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everyone to pick up a copy of it.”

The newspaper special issue will be a collection

“This will be a historical newspaper. It’s a keepsake item

of some of the most important stories *The Skanner*

has covered, as well as highlights of how the community has grown in the years *The Skanner* has been in print. This special issue will be researched and written by longtime former *The Skanner* editor Lisa Loving.

If you would like to advertise in *The Skanner’s* special issue, please contact Jerry Foster at [jerry@theskanner.com](mailto:jerry@theskanner.com) or 503-285-5555 ext. 506.

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escalates as soon as you learn how to walk and go to school and go to the doctor — any institution that has authority over your body at the time is kind of violent towards you, so you learn to deal with violence, especially systemic violence. I don’t think for us it’s any different than before the election, and it won’t be different than the last 10, 15 years.

What added precautions do we need in a state of violence that we’ve already been dealing with? I don’t know.

I’m a Black woman. I’m living. I live with happiness and joy in my heart everyday. White people don’t have power over me, that’s why I’m a community organizer. I’ve got to teach other people not to let people’s hate and their value systems make you feel less than human, even though they’re set up to dehumanize you. We have to fight against that every single day, not just in a Trump America.

**What is your response to local elections?**

I think anybody that ran an anti-Black campaign got the numbers, the donations and support that they needed. I

think no one wanted to center Blackness, especially here in Oregon, and if they did center a Black candidate, they tried to center things that didn’t have anything to do with the color of their skin — unless it was where they grew up. Somebody might be from Northeast Portland, but let’s not talk about how Black they are; let’s talk about how they assimilated.

**Does a second Trump administration change anything about the community organizing work you do?**

Outside of connecting with my friend who’s a doctor who provides therapy and programs that support people being proactive in their own managed care and emotional care, outside of adding that to our outreach and advocacy, I don’t see much more I can do. If we would’ve organized protests, obviously there would be demands, but our demands are the same.

The things that we’ve been doing — critical support, mutual aid — those are things we’re going to keep doing.

On election night we had two exhibits that



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**Volunteers Clean Up**

This past Saturday, the Great Powell Cleanup brought together over 100 dedicated volunteers who took action across 10 locations, successfully removing 1,200 pounds of litter. The event, spanning neighborhoods such as South Tabor, Richmond, Hosford Abernathy, Creston, and three Brooklyn locations, exemplified the community’s commitment to keeping Portland clean and vibrant. Portland’s mayor-elect, Keith Wilson, made an appearance at the Hosford Abernathy cleanup site, lending his support alongside his wife.

push conversation and dialogue to promote community engagement, which is to us mutual aid and advocacy. One is at PCC Sylvania, and it’s a replica exhibition that includes the panels from the 2020 protest and has been set up as a place for conversations post-election. It opened on election night.

We have a gallery downtown, the Black Gallery, where we have a show that’s called Room for Conversation. There’s some very provocative pieces in there from people like Cheryl Walker and Faith Ringgold and Ernie Barnes — people that are known for contributing to the art world images that are around racism and violence, we have those on display.

It opened election night and it goes through Inauguration Day. It provides people with a space for having these tough con-

versations. And we’re trying to use this space not only to connect with community that needs to kind of mediate through what’s happening, but also to look at what’s happening so we can build up what our resiliency will be for the next four years.

We even have an oral history booth in here so people can document their feelings and have that as an archive for the future.

We’re working with a doctor, we have this space where, when you walk in, not only is there fine art on the walls, we’ve put in lounge seating so there’s all these places to sit down. I found the place I felt safest as a child, going through foster care and all the other stuff in my life, was my grandma’s house. I would go there and there were things in the house that were al-

ways the same. Whether it was 1980 or 1990, you were going to find some Ebony magazines, some Jet magazines, you were going to find a comfortable pillow — a little warmth in the space that made you know you were in a safe space.

On election night, we had probably 40-something people that came through for that opening event, and we were all in there drinking wine, watching the election returns on the big screen, and by the time eight o’clock rolled around we were drinking tequila and whiskey and it was cool, cause everybody was comforting each other. But it really landed as the place we wanted. Like, where are our people going to go with that energy? We weren’t interested in protesting because we knew the outcome, unfortunately. We knew what was going to

happen. So we thought, if nothing else we can share desserts and wine with our community and we can let everybody know that everything’s going to be ok, and say look, we’ve got each other. And as long as we’ve got each other, we can always organize and make our lives better. Continue to organize, continue to look out for each other.

For more information on these exhibits, visit <https://theblackgallerypdx.com>.

**Lakayana Drury**

Drury is the founder, executive director and chief visionary officer of Word Is Bond, a leadership incubator for young Black men in Portland. He gave *The Skanner* his thoughts on how the presidential campaigns failed to address the needs of the young men he works with, how to better engage with youth

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those previously unable to afford it. However, the enhanced subsidies are only guaranteed through the end of 2025, and with Republicans newly in control of the Senate and vying for control of the House, the potential loss of these financial aids could spell trouble for millions of Americans who depend on the ACA.

“These historic enrollment numbers are a testament to the need for comprehensive, quality, affordable health insurance,” said Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, Administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. “Not only is demand for Marketplace insurance coverage at an all-time high, but the Marketplaces are delivering on the Affordable Care Act’s promise to provide the peace of mind that comes with having health insurance to millions of Americans.”

While the House remains undecided, with Republicans projected at 215

seats to Democrats’ 210 and a majority requiring 218, health policy experts warn that GOP control could end these subsidies. House Speaker Mike Johnson suggested at a campaign stop that significant reforms to the ACA could be forthcoming. “The ACA is so deeply ingrained, we need massive reform to make this work, and we’ve got a lot of ideas on how to do that,” Johnson asserted.

The states with the highest ACA enrollment rates in 2024 were largely conservative strongholds supporting President-elect Trump, including Florida with 4.2 million enrollees, Texas with 3.5 million, and Georgia with 1.3 million. These five states — Florida, Texas, California, Georgia, and North Carolina — accounted for 55% of total ACA enrollment. Each state uses the federal Healthcare.gov enrollment platform and has yet to expand Medicaid under the ACA, making the ACA subsidies particularly vital for affordable health-

care access.

The subsidies have also substantially impacted middle-income families, including those with incomes above 400% of the federal poverty level, or approximately \$103,280 for a family of four. For this group, enhanced subsidies have capped insurance premiums at 8.5% of income; without the subsidies, premiums could exceed 20% of income, according to Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) Vice President Cynthia Cox. Cox cautioned that if subsidies expire, middle-income enrollees would likely be hit the hardest, as many would be priced out of coverage entirely. “A lot of those folks would drop coverage,” she noted.

ACA enrollment has also surged rapidly in states like Texas and Mississippi, where growth rates have exceeded 200% since 2020. Notably, these states had some of the highest uninsured rates before introducing the enhanced subsidies. Without Medicaid expan-

sion, the ACA marketplace has been the primary avenue for affordable insurance.

Enhanced subsidies, which reduce premiums for eligible enrollees by an average of 44%, or about \$705 per year, have made health insurance more accessible than ever. However, if Congress fails to renew them, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that ACA enrollment could fall from 22.8 million in 2025 to 15.4 million by 2030 as millions of Americans lose affordable options. Without financial support, many of these individuals — who have come to rely on the ACA for medical peace of mind — could be forced to go without insurance, leading to even higher rates of medical debt, which stood at \$220 billion nationwide in 2021.

For now, ACA enrollees can rest assured that their 2025 premiums will remain stable if they enroll during the current open enrollment period.