,” Whitten said. “But we know that long-term resilience happens over a longer time horizon than a year. We believe that we are setting up folks for their best success with a three-year time investment.

“A year of basic income is not enough to be able to be set up for success at school, or to take time off to do job training, or to build a family,” Whitten said. “These are things that we know take planning, and for many folks that first year is going to be taking off the weight of worry, taking off the stress from scarcity. That second year is building that abundance mindset, building trust and confidence in self. Third year is blastoff. That’s the way that I see it.”

Survival and Dignity

Stacey Rutland, founder and director of Portland-based Income Movement, argued the COVID crisis has given Americans a taste of guaranteed basic income.

“In addition to the drastic jolts to our broader economy, I think the pandemic was the first time our government decided to address an economic downturn by giving cash directly to people,” Rutland told *The Skanner*. “So you have the stimulus checks, you have the child tax credit that went out for six months last year.

Read more at
TheSkanner.com



PHOTO COURTESY PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Reduced Costs for Parks Programs

Portland Parks & Recreation announces the bureau’s new financial assistance program, designed to reduce cost as a barrier and to allow for easier access to participate in its offerings. The new Access Pass for activities, programs and passes to be used for programs begins Oct. 3. For more information, visit portland.gov/parks/parks-levy

Preschool cont'd from pg 1

nity for children that may be a little bit behind developmentally, to get screenings for hearing, dental, to really get them ready so when they do get in a K-12 setting they’re ready to go. And parents build community with a teacher early on.”

“Preschool is an opportunity for young children to really learn how to be with others

The program is funded by a tax on high-income households.

“The return on investment is so rich, too – it’s monetary,” Barnes added. “Every dollar spent has a \$7 return. It also prevents some of the things we don’t want to see – the preschool to prison pipeline. This gets children on the right track for the future.”

Of the more than 1,100 applications received for the 2022-2023 school year, PFA reports 28% were Black, African or African American. Eighty-one percent of the applicants’ families were low-income, and 4% were experiencing homelessness.

“(That) children from families that have been historically marginalized should be at the front of

the line is still a radical thought for people,” Molly Day, early learning director at Early Learning Multnomah and a member of the PFA advisory committee, said. “Or that investing in young children, even if you can’t unequivocally show that they’re going to be college geniuses or better third grade readers, is still worth it. That the rich should be taxed for social good for children of families they’ve never met. When I think about the world I want to leave behind, I want to leave behind a world where those values are clear and embedded in policy.”

Closing the Gaps

The program aims not only to increase access to early childhood learning, but also to boost the number of preschool sites throughout the county in the wake of a 20% drop in providers.

“The pandemic made shockingly clear how unstable our child care system is,” Brooke Chilton-Timmons, early learning coordinator for the Department of County Human Services, said during an earlier meeting of the Preschool for All advisory committee. “There are 300 fewer providers operating in Multnomah County now than in February 2020.”

Potential providers are invited to participate in either the PFA Pathways Program, which offers

up to two years of coaching and guidance for providers to meet the PFA requirements, or the Pilot Project Sites program, which offers coaching and other support to approved providers.

PFA expects to reimburse providers up to \$15,000 per school year for students on a school day schedule, and up to \$21,000 for students on a year-round work day schedule.

PFA preschool sites must meet a host of requirements. In-home providers must commit to providing a minimum of four slots, with centers committing to at least 10 slots and school districts to 18. PFA works with families to determine the best placement for each student, with families ranking their top three choices.

To participate, providers must agree not to suspend or expel students – an equity measure that reflects the disproportionate disciplining of Black students in even early education settings.

“We understand that there are going to be needed supports, and we are interested in having deeper conversations with providers we’re working with to ensure that all children can be successful in their PFA placements,” Leslee Barnes, director of the Department of County Human Services’ Preschool & Early Learning Division.

See PRESCHOOL on page 11

Virus cont'd from pg 1

on an existing stigma, although the virus has been detected without a clear link to Africa.

The majority – 84 percent—of confirmed cases are from the European region, followed by the Americas, Africa, Eastern Mediterranean region and Western Pacific region.

“The most obvious manifestation of this is the use of photos of African patients to depict the pox lesions in mainstream media in the global north,” the researchers said.

Ahmed Ogwell, deputy director of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and more than a dozen

infectious disease experts in the U.S. and Europe are soliciting suggestions

“The most obvious manifestation of this is the use of photos of African patients to depict the pox lesions in mainstream media

for a new name using the website virological.org.

“We are removing the distinction between endemic and non-endemic countries, reporting on countries together where possible, to reflect the unified response that is needed,” the WHO said in its outbreak situation update sent out on July 23.

As for what the virus should be called, the scientists suggest starting with hMPXV, to denote the human version of the monkeypox virus. Rather than geographic locations, they say, letters and numbers should be used, based on order of discovery. In that system, the lineage behind the current international outbreak would be dubbed B.1.

It has been reported in 39 countries so far in 2022, and most of them are having their first-ever cases of the disease, according to the WHO. Worldwide, it says, there are around 3,100 confirmed or suspected cases, including 72 deaths. The normal initial symptoms include a high fever, swollen lymph nodes and a blistery chickenpox-like rash.

Between January 1 and June 15, 2,103 confirmed cases, a probable case and one death have been reported to the WHO in 42 countries, it said.

Global Information Network creates and distributes news and feature articles on current affairs in Africa.