



Minority Business

Special Edition 2025

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Chef Kiara "Kitchen Killa" Hardy, is a nationally renowned private chef and caterer known for her "sophisticated comfort food" and high-profile clientele.

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Empress Edwards-EL, a former public health expert, now runs 'Yummy Empire', a dessert shop in Portland's Lloyd Center Mall after losing her government DEI job.

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Kymberly Horner Leads PCRI with Vision and Commitment Driving Progress Through Equity and Purpose

Kymberly Horner has served as Executive Director of Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc. (PCRI) since July 2019, becoming only the second person to hold the post in the organization's nearly three decades of service. Under her leadership, PCRI has continued its mission of providing affordable housing, creating pathways to homeownership, and promoting wealth-building for communities historically disenfranchised in Portland, particularly people of color.

Horner grew up in Westlake Village, California, where civic engagement was a part of daily life. Her father served as Mayor and as a City Councilmember for 18 years, giving Horner an early understanding of the role local leadership can play in shaping communities. She got her start in public service working for California Congressman Brad Sherman, assisting constituents and learning how to navigate governmental processes to make services accessible.

Her career path then led her to the City of Oxnard, where she spent over 17 years in local government, most recently as Economic Development Director. In that role, she oversaw downtown revitalization, business attraction and retention, and retail development. Horner has said those experiences taught her how to connect economic development with long-term community stability—a lesson she has carried into her work at PCRI.

Since joining PCRI, Horner has guided the organization through a period of both challenge and growth. The nonprofit owns and operates over 2000 doors in North and Northeast Portland, neighborhoods that have seen dramatic increases in property values and displacement pressures. She has emphasized maintaining a strong organizational foundation to



Kymberly Horner, Executive Director of Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc. (PCRI)

manage during economically challenging times, ensuring PCRI can continue serving the residents who rely on its programs.

Early in her tenure, Horner oversaw the financing, construction, and community planning for King + Parks, a 70-unit affordable housing rental project in the Piedmont neighborhood. Despite the disruptions of COVID-19, the project moved forward successfully, providing much-needed rental units and reinforcing PCRI's commitment to sustainable, inclusive community development. Between 2019 and 2020, she and her team also completed two separate for-sale townhome projects, enabling approximately 10 income-qualified families to achieve homeownership.

Horner's leadership extends beyond new construction. Her team is now turning its attention to the development of 12 new homeownership units on four parcels owned by PCRI. Aged units will be removed to make way for modern homes, which will be offered to lower- to middle-income qualified residents once construction is complete. This effort builds on PCRI's broader commitment to creating wealth-building opportunities for Port-

land residents, particularly those impacted by decades of gentrification.

At the same time, PCRI has invested in its existing housing portfolio. The organization recently restored 16 single-family homes using grants from the Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF), and plans to move another 50 single-family homes into PCEF grant funding pending approval. Additional homes will receive support from Constructing Hope, a like-minded organization dedicated to rebuilding the lives of people in the community. These efforts highlight Horner's strategic focus on not just building new units, but also sustaining and improving existing housing stock.

Horner is also leading several larger-scale initiatives. The Williams & Russell redevelopment will bring 85 rental units and a mix of homeownership opportunities to a historic site in North/Northeast Portland. Horner personally secured \$2 million in Congressional earmark funding for the project, demonstrating her ability to leverage federal resources

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Portland Not in Chaos — No Grounds for Military Action!

Judge Temporarily Blocks Trump Administration from Deploying Troops

(AP) — A federal judge in Oregon temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's administration from deploying the National Guard in Portland, ruling Saturday in a lawsuit brought by the state and city.

U.S. District Judge Karin Immergut, who was appointed by Trump during his first term, issued the order pending further arguments in the suit. She said the relatively small protests the city has seen did not justify the use of federalized forces and allowing the deployment could harm Oregon's state sovereignty.

"This country has a longstanding and foundational tradition of resistance to government overreach, especially in the form of military intrusion into civil affairs," Immergut wrote. She later continued, "This historical tradition boils down to a simple proposition: this is a nation of Constitutional law, not martial law."

The Trump administration late Saturday filed a notice of



Demonstrators standoff against Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents outside an ICE facility on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025, in Portland, Ore. (AP Photo/Jenny Kane)

appeal to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

State and city officials sued to stop the deployment last week, one day after the Trump administration announced that 200 Oregon National Guard troops would be federalized to protect federal buildings. The president called the city "war-ravaged."

Oregon officials said that characterization was ludicrous. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in the city has been the site of nightly protests that typically drew a couple dozen people in recent weeks before the deployment was announced.

Generally speaking, the president is allowed "a great level

of deference" to federalize National Guard troops in situations where regular law enforcement forces are not able to execute the laws of the United States, the judge said, but that has not been the case in Portland.

Plaintiffs were able to show that the demonstrations at the immigration building were not signifi-

cantly violent or disruptive ahead of the president's order, the judge wrote, and "overall, the protests were small and uneventful."

"The President's determination was simply untethered to the facts," Immergut wrote.

Following the ruling, White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson said that "President Trump exercised his lawful authority to protect federal assets and personnel in Portland following violent riots and attacks on law enforcement — we expect to be vindicated by a higher court."

Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield called the ruling "a healthy check on the president."

"It reaffirms what we already knew: Portland is not the president's war-torn fantasy. Our city is not ravaged, and there is no rebellion," Rayfield said in a statement. He added: "Members of the Oregon National Guard are not a tool for him to use in his political theater."

Trump has deployed or threatened to deploy troops in several U.S. cities, particularly ones led by Democrats, including Los Angeles, Washington, Chicago and Memphis. Speaking Tuesday to U.S. military leaders in Virgin-

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The **INSIDE****LOCAL NEWS**

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The **Portland Observer**

Established 1970 USPS 959 680
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Portland Street Response Expands Access

Crisis Support Team Now Easier to Reach

Portland Street Response has announced several changes – including a new number and new hours – to improve the program's ability to assist people experiencing mental health and behavioral health crises.

Effective October 1, you can reach Portland Street Response by calling 911 or 503-823-7773 from 6 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week. Both lines will be answered by trained 911 call takers. Please continue to call 911 when reporting instances involving an immediate threat to life or property.

"We are thrilled! The Portland Street Response specific phone number illustrates what can be accomplished when the Portland Public Safety Service Area works together to meet community needs," said April Roa, Interim Program Manager for Portland Street Response. "We thank our partners at the Portland Bureau of Emergency Communications for helping make this possible."

Portland Street Response is available to assist individuals



Portland Street Response's founding team. (Photo Courtesy of Portland Street Response)

who are down and have not been checked, those experiencing an active crisis—such as yelling, crying, agitation, disorganized or repetitive behavior, or talking to unseen others—people who are inappropriately dressed for the weather and at risk of exposure-related injury or illness, individuals seeking support with resources but without access to a phone, and those wishing to reconnect with

Portland Street Response services after prior contact.

Portland Street Response is not available to respond to individuals who are actively suicidal, those brandishing weapons or behaving violently, third-party callers reporting homeless encampments without any indicators of crisis, or third-party callers requesting supplies, resources, referrals, or shuttling without any signs of crisis.

New Partnership Supports PSU Business Students' Careers

Career Resources and Financial Insights

OnPoint Community Credit Union announced a new partnership with The School of Business at Portland State University, to help prepare students for a successful career. OnPoint will be folded into several School of Business events throughout the 2025-2026 school year, while also providing guest speakers and panelists for business classes and gatherings. Oregon's largest credit union will also cover the cost of new headshots for students, giving them a professional start to their business careers.

"Any successful career begins with a solid educational foundation, and The School of Business



at PSU has provided its students with an exceptional experience for more than 50 years," said Bob Harding, chief commercial officer, OnPoint Community Credit Union. "Education is OnPoint's foundation, so the partnership makes perfect sense.

We look forward to supporting the next generation of business leaders, and we are excited to enrich their PSU experience and encourage their ambition."

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Empowering Brands & Communities Through Strategic Marketing

Press Release Marketing is a full-service marketing and consulting firm founded by Crystal Chanel. We provide creative strategies and project management for profitable businesses and nonprofit organizations, offering services that include branding, social media, graphic design, website development, event production, and community engagement.

Our clients—ranging from chefs, restaurants, gyms, trainers, and chiropractors to nonprofits like the Urban League of Portland, Urban League of Broward, NAACP Portland Branch, Elevate Oregon and ELO, Inc.—turn to us to save time, outsource marketing tasks, and achieve results with consistent, professional campaigns.

For more than 12 years, Press Release Marketing has produced high-profile events such as the Urban League of Portland's Equal Opportunity Gala and the NAACP Portland Freedom Fund Dinner.

Led by Crystal Chanel, a nationally recognized marketing professional and Legacy Magazine Top 40 Under 40 honoree, Press Release



Crystal Chanel

Marketing continues to help organizations build visibility, expand their reach, and create meaningful connections with their audiences.

Meet Chef Kiara Hardy, A.K.A. Kitchen Killa

Chef Kiara "Kitchen Killa" Hardy is the renowned owner of Kitchen Killa Culinary Solutions, a full-service, luxury catering and private chef company serving clients nationally, with a home base in the Pacific Northwest since 2015.

Chef Hardy, a South Florida native, prides herself on creating "sophisticated comfort food" by blending the nostalgic feeling of culinary favorites with inspiration and influence from all over the world.

Hardy, who is currently headquartered in Lake Oswego, Oregon, serves as the CEO and Executive Chef of a team of culinary and service professionals who provide private chef services, corporate catering and culinary solutions to several high-profile Portland residents, well established non-profits, in demand-restaurants and various members of the Portland Trailblazer organization from players and coaches to front office personnel.

Chef's passion for culinary and hospitality is evident, in-demand and making headlines. Search online for Kitchen Killa media mentions in the Willamette Weekly, The Portland Medium and PDX Eater to name a few. More press can be found online at www.kitchenkilla.com.

Meanwhile, Hardy continues to handle the demands of her Florida and Oregon clientele by successfully staffing local



Chef Kiara Hardy

chefs in each state for businesses, weddings, corporate events and other private affairs. Kitchen Killa clients have come to expect a culinary experience like no other.

Clients include: Kairos, Friends of Baseball, Nike, USA Basketball, American Express, NBA, Congresswoman Janelle Bynum, University of Portland and several current and former NBA, NFL & WNBA players.

To request quote for your next event, please email kiara@kitchenkilla.com or visit kitchenkilla.com.

Molly Washington Director of the Native American Program



Molly Washington Director of the Native American Program

Legal Aid Services of Oregon Announces Molly Washington as the New Director of the Native American Program

Legal Aid Services of Oregon (LASO) recently welcomed Molly Washington (N'dee/Apache) to serve as the next Director of the Native American Program, historically known as NAPOLS. Since its inception in 1979, NAPOLS has provided high-quality legal advice and representation to income-eligible Native American community members, organizations, and Indian Tribes throughout Oregon, covering an array of legal issues including estate planning, guardianship, expungement, benefits access, tribal sovereignty and more.

Molly brings a breadth of experience to this leadership position, having spent over 16 years as a civil law practicing attorney in both the private and public sectors, as well as experience in non-profit leadership. Molly currently serves as the Chair of the Native American Youth and Family Center, having served on the Board for the past six years, and has worked with many other Native-led organizations throughout the region. Molly's approach to her work at NAPOLS is guided by her cultural values which instill responsibility, respect, balance, interconnection, humility, and truth. Molly is ecstatic about the opportunity to advance and reinvigorate the Native American Program so that it remains responsive to community needs and the shifting legal landscape.

"NAPOLS is a program that has the ability to provide significant legal support to the members of our Native community who are most in need," Molly said. "Our community is resilient, adaptable, creative, strong, and inspiring. Our work is to advocate, to educate, and to empower all of those traits. I am grateful for the opportunity to play a small part in the long legacy of NAPOLS and am honored that its future has been entrusted to our team."

If you want to learn more about the Native American Program of LASO and its services, go to Native American Program - LASO


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SPEAKER



Public Health Expert Becomes Pastry Entrepreneur

Small Businesses in Lloyd

BY BEVERLY CORBELL

Like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, after losing her high-level government job, Empress Edwards-EL went from a nationally-known public health expert to owning a pastry shop in the Lloyd Center Mall.

"I was still working full-time this year, but with the new president I received a layoff notice," Edwards said. "I had a DEI job (diversity, equity and inclusion)," a field that President Trump notoriously came out as against.

Business is okay at Yummy Empire, Edwards said, but it could be better.

"It's a good place for start-ups and to keep some money in owners' pockets, but the mall management is not promoting us at all, not even a sign that we're open during construction," she said.

With EI in her name reflecting her Moorish heritage, Edwards said got the idea for Yummy Empire while teaching her 16-year-old twin daughters, Olivia and Gracie, how to create traditional dessert recipes, like sweet potato pie and peach cobbler, and she then opened a website where people could pre-order.

Business was so good that she rented a commercial kitchen and sold treats like the pies, banana pudding, strawberry pizza and walnut chocolate chip cookies.

"We use no bleached flour or white sugar," she said. "Only good quality ingredients, so everything is homemade from scratch."

As chance would have it, one day when Edwards was at the Lloyd Center, she noticed that a former Cinnabon store had closed while she was eating burgers with her girls in the food court, when a friend happened by and encouraged her to take over the Cinnabon space.

"I contacted (mall) management and took it from there," she

said. "My daughters are back in school now and traffic is slow, but there's not enough business to hire someone, and I need to grow the business so I can sustain a household."

Edwards has also expanded her menu to include ground beef tacos, milkshakes, Italian sodas, espresso and ice cream by the scoop, using family recipes.

"Everything is like mama and them made," she said. "I'm a picky eater, and we like to be a place where you can come and get it the way you want it — we can even put strawberries in your banana pudding."

Edwards has a degree in business administration and over 22 years in public health for state and county health departments, dealing with HIV and chronic disease management and wellness.

"I was on Montel and Oprah, on the cover of the Portland Observer, and in Cosmopolitan, sat on planning councils, advocated for youth-based programs out of Wahington, DC, was instrumental in getting comprehensive sex education in schools, and worked with immigrants and built programs through the Albina Ministerial Alliance," she said.

Her last government job was with the Washington State Department of Health, and it's been a struggle since then, but one Edwards believes she can handle.

"A theme of my life is taking a bad situation and turning it into opportunities, from growing up with a parent struggling with addiction, to getting diagnosed with a chronic illness," she said.

Edwards originally named her store Yummy Treats, but switched to Yummy Empire when she found the original name had been trademarked, but she can still be found on Instagram under yummytreats911 and can be reached by email at yummytreats911@gmail.com.

But to be profitable, said Edwards' friend Latina McCord, another Black businesswoman who owns Latina's Style of Elegance dress shop at the Lloyd Center, agrees that business needs to pick up, and the mall management could do a lot more to advertise the small businesses trying to make ends meet, especially those that are Black-owned.

"There's a lot of stuff going on, small businesses doing pop-ups and trade shows, but it's mostly Caucasian, and Black people don't know there are still stores here for them," McCord said. "I had a store at NE 13th Ave. and Alberta for three years, but a lot of people don't know I'm here at the Lloyd Center."

McCord said a lot of white people come in her store from a nearby hotels, but mall management doesn't advertise at them as it once did before the mall's big box stores closed.

"I would love to see my old customers come back, but with Nordstrom's being torn down, people don't know that what's keeping the mall afloat are small businesses, and we've been there all along."



Empress Edwards-EL stands holding pastries in front of her shop in Lloyd Center Mall



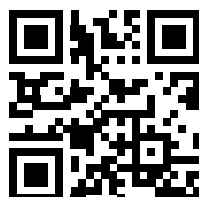
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Kymerberly Horner Leads PCRI with Vision and Commitment

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

to meet local needs. Meanwhile, Kafoury Court, a 40-unit Permanent Supportive Housing project scheduled to open in 2025, will provide residents coming out of chronic homelessness with safe, dignified, and beautifully designed housing.

For Horner, housing is more than just structures—it's about opportunity. She has worked to secure millions in grants supporting both development projects and day-to-day operations, ensuring PCRI's long-term financial stability. "PCRI's mission isn't just about building units," she told the Portland Observer. "It's about creating opportunities for families to return, to thrive, and to build wealth that has been denied to them for generations."

Horner's influence extends well beyond her immediate projects. She serves as Vice-Chair of Housing Oregon, Chair of the NAACP Portland Branch Housing Committee, and is active in numerous organizations, including the National Association of Minority Contractors, the Affordable Housing Industry Anti-Racism Collaborative, and The Links, Inc. She frequently participates on panels and podcasts, sharing insights on affordable housing, wealth creation, and community development.

Ernie Warren, PCRI's longtime general counsel, noted the complexity of Horner's work. "Kymberly has stepped into a role that requires not only skill but vision," he said. "She understands that housing is the



PCRI staff standing together on the front steps. (Photo by Mark Washington)

foundation of stability, and she's fighting to make sure families in this community have access to it."

Horner also prioritizes community engagement. Residents are invited to participate in design forums and planning sessions, ensuring that new developments reflect neighborhood needs and priorities. PCRI's projects are also designed to integrate services, like workforce training and economic empowerment programs, that support residents in building long-term security.

The Pathway 1000 initiative remains central to PCRI's vision. The plan calls

for the creation of 200 rental homes and 800 units for individual ownership over ten years. Horner sees these goals as achievable through thoughtful development, strategic partnerships, and active community involvement.

As housing costs continue to rise and displacement pressures grow in Portland, PCRI's work has never been more critical. Horner emphasizes that solutions require both vision and collaboration. "The community needs to be part of the solution," she said. "There's a role for every leader, every partner, and every neighbor who cares about Portland's future.

Together, we can make sure families have not only housing, but a real chance to prosper."

Under Kymberly Horner's leadership, PCRI has strengthened its operational capacity, advanced major development projects, and expanded its portfolio of rehabilitated and newly built homes. Her work exemplifies the power of strategic leadership, community engagement, and a commitment to justice in housing. For Portlanders seeking stability, opportunity, and a pathway to homeownership, PCRI under Horner's guidance remains a vital resource—and a beacon of hope.

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Portland Marathon Sells Out 53rd Annual Event

Over 11,800
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Event

The Portland Marathon, one of the longest-running consecutive marathons in the state of Oregon, hosted over 11,800 participants on Oct. 5 for its 53rd annual event. The Portland Marathon offered four distances: a marathon, half marathon, the MindRX Group 10K and the Kids Run, which all offer their own scenic tours of the Portland area. The Portland running community was strongly represent-

ed this year, with a majority of podium finishers across all distances residing in Portland.

Runners took on multiple courses where they toured some of Portland's most notable landmarks and neighborhoods, including the Waterfront Park, Old Town, the Pearl District, Sellwood-Moreland, Reed College and experienced multiple bridge crossings over the Willamette River.

"The Portland Marathon is truly a special event for everyone involved," said Phil Dumontet, CEO of Brooksee, producer of the Portland Marathon. "With this year's sell-out race, we couldn't be more proud to share that the Portland Marathon is now Brooksee's largest event in our portfolio of races, and we couldn't have done it without our amazing participants, race staff, sponsors, and of course,



Photo courtesy of Portland Marathon



Actress, writer, and producer Issa Rae participated in The Portland Marathon October 5th 2025.

the support from the local community right here in Portland."

Nic Maszk, the men's marathon champion and overall first-place finisher, completed the 26.2 miles in 2:28:53, followed by the men's marathon second-place finisher, Portland resident Jared Bassett. Max Woodbury, another Portland resident, took the third-place spot for the men's marathon. The women's marathon course was led by Portland local Luciana Lenth, who finished her second marathon ever with a time of 2:53:20, a 30 minute personal record (PR). Second and third-place finishers for the women's marathon were Rachael Lenz and Portland resident Georgia Filler. Eliezer Vasquez claimed first in the gender expansive division with a time of 3:06:00, followed by second and third-place finishers Patric Campbell and Devon Carlstrom.

The men's half marathon division was led by Alex Slenning, a Portland resident, who finished

with a time of 1:04:12, while Portland local Jenny Schilling led the women's division with a time of 1:14:13. JL Odom, the gender expansive division leader completed the course with a time of 1:24:46. All first-place finishers of the men's, women's and gender expansive divisions for the MindRX Group 10K were also Portland locals. The men's division was led by Jonathan Carmin with a time of 31:06, Alexandra Keogh brought in first for the women's division finishing in 38:59, and Samson Ice led the gender expansive division with a time of 58:27.

Race weekend also featured a shakeout run on Oct. 4, in partnership with Nike, the event's official footwear and apparel sponsor. Over 1,000 locals and visitors took part in the free event at Nike World Headquarters, which also featured complimentary Nike Company Store guest passes, a recovery zone featuring Hyperice equipment, giveaways, product trialing,

athlete appearances and a live DJ. On that same Saturday was the Health and Lifestyle Expo, which hosted a variety of vendors offering runner-friendly products and services to help prepare participants for the eventful weekend.

Spectators at the Portland Marathon also had the opportunity to earn a prize on race day. The event annually hosts a "neighborhood cheer station" competition, where running groups and neighborhood associations can gather a group to cheer on participants. This can include fun signs, music, dressing in costumes, or any other unique way the groups come up with to encourage the runners. Participants on the course vote for their favorite cheer station and the group with the most votes take home a prize of \$1,000.

For more information about the Portland Marathon, visit www.portlandmarathon.com and follow the event on Facebook and Instagram.

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Photo by Mark Washington

Portland Clergy Condemn Guard Federalization

Faith Leaders Call Federal Move Unjust and Unnecessary

The African American clergy of Portland stand in solidarity during this critical moment as the Oregon National Guard has been federalized. Recognizing the heightened tension and potential impact on vulnerable communities, faith leaders are speaking with one voice to call for peace, justice, and humanity for all residents of Oregon.

We come today to stand in unity with our Governor, Congressional representatives and the Mayor, City Council, Metro Council and

County Commissioners to condemn the illegal and unnecessary act of Federalizing the Oregon National Guard and sending them to police the streets of Portland.

"It is our hope that out of this midnight, morning will come." - Albina Ministerial Alliance (AMA)

"The federalization of the National Guard is not just a political decision—it has real consequences for families, neighborhoods, and those already facing fear and uncertainty," said Pastor Craig L. Brown, Senior Pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church. "As clergy, we are committed to being a moral compass in this city—urging restraint, advocating for accountability, and standing with those most likely to be harmed." -Interfaith Peace and Action Collaborative (IPAC)

"We've been working for 40+ years on helping Portland develop a culture of 21st century community policing. We are not at all supportive of many of the federal tactics that have been talked about that speak to extreme force. The President should have called the Mayor and other electeds to see what we need. That was not done. Restoring opportunities for community grants and for people on Medicare and There is a humane way for us to work together. We do not need federal troops on our streets. - Coalition of African and African American Pastors and Imams (CAAAP)

Crime has decreased in the City of Portland 51% and our law enforcement are doing a good job protecting residents and property.] POIC | What the Data Tells Us:

Portland Leads National Decline in Violent Crime

Presently, Portland is a vibrant, lively, dynamic city with the residents carrying on daily life.

The coalition of African American clergy affirms peace over violence, calling for measured and just actions that do not escalate fear or harm in the community. They urge civility over chaos, asking Portlanders to continue the city's long tradition of exercising their First Amendment right to protest nonviolently. Emphasizing the protection of civil rights, the clergy remind leaders and law enforcement of their duty to uphold the rights of all Oregonians, especially communities of color and immigrants. They also pledge pastoral care, sanctuary, and advocacy

for families who feel threatened or destabilized by the federal decision. Finally, they call on all faith communities and civic leaders to unite with wisdom, compassion, and courage in this critical moment.

The African American church has long stood as a voice of conscience during times of crisis. The clergy of Portland believe that history calls them once again to speak truth to power, to remind the city and state that military presence must never come at the cost of justice, equity, and the dignity of its people.

We urge all individuals and organizations to engage their communities and local, state and national governments to help bring about transformation and to create a Beloved community.

Portland Opera Announces Board Updates



From left to right: Vanessa Valencia, Ayaka Jones, Gregg Arntson and Laura Howe

Focusing on Community & Creativity Portland Opera ushers in a New Era of Leadership

Portland Opera is excited to announce that Gregg Arntson, longtime Portland Opera board member, has recently been elected board President. In a unanimous election, current board members Linda Brown, Christine Lewis, Larry Roper, and Carol

Turner have also been promoted, to the offices of Treasurer, two Vice-Presidents, and Secretary, respectively. Three new members have joined the board – Laura Howe, Ayaka Jones, and Vanessa Valencia.

Gregg Arntson, Director, Community Impact and Executive Director, PGE Foundation, has served on the Portland Opera board since 2016. He says, “I work alongside a remarkable group of committed volunteers who deeply believe in the transformative power of the arts and the mission of Portland Opera.” Arntson’s goals for his Presidency include maintaining the financial health of the organization, audience growth, and service as a champion for the

cultural, educational, and economic value of opera in our region. An active artist and advocate for creativity throughout his lifetime, his experience includes six years of board service for Oregon Children’s Theatre, and his own theatrical endeavors as a performer. Gregg is committed to using opera as a bridge—to invite conversation, spark imagination, and reflect the full spectrum of our shared humanity.

Laura Howe is an experienced Accounting Manager at OnPoint Community Credit Union with over 20 years in the profession across a variety of industries. Her diverse background has provided her with a well-rounded perspective and expertise

spanning financial reporting, audits, budgeting, and project implementation. Outside of her professional life, Laura enjoys reading, volunteering at her sons’ school, and cheering them on in their many sports activities. “I’m excited,” Laura says, “to have the opportunity to join the Portland Opera board contribute to an organization that champions the arts. Singing has been a longtime love of mine, and I’m passionate about supporting creative expression in all its forms.” A lifelong supporter of the arts, she has been a dedicated season ticket

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



Albina Music Trust



Albina Music Trust is the only full service community archive in the United States, dedicated to the restoration of a Black community’s historic musical culture.

www.albinamusictrust.com



LA BOHÈME

This November Portland Opera transports you to 19th century Paris for a night of passion and tragedy.

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Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Bay Area Rapper LaRussell Kicks Off 'Rhythm & Revolution'



Bay Area Indie Rapper LaRussell

Celebrating Hip Hop's Legacy with Local Talent and a Post-Show Cypher

Bay area indie rapper LaRussell hits the stage October 18 for an all-ages show to kick off Rhythm & Revolution, a year-

long exploration of the legacy of Hip Hop culture.

A huge proponent of uplifting his community, LaRussell has made it his art and his business to celebrate locality in everything he does. He has been working for years to build a framework for the music business outside of traditional channels; releasing records on his own label, running a concert

series in his backyard, and creating resources for other musicians.

Hosted by D.J. OG ONE and featuring Raaquel and Drew Dru, the winner of the Friends of Noise Young MC Contest. This show will start at 6 PM and will be followed by a free + participatory MC cypher in the lobby hosted by Sypher Saturdays.

Grab your tickets today!

Portland Opera Announces Board Updates

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

holder with Broadway In Portland for the past decade.

Ayaka Jones is a Senior Account Executive at FINN Partners, specializing in transforming complex narratives into compelling, human-centered stories. Born and raised in Tokyo, Ayaka developed an early love for the arts. As a pianist, she has shared the stage with Broadway star Shoshana Bean and served as an accompanist to vocal performance students at the University of Oregon. Putting down roots in Portland, Ayaka is eager to deepen her commitment to local communities. She currently volunteers with Oregon Public Broadcasting, and as a new board member of Portland Opera, aims to combine her passion for the arts with her expertise in communications to introduce Portlanders to the diverse stories the company tells. "Driven by a lifelong passion for the arts," she says, "I am

honored to serve on the board and contribute to Portland's rich and ever-evolving cultural ecosystem."

Vanessa Valencia has been in the Pacific Northwest since 2008 and graduated from Portland State University with both a bachelor's and master's degree. With nearly two decades of experience in the financial services industry, she has built a well-rounded career, spanning roles from teller to consumer loan officer, commercial credit analyst and accountant, and is currently Vice President of Financial Planning Analysis at On-Point Community Credit Union. Each position has contributed to her deep understanding of retail and corporate finance. Beyond her work she is committed to community service, volunteering at the Oregon Humane Society and serving on the board of The

Dougy Center. "I joined the Opera," she says, "because I understand the arts in Portland will help weave a stronger, more connected, and resilient community."



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OPINION

Beyond the Achievement Gap: Measuring What Truly Matters in Our Children's Education

An Op-Ed for Portland Observer Minority Business Edition

BY KARANJA CREWS, M.Ed

The numbers came out again this month: 17% proficiency for Black and African American students in English/Language Arts, compared to 67% for white students. But what if we're asking the wrong questions about what these numbers actually tell us?

Understanding What Tests Actually Measure

The Oregon Statewide Assessment System measures student performance against specific learning standards. But here's what's important: standardized assessments measure a very specific type of knowledge under very specific conditions. Research from the National Center for Fair & Open Testing shows that standardized test scores correlate more strongly with family income and parental education than with actual student learning and potential.

This doesn't make our children less capable. It means we're using a limited measurement tool to draw sweeping conclusions about unlimited human potential.

The Power of Street Data: A Different Way to See

In her transformative book *Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation*, Dr. Shane Safir distinguishes between "satellite data"—the high-altitude view from standardized tests—and "street data"—the qualitative information we gather at eye level with students.

Dr. Safir writes: "Satellite data gives us a 10,000-foot view, but it can't tell us why students are struggling or what they need to thrive."

Let me share what street-level observations reveal in Portland classrooms: Students masterfully navigating complex social situations, demonstrating emotional intelligence that will serve them throughout life. Children seamlessly code-switching between languages and cultural contexts—a sophisticated cognitive skill. Young people creating compelling digital narratives, showing creativity and technical literacy.



Karanja Crews, M.Ed

None of this shows up in the 17% proficiency rate. But all of it matters for their future.

What the Testing Process Actually Looks Like

For the OSAS English/Language Arts assessment, students spend 4-5 hours across multiple sessions. But the testing environment includes variables that significantly impact results:

- Students take tests on different days and times, under varying emotional and physical conditions
- Testing happens regardless of recent trauma, food security, housing stability, or access to healthcare
- The cultural context of test questions may reflect experiences unfamiliar to many students of color
- Time constraints may advantage students with certain processing speeds over others

Understanding these factors helps us see the complete picture of what we're measuring and what we're missing.

Learning from the Marathon: Building Sustainable Excellence

Nipsey Hussle taught us that "The Marathon Continues"—and his Marathon Brand philosophy offers profound insights for education. Nipsey didn't measure success solely by comparing himself to others. He measured it by jobs created in his community, ownership transferred to his people, knowledge shared across generations, and long-term impact.

What if we measured:

- How students' sense of belonging grows over time
- The depth of relationships between students and caring adults
- Students' ability to see themselves reflected in what they're learning
- The development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills
- Growth in cultural knowledge and multilingual abilities

These aren't "soft" measures—they're indicators of the skills that actually predict long-term success, well-being, and contribution to community.

Moving Forward: Questions That Lead to Solutions

Instead of asking "Why aren't Black children achieving?" we can ask:

- What barriers exist in our system that prevent Black children from demonstrating the brilliance they already possess?

• How can we create assessment systems that reveal rather than obscure student capabilities?

• What would it look like to measure the skills that actually predict long-term success?

• How can families and communities be partners in defining and assessing meaningful learning?

These questions shift us from deficit thinking to asset-based approaches. They position our children as capable and our systems as the variables we need to adjust.

The 16th Annual Teaching With Purpose Conference

On October 10, 2025, we're gathering to explore these very questions. Dr. Kimberlee Armstrong, Portland's Superintendent, will share PPS's vision for more comprehensive approaches to understanding student learning. Blacc Sam, representing the Marathon Brand and Nipsey Hussle's legacy, will connect community ownership to educational excellence.

Our workshops will focus on mental health literacy, economic and technology literacy, restorative practices, community school approaches, and assessment practices that reveal student brilliance.

The Invitation Forward

The 17% proficiency rate tells us something important: our current measurement systems are insufficient for capturing what our children know and can do. This isn't a reflection of student capacity—it's a call to develop better ways of seeing, understanding, and supporting our children's learning.

Our children possess remarkable capabilities: emotional and social intelligence, cultural knowledge and multilingual abilities, creative and critical thinking skills, and resilience developed through their lived experiences.

The question isn't whether our children can learn and achieve. The question is whether we can develop systems of assessment that reveal and nurture the brilliance that's already there.

Dr. Safir reminds us: "When we listen closely to street data—the voices, experiences, and wisdom of students and families—we discover solutions that satellite data could never reveal."

The marathon continues. And we're running it together, measuring what truly matters, celebrating every form of excellence, and building the educational experiences our children deserve.

Join us on October 10th at Benson Polytechnic High School. Together, we're not just talking about change—we're building it.

For more information and to register for the 16th Annual Teaching With Purpose Conference, visit teachingwithpurpose.org.

Karanja Crews, M.Ed., is the founder of Teaching With Purpose, an organization dedicated to advancing educational equity through culturally relevant pedagogy and community engagement. A retired Portland educator, he continues to work with families, educators, and communities to create learning environments where all children can demonstrate their brilliance.

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Business Rebuilds After Devastating Fire

By BEVERLY CORBELL

Aaron Peterson was enjoying himself at a poker table in Las Vegas on August 18 of last year when he got the terrible news that his business, 42nd Avenue Fish & Chips, was going up in flames.

"One of my worker face-timed me and showed my building was on fire," Peterson said, "and I was out of commission for about a year."

It shouldn't have taken that long, Peterson believes, since the fire only damaged the kitchen. But unfortunately for him, the Portland Fire Department decided to have a training crew demolish the building entirely.

"I was going to rebuild the old building and a whole bunch could have been salvaged since the fire was just in the kitchen," he said. "It was really, really unfair. The fire had been out for about two hours, but they (firefighters) were in there, drinking my soda pop, tearing it down."

Even then, the fire department didn't make it any easier for Peterson, he said.

"The fire marshal put us through things and I felt like they put us through the ringer," he said. "I don't know why — I felt like it was a little racism — because of the fences they had us put up and a ventilation system I don't see in other folks' businesses."

Peterson's business was originally at NE Alberta Street and Alberta, but a new owner evicted him and he was glad to find a new location at 5303 NE 42nd Ave. until it was brought down by fire — and the fire department.

The future didn't look bright, but the



Aaron Peterson (Photo by Mark Washington)

42nd Avenue Alliance, a community-based economic development initiative, helped Peterson locate another building at 4935 42nd Ave., just down the street, which he promptly bought enabling him keep the same business name. The new location opened on Sept. 11, and Peterson said now business is good.

"We're open seven days a week, Mon-

day through Saturday from 11 am to 9 pm, and Sunday from noon to 7 pm," he said.

Peterson learned to cook fish from his mother as he was growing up in Los Angeles, focusing on cornmeal breading and a secret recipe of spices.

The restaurant serves a variety of fish, including red snapper, catfish, cod and tilapia, Peterson said, as well as oysters,

shrimps, a variety of salads, along with fried okra, hush puppies, potato salad, mac and cheese, cabbage, greens, cornbread, grits and a range of desserts that includes banana pudding, sweet potato pie, German chocolate cake, chocolate cake, strawberry cake and devil's food cake.

"It's not just fish and chips," Peterson said. "It's also a little bit of soul food."

Obituary



Celebration of Life for Jessie Lee Streeter

Sunrise December 9th 1951 - Sunset September 29th 2025

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October 11th 2025 at 11:00 A.M.

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October 10th 2025 3 P.M. (Family) 4-6 P.M. (public)
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- The Streeter Family

Portland Not in Chaos — No Grounds for Military Action!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

ia, he proposed using cities as training grounds for the armed forces. Last month a federal judge ruled that the president's deployment of some 4,700 National Guard soldiers and Marines in Los Angeles this year was illegal, but he allowed the 300 who remain in the city to stay as long as they do not enforce civilian laws. The Trump administration appealed, and an appellate panel has put the lower court's block on hold while it moves forward.

The Portland protests have been limited to a one-block area in a city that covers about 145 square miles (375 square km) and has about 636,000 residents.

They grew somewhat following the Sept. 28 announcement of the guard deployment. The Portland Police Bureau, which has said it does not participate in immigration enforcement and only intervenes in the protests if there is vandalism or criminal activity, arrested two people on assault charges. A peaceful march earlier that day drew thousands to downtown and saw no arrests, police said. On Saturday, before the ruling was released, roughly 400 people marched to the ICE facility. The crowd included people of all ages and races, families with children and older people using walkers, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported.

Federal agents responded with chemical crowd control munitions, including

tear gas canisters and less-lethal guns that sprayed pepper balls. At least six people were arrested as the protesters reached the ICE facility.

Later in the evening, federal agents again emerged from the facility and deployed tear gas on a crowd of about 100 people.

Trump sent federal officers to Portland over the objections of local and state leaders in 2020 during long-running racial justice protests following George Floyd's killing by Minneapolis police. The administration sent hundreds of agents for the stated purpose of protecting the federal courthouse and other federal property from vandalism.

That deployment antagonized demonstrators and prompted nightly clashes. Federal officers fired rubber bullets and used tear gas.

Viral videos captured federal officers arresting people and hustling them into unmarked vehicles. A report by the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general found that while the federal government had legal authority to deploy the officers, many of them lacked the training and equipment necessary for the mission.

The government agreed this year to settle an excessive force lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union by paying compensating several plaintiffs for their injuries.

Portland Parks & Recreation Welcomes Mobile Vendors



Vending in Parks. (Photos are courtesy of Portland Parks & Recreation, Portland, OR.)

Low-Cost Permits Made Easy

Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) is opening new doors for local entrepreneurs to bring their food, crafts, and services directly to the people—right in Portland's beloved city parks.

With a new, simple and affordable same-day permit system, self-contained mobile vendors can now operate in designated parking areas at select parks across the city. Whether it's food carts, craft vendors, or mobile services, this streamlined program is designed to support small businesses while energizing public spaces.

"This initiative removes financial and administrative barriers for small, mobile vendors to operate within parks," said Priya Dhana-pal, Deputy City Administrator for Public Works. "It's about creating opportunities on Parks property, bringing vibrancy to Portland's public green spaces, and supporting local enterprise year-round in a way that benefits everyone."

Vendors who meet the requirements can use an easy on-line payment system to secure a

daily permit and begin vending that same day—no long waits, no complicated paperwork. It's a do-it-yourself, business-friendly model designed with small businesses in mind.

"We're excited to reduce costs and make it easier than ever to bring energy and innovation into Portland's parks," said Sonia Schmanski, Interim Director of Portland Parks & Recreation. "This new permitting option gives vendors the flexibility they need to thrive while helping us activate parks in fresh, community-driven ways."

Qualified vendors can learn more and apply at portland.gov/parks/mobilevending. To participate, vendors must operate a fully self-contained, licensed food truck or trailer, hold all required licenses and insurance, use only designated parking spaces, manage their own trash removal, and comply with all county and state health and business regulations.

Parking spaces are first-come, first-served, but can be reserved in advance through a separate special use permit.

Vendors must follow all park rules under City Code, Title 20.

Vending is allowed in the parking areas of several Portland parks, with daily rates varying by location. Most parks, including Cathedral Park, Chimney Park, Clinton Park, Columbia Children's Arboretum, Creston Park, Duniway Park, East Holladay Park, Ed Benedict Park, Forest Park, Foster Floodplain, Fulton Park, Gabriel Park (excluding the community center lot), Glenhaven Park, Harney Park, Kelley Point Park, Knott Park, Lents Park, Luuwit View Park, Marquam Nature Park, Mt. Tabor Park, Northgate Park, Oaks Bottom, Parklane Park, Pier Park, Portland Heights Park, Powell Butte, Sellwood Park, Sellwood Riverfront Park, Springwater Corridor, SW Terwilliger Blvd Parkway, Thomas Cully Park, Ventura Park, Westmoreland Park, and Whitaker Ponds Natural Area, have a \$5 daily vending rate. Higher rates apply at certain locations, including \$10 per day at Multnomah Arts Center (Lot C only) and Willamette Park, \$12 per day at Waterfront Park Morrison Bridge Lot, \$13 per day at Waterfront Park Hawthorne Bridge Lot, and \$40 per day at Pittock Acres Park.

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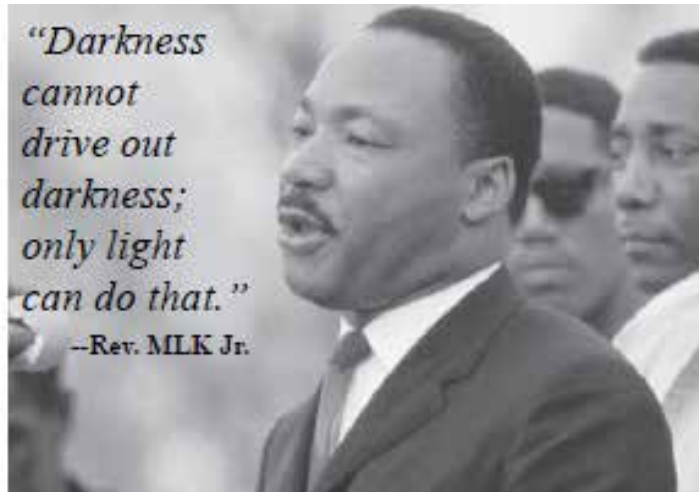

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New Partnership Supports PSU Business Students' Careers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Through the new partnership, OnPoint will sponsor several university events providing advice and information to students in the School of Business. These include Financial Wellness Day on October 23, 2025, where students can meet representatives from local financial wellness organizations, including OnPoint; a finance career panel discussion during the Winter 2026 term featuring professionals from the local finance community, with an OnPoint branch manager among the panel experts; and the Portland State Winter All Majors & Business Fair on February 9, 2026, which will bring representatives from more than 100 em-

ployers to campus for students to meet, network, and explore potential careers.

"We are incredibly grateful to OnPoint Community Credit Union for their generous donation to the Portland State University School of Business Career Center. This gift directly strengthens our ability to provide business students with the critical resources and career coaching they need to succeed," said Shannon Aniciete, director of Business Career Services, Portland State University School of Business. "OnPoint's investment is an investment in the future of Portland's community, as our graduates go on to become the innovators who drive our regional economy."

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TriMet Fills Major Executive Positions

Decades of Experience, New Roles

General Manager Sam Desue Jr. has selected two women who spent decades growing and learning with TriMet for exciting new roles with the agency. He tapped Inessa M. Vitko to serve as Chief Operations Officer and promoted Mary L. Hill to the position of Executive Director of Transportation.

The promotions come at a time of historic change at TriMet. They are part of an agency-wide focus to improve fiscal efficiency and stewardship.

Over the summer, TriMet announced a large-scale effort to reduce costs amid a significant and growing budget gap and impending fiscal cliff. Changes to the agency's executive leadership team are among the many steps TriMet is taking to achieve a balanced budget by July 2028.

"As we work toward this goal, I felt it was important to begin with adjustments at the highest level of management," said TriMet General Manager Sam Desue Jr. "As I've also committed to you, we are doing this all with care, compassion and transparency. I am honoring that commitment."



Combined, Chief Operations Officer Inessa M. Vitko and Executive Director of Transportation Mary L. Hill bring more than 40 years of transit experience to their new roles. (Photo courtesy of TriMet)

The executive-level promotions reward two dedicated transit professionals for decades of hard work and commitment. Both Vitko and Hill began their professional careers with TriMet, with Vitko coming on in 2006 as a training services administrator and Hill beginning her career at TriMet in 2003 as a bus operator. Coincidentally, both left TriMet to gain additional experience at C-TRAN, before returning in the 2020s for more challenging roles.

"Moving into this new role nearly 20 years after I started my career at TriMet is an incredible privilege, and to be honest,



it's a little surreal," remarked Vitko. "I am excited and thankful to continue to be part of an invested and dedicated leadership team, and look forward to TriMet's future as we navigate our path ahead."

Formerly TriMet's Senior Director of Operations Command Center and Rail Operations, Hill joins TriMet's executive leadership team in her new role, assuming the position previously held by Vitko.

"I'm honored to continue my journey with TriMet in this new role, building on the lessons I've learned from the front lines as a bus operator to our leadership

team," said Hill. "This promotion reflects the incredible opportunities TriMet provides for growth and the importance of supporting women and people of color in leadership."

In addition to a breadth of transit industry experience, Vitko holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Statistics from Portland State University. Hill holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, both from Western Governors University.

As part of the reorganization at TriMet, Desue eliminated the agency's Chief Operating Officer role, which has been vacant since May. Vitko's position as Chief Operations Officer is different, with a revised scope and narrower focus on day-to-day operations.

TriMet is conducting a full-scale operational assessment to identify additional opportunities for streamlining and reducing costs, as the agency works to close our budget gap. Some of the earliest efforts focus on changes at the top of the organization. For example, the Executive Director position for the agency's Transit Systems Asset and Support Division, open since May, has been eliminated, as the agency considers the division's future.

Staffing changes and internal savings alone, however, will not be enough. TriMet will also begin reducing service this fall, as they look for new avenues to increase revenues.

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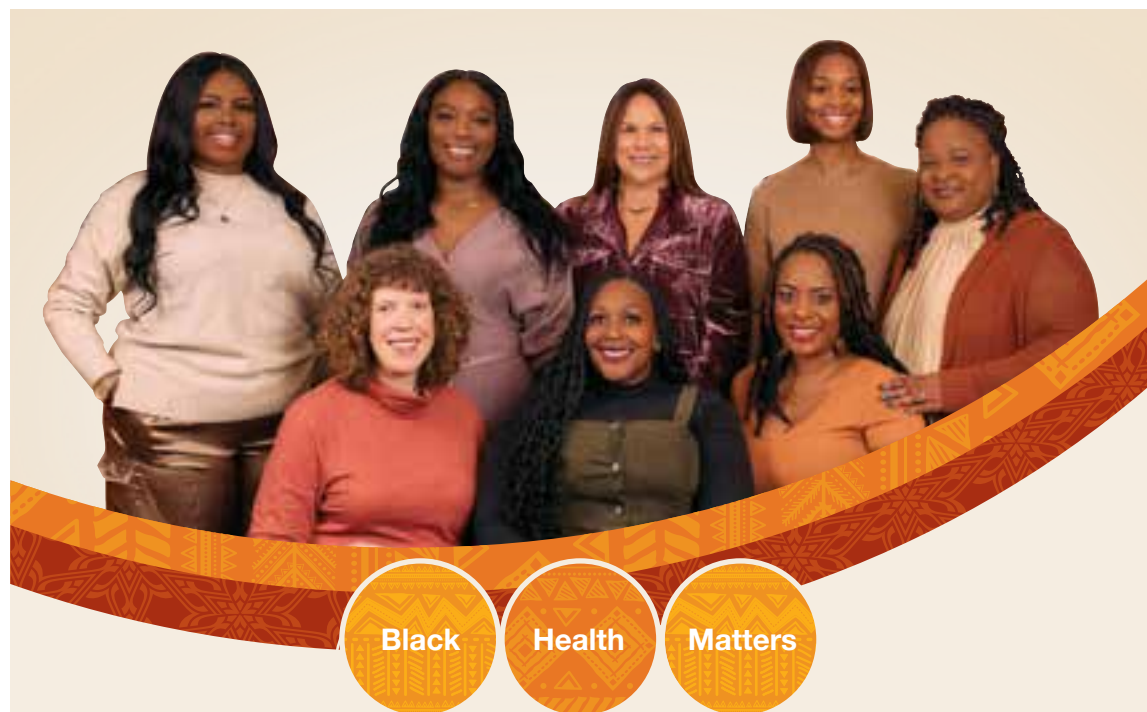
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North by Northeast Community Health Center is the only clinic in Oregon devoted to African American health. We provide welcoming, high quality health care to adults who have Oregon Health Plan. Since 2006, our priority has been to serve the local African American community and to reduce the deadly effects of high blood pressure and diabetes. We are accepting new patients, and if you're uninsured, we can help you get covered!

northby
northeast
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

To make an appointment or learn about our services, contact us:

www.nxneclinic.org
(503) 287-4932

714 NE Alberta Street
Portland, Oregon 97211

Roll Up Your Sleeves for Community Impact Week!



Photo courtesy of United Way Columbia-Willamette

Connecting Volunteers to Service Opportunities at Dozens of Amazing Nonprofits

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW) invites you to sign up for a project during Community Impact Week (October 7–11, 2025), a week-long volunteer event uniting community members, corporate partners, and nonprofits across the Portland

metro region. Powered by UWCW's Hands On Greater Portland (HOGP), the event will mobilize hundreds of volunteers to roll up their sleeves and make a tangible difference in neighborhoods across Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, and Clark counties.

Volunteers will participate in a variety of projects - from preparing STEM kits for local schools, to beautifying parks and community spaces, to supporting organizations serving families in need. The event is designed not only to meet immediate needs, but also to strengthen long-term community connections by forging bonds between community members and local nonprofits they're interested in.

"Community Impact Week is about bringing people together to

create lasting change," said Kelly O'Lague, President and CEO of UWCW. "The experiences volunteers have are often remembered for years - whether it's learning a new skill or meeting a new friend - it just feels good to give back... and it's fun!"

HOGP, a program of UWCW, connects thousands of volunteers each year to opportunities with local nonprofits, schools, and community organizations. Community Impact Week serves as a spotlight on this year-round work, remind-

ing residents that service doesn't end after the week concludes.

"This week showcases the best of what's possible when we give our time, talent, and energy to the places we call home. Our Hands On team is proud to power this event, but more importantly, we're proud to offer pathways for people to stay engaged 365 days a year," said John Afryl, Senior Program Manager at HOGP. "Whether you're an individual, family, or workplace team, there's always a way to contribute."

OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING RESOURCE

OPGR

WHAT DOES "SOBER OCTOBER" HAVE TO DO WITH GAMBLING?



October inspires us with stunning foliage, a certain flavor of latte, and plans for creating the perfect costume by the 31st. But for an increasing number of people, the month means something more. For those participating in "Sober October", it's a time to put drinking aside in the hopes of resetting their relationship with alcohol.

It's a wonderful concept—pausing to reevaluate—and can be useful to anyone who struggles with a habit that may no longer serve their best interests. For those who gamble, doing your own take on Sober October—pausing your gambling—can have powerful benefits too.

OPGR CAN HELP

If you're "sober curious" when it comes to gambling, Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR) can help. We offer both online and in-person support that can help you take the first step. Whether you want to simply gain greater control or eliminate gambling from your life entirely, we're here to help you explore your options. Make this October a time of change. We're ready to help.

Learn more: OPGR.org