



# The Portland Observer

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

# SEI at 45: Empowering Youth Strengthening Families

## Listening, Building and Helping Families Stay Rooted

By ANTHONY DELONEY

I first came to Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) as a kid who did not want to be there.

School had just let out, and my dad told me I was going to SEI camp on Monday. I loved sports, but summer meant freedom. I was not looking for structure, or SAT prep.

That first day, a line of Black men stood in front of us. Some were in college. Some were professionals. They had on the good shoes, the good clothes, the suits. And as a young boy in Portland Public without much exposure to Black male teachers, I remember thinking: I don't know what this is, but I want to be part of it.

That summer camp was about so much more than basketball. We had academic classes. We had conversations about manhood. Adults told us that sports without education was a "long shot". People showed us that we were capable and important.

One year, I won Mr. Classroom. It is the second-best award you can win at camp. That was the first time I remember being called smart. That stays with a kid.

SEI captured me early. During college, I came back every sum-



Anthony Deloney, director of business development with the SEI drumline.

mer to work at camp. Later, I joined SEI through AmeriCorps and started working in the Leadership Project. I was young, so I had to become Mr. Deloney pretty quickly.

I grew into leadership, but coaching kept me grounded. Driving vans and listening helped teach me what young people were really carrying. Kids today are not so different. They still want to be seen. They still need adults who care enough to check. If you do not evolve, young people will evolve right past you.

Listening and then building has always been one of SEI's strengths. We listen, then we create. When kids needed more

access to sports, music, dance and mentoring, we built programs. When we saw that college was not the only path, we built an apprenticeship program with partners like Anderson Construction so young people could enter the trades.

For years, we told kids, "It's not if you go to college, it's when." That was not a bad message, but one size does not fit all. Our job is to understand each young person well enough to help them find their path.

Portland has changed around us, too.

I have lived in Northeast Portland most of my life, and I have seen gentrification firsthand. I re-

member when I could drive all of my SEI kids home in 30 minutes. Years later, it took over an hour and a half. Families were getting pushed further and further out. The Portland that raised me was becoming less recognizable.

That is why SEI's move into housing makes sense. People may know us for working with youth, but the goal has never been just to create great kids. The goal is to help young people become thriving adults, build stable families and become leaders themselves.

Today, SEI engages 17,000 youth and families each year. We provide 400 services across 40 programs and 36 locations. We

share more than 400,000 meals annually. Students in our programs graduate high school at a 98% rate, compared with 81% statewide and 73% for Black students in Oregon.

Those numbers matter. But behind every number is a person, a family, a story.

Now, as SEI looks ahead, affordable housing is a major part of our next chapter. But we are not interested in simply putting up buildings. If we are going to do housing, we are going to do it the SEI way: housing matched with services, relationships and support that help people stabilize and thrive.

Affordable housing can help someone get rooted. Services help them stay rooted. Homeownership and wealth-building change a family's trajectory for the next generation.

That is what keeps me doing this work after more than 30 years. I have seen young people who were headed in the wrong direction become incredible parents, professionals and community leaders. I have seen one generation change what the next generation has to carry.

In a lot of ways, SEI is now in a harvest season. For 45 years, we've been planting seeds. Now we see those same young people grown up, giving back, and helping others move forward.

At SEI, we tell people: the way you pay us back is by looking out for the next young person the way someone looked out for you.

That was true when I first walked into camp as a kid. And it remains true today.

Anthony Deloney is SEI's Director of Business Development. Learn more about SEI at selfenhancement.org.

# Portland Mourns the Loss of Legendary Locksmith and Civil Rights Pioneer

J.J. Moore Passed Away on Monday, May 18, 2026.



Legendary Locksmith and Civil Rights Pioneer J.J. Moore

The Portland community is mourning the loss of beloved father, entrepreneur, civil rights advocate, and respected businessman J.J. Moore, founder of Affordable JJ Lock & Key and one of Oregon's pioneering Black locksmiths.

For decades, Moore was a trusted and familiar presence throughout Portland and the surrounding metropolitan area. Through his business, Affordable JJ Lock & Key, he built a lasting rep-

utation for professionalism, integrity, reliability, and exceptional service. As one of the few African American locksmith business owners in Oregon, Moore broke barriers and created opportunities for future generations of Black entrepreneurs.

Beyond his success in business, Moore's life reflected a deep commitment to justice, equality, and community empowerment. In a 2017 interview with the Portland Observer, he shared his experiences participating in the historic 1965 Selma to Montgomery civil rights marches alongside fellow activists advocating for voting rights and social change. His journey embodied courage, resilience, and a lifelong dedication to uplifting others.

Family, friends, customers, and community members remember J.J. not only as a skilled locksmith, but as a man whose wisdom, kindness, and entrepreneurial spirit positively impacted countless lives throughout Portland and beyond.

"J.J. Moore represented resilience, leadership, and community," shared family friends. "His impact reached far beyond his business. He opened doors for others in every sense of the word."

Moore's passing marks the loss of a respected father, husband, papa, brother, uncle, and community leader whose legacy will continue through the lives he touched, the business he built, and the history he helped shape.

The family kindly asks that all condolence cards, flowers, and expressions of sympathy be sent to:

The Moore Family  
4724 NE Killingsworth,  
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A public Celebration of Life honoring the legacy of J.J. Moore will be held in June 2026. Additional details will be announced soon. Family, friends, colleagues, and community members are encouraged to stay tuned for further information.



Summer EBT is back to help feed Oregon children during summer break (Adobe Stock Photo by Anna)

# Summer EBT Returns for Oregon Families

## Nutrition Support for School Break

The Oregon Summer Electronic Benefits (Summer EBT) program is returning in 2026 to help families buy groceries for school-aged children during summer break when they don't have easy access to healthy meals.

Eligible families can receive a one-time payment of \$120 for each child on an Oregon EBT card to buy food. Unused benefits can expire 122 days after they are issued.

Families will receive benefits automatically on their Oregon EBT card if they have children ages 6 to 18 and received one of the following supports at any time during the 2025 to 2026 school year: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP food benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families TANF cash assistance, Medicaid if household income is below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, or foster care services.

Families also may automatically receive benefits if they have children who were determined by their school to have a status as migrant, houseless, or runaway, who participated in the Food Distribution Program

on Indian Reservations, or who attended a Head Start program that was part of the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.

Families may need to apply if their household meets income requirements for free or reduced price school meals or if their child attends a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program NSLP or School Breakfast Program SBP.

Important Summer EBT dates include June 1, 2026, when the Summer EBT call center opens and families can call 833-673-7328 on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., June 4, 2026, when benefits are expected to begin issuing to families who are automatically eligible, June 5, 2026, when the online application opens and applications begin processing, September 1, 2026, which is the application deadline, and September 25, 2026, when the Summer EBT call center closes.

The Summer EBT program is administered by the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE).

Children cannot receive 2026 Summer EBT benefits in multiple states. The program invites families to apply if they have children living in Oregon during the 2025-26 school year.



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## Police Increase 82nd Avenue Patrols

### Effort responds to Community Concerns

Throughout the months of March, April and May, the Portland Police Bureau continued directed patrol efforts along Northeast 82nd Avenue and Northeast Sandy Boulevard in response to ongoing community complaints and observed sex trafficking activity.

These were collaborative efforts among the Portland Police Human Trafficking Unit (HTU), East Precinct, Central Precinct, North Precinct, Central Precinct Entertainment Detail, Detective



(Adobe Stock Photo - By reewungjunerr)

Division, and Victim Services Unit. PPB is also grateful to the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Sandy Police Department, Port of Portland Police Department, Multnomah County District Attorney's Office (MCDA), Multnomah County Parole & Probation, Oregon State Police,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Bomb Threat at Gresham Bank Determined to Be Hoax

### Drone and K9 Clear Scene Safely

May 20 - Officers used drones and an explosive ordnance detection K9 to safely clear the scene after a bank employee reported receiving threatening messages. Gresham Police responded to a bomb threat at approximately 9 a.m. in the 100 block of NE 181 Ave. after an employee of a bank reported receiving messages claiming a bomb had been placed in their vehicle.

Officers secured the area and used a drone to visually check for devices. An explosive ordnance detection dog from the Port of Portland Police Department assigned to the TriMet Transit Police Unit, K9 Jacky, and her



K9 Jacky and her Handler from the Port of Portland Police Department check a car in the parking lot for explosives. (Photo Courtesy of Gresham Police Department)

handler, responded to the scene. After checking the parking lot and inside the bank, the scene was rendered safe. The investigation at the scene took about 90 minutes.

Preliminary information indicates the messages originated from a Voice over Internet Protocol VOIP service. Officer Jarom Sweazey said, "The victim of the threat did the right thing by reporting it to police immediately." The investigation into the origin of the hoax threat is ongoing.

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# Police Increase 82nd Avenue Patrols

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security Investigations, Safety Compass and the Providence S.A.F.E. Center. All were active partners in this effort.

Law enforcement arrested or cited multiple individuals for alleged violations of ORS 167.008 Commercial Sexual Solicitation (CSS), Portland City Code 14A.40.050 Unlawful Prostitution Procurement Activities (UPPA), and other associated offenses.

Since the beginning of April, the Human Trafficking Unit (HTU) has engaged in frequent high visibility patrols in areas known for chronic prostitution-related activities. During these patrols and other directed-patrol missions, more than 110 provider contacts were made by officers and providers were offered advocacy services and other resources. During these contacts and other investigative efforts, additional information was gathered related to other suspected buyers, suspected traffickers, and ongoing trafficking investigations.

HTU continues to utilize the partnership of PPB's Victim Ser-

vices Unit and Safety Compass for street level outreach for provider contacts. Safety Compass is a non-profit organization that offers advocacy services to individuals under the age of 25 who identify as survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking. HTU has also recently partnered with the Providence S.A.F.E. Center which provides medical examinations, treatment, and other services to victims of sex and labor trafficking.

HTU cases are complex with several identified barriers such as repeated traumatic exposures, trauma bonds with traffickers, and fear of retaliation. The survivors in these cases are often reluctant to come forward, make a report, and/or continue through the criminal justice process. HTU continues to offer trauma-informed, victim-centered services, in conjunction with PPB Victim Services Unit advocates and community-based partnerships like Safety Compass. If you know or suspect someone is being trafficked, please call 911, PPB's non-emergency line 503-823-3333, or the National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7888.

# RIGHT IN PORTLAND'S BACKYARD

Just minutes from Portland, the Sandy River offers a quiet shift in pace. Newly opened Sharon Nesbit Heritage Park stretches along the riverbank in Troutdale, inviting walkers and cyclists to slow down and take in the scenery without leaving the metro area. A wide, paved path traces the water's edge, linking Troutdale to regional trail networks and creating an important new connection for riders heading east toward the Gorge. With plenty of inspiring views and places to pause, the park supports both casual strolls and purposeful miles.

Made possible through a mosaic of funding sources, including an Oregon Lottery-funded grant awarded through Oregon Parks and Recreation, Sharon Nesbit Heritage Park transforms a former industrial stretch into a welcoming riverside gateway—one that brings Portland's backyard a little closer to the water.

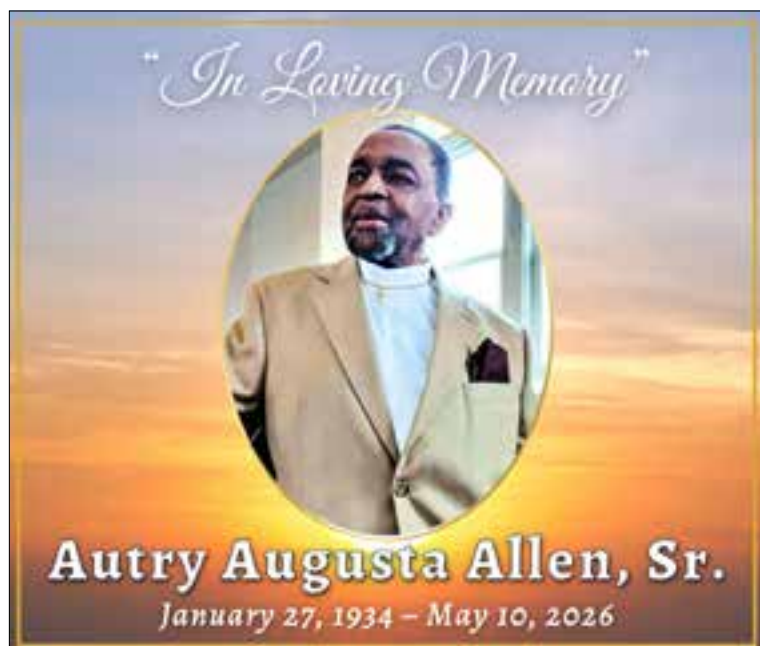


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# SPORTS

## Joint Portland WNBA-NWSL Training Center

### First Shared Training Center for Women's Pro Teams in Different Sports

(AP) — The ribbon-cutting ceremony to formally open the joint training facility shared by the WNBA's Portland Fire and the NWSL's Portland Thorns is set for Aug. 22.

It is the nation's first performance center shared by pair of professional women's teams in different sports. The \$150 million campus sits on a repurposed facility formally owned by Nike on 12 acres west of Portland.

Both the Fire and the Thorns are owned and operated by Raj Sports, led by Lisa Bhathal Merga and Alex Bhathal. The opening of the Kaiser Permanente Performance Center will be part of



Portland Fire center Megan Gustafson, center, stand with guard Sarah Ashlee Barker, right, during player introductions before a WNBA basketball game against Chicago Sky, Saturday, May 9, 2026, in Portland, Ore. (AP Photo/Jenny Kane)

a celebration of women's sports dubbed Epicenter Week, presented by Raj Sports and Nike, to run Aug. 19-23.

Included in the program will be the

second Women's Global Sport Summit held at Nike's Beaverton headquarters on Aug. 20. Last year's summit included panels with South Carolina coach Dawn

Staley and New York City Marathon winner Shalane Flanagan, and other executives and leaders in women's sports.

"As women's sports continues its global rise, there is an increasing need for collaboration, shared learning, and aligned leadership across the industry," said Karina LeBlanc, executive vice president of strategic growth for RAJ Sports. "Epicenter Week builds on Portland's longstanding foundation by bringing together global leaders across sport, business, media, and culture to explore how women's sports can continue to grow with greater collaboration, innovation, and long-term impact."

The Thorns currently train and play their matches at downtown Portland's Providence Park. The expansion Fire currently practice at Portland State University.

Amenities of the new performance center include locker rooms and lounges for both teams, two soccer fields and an additional outdoor training area, a gym that will include two basketball courts, strength training, conditioning and rehab areas, film theaters, a dining room and team offices.



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# TriMet Advances Spending Cuts and Restructuring Plan



TriMet moves forward on streamlining spending and resizing agency as search for new revenue continues. (Photo courtesy of TriMet)

## Budget Tightening Continues Across Agency

TriMet will make major spending cuts and a historic staffing reduction beginning July 1, 2026, as we continue taking action to address an annual budget deficit and preserve our core transit service for our riders and the region, even in the face of rising costs.

The TriMet Board of Directors adopted our agency's fiscal year 2027 (FY 2027) budget on Wednesday, May 27, 2026. Most of the actions directed in the budget streamline our overall spending by about \$64.5 million, reflecting about \$53 million in administrative spending cuts and about \$11 million in service cuts.

The FY 2027 adopted budget totals \$1.75 billion, with \$1.14 billion available for service, operations, capital/maintenance projects and other requirements. The budget relies on \$127 million in reserve funds to close the gap between expenses and revenues.

TriMet first announced a \$300 million structural budget deficit in July 2025. Despite internal spending cuts, a staffing reduction in fall 2025 and pausing planned bus service increases that totaled about \$150 million in savings, our deficit grew faster than we can reduce it.

That's because the costs of operating public transit continue to rise, including sharp increases this year, and revenue is not keeping up with those increases.

TriMet's long-term budget deficit currently stands at \$224 million and includes the

Board-approved service cuts for later this year. Our fiscal cliff, when we will be out of the money necessary to provide service, is forecast for May 2029. Further budget and personnel reductions that go into effect on July 1, 2026 will reduce our long-term deficit to \$160 million, with our goal of closing that gap by July 2028.

Although cuts are necessary to close the deficit and avoid running out of money, TriMet continues to work with state, regional and local leaders to identify new, sustainable funding essential to sustain the public transit that is vital for the Portland region's recovery.

"We at TriMet have made historic investments in security, cleaning and promoting service to increase ridership, but we must now resize our agency to reflect our current financial reality," said TriMet General Manager Sam Desue Jr.

In the first quarter of the fiscal year starting July 1, 2026, TriMet will eliminate approximately 400 positions, about 140 of which are vacant. Among the positions not vacant, many of those workers are eligible to return to prior union positions, in accordance with the current Working and Wage Agreement (WWA). That means the number of employees facing layoff is about 170 — about 100 nonunion and 70 union employees.

Combined with a previous, smaller staffing reduction in fall 2025, TriMet's overall staffing has dropped by just over 500 positions since July 1, 2025.

Beginning Aug. 23, 2026, TriMet will implement service changes to 33 lines approved by the TriMet Board in April. The changes include eliminating two bus lines with other cuts and adjustments for network efficiency. Those involve shortening the

MAX Green Line and combining bus lines or reducing where lines run near others and moving routes to maintain as much service in areas and at times when more people ride.

TriMet's efforts to streamline spending include internal changes such as lessening training for nonunion staff, limiting travel, decreasing software use and reducing the use of contractors. But the cuts are affecting some of our customer-facing offerings in addition to service. Beginning next week, our Customer Service call center will no longer be open on weekends and our Lost & Found hours will reduce from 12 to 10 hours daily.

TriMet faces the same challenges as other local governments, school districts and fellow transit agencies: rising costs and revenue streams not keeping up with them.

On average, TriMet's costs for providing public transit increased about 56% between 2019 and 2025, on everything from materials to equipment to contract services. Prices continue to go up this year. TriMet's fuel costs alone have surged sharply in 2026, as much as 84% over weekly budgeted amounts, due to the Iran War.

"This is a challenging time — not only for TriMet but for the region," said TriMet General Manager Sam Desue Jr. "We have a mountain to climb, but never has our mission mattered more as the region needs a reliable and viable transit system to continue its recovery.

"We urge lawmakers to join us and the Oregon Transit Association in seeking new strategies to address sustainable public transit funding — not only for the tens of thousands of riders who rely on it, but for all Oregonians," added Desue.

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The Portland Observer

# Rosa Parks Way Reception at Peninsula Park

## Honoring the Civil Rights Icon's Enduring Legacy

The street, formerly named Portland Blvd, was renamed to Rosa Parks Way roughly 20 years ago. In a collaborative effort to honor noted activist and civil-rights champion Mrs. Rosa Parks, 100 colorful laser cut, powder coated aluminum silhouette figures were recently installed atop each street sign along the N/NE Rosa Parks Way thoroughfare in Portland's Piedmont Neighborhood.

To commemorate this activist icon pairing with the street's renaming, in 2007 the Piedmont Neighborhood Association (PNA) was awarded \$12,000 by the Portland City Council to realize a creative aspiration. Through collaboration, public engagement, and sheer tenacity this worthy project has been realized. Thanks to the Office of



Sign Topper Install by PBOT Oct 2025 (Photo by Brian Borrello)

Arts and Culture, PBOT, former PNA Board Chair Shaun Sullens, Councilman Dan Ryan, designer/neighbor Jackson Ramone,

public artist/facilitator Brian Borrello, and the commissioned sign topper concept artist, Arvie Smith, PNA will be celebrating

this project milestone by hosting a reception on Saturday, June 20 from 10:00am-Noon at Peninsula Park, N Portland. The reception

includes a free trolley ride to enjoy the installed signage, with loading on/off at Peninsula Park on N Kerby Ave between Rosa Parks Way and Ainsworth St.

Smith shared that he was honored to have been invited to create artwork for the street signs along Rosa Parks Way, including insight to his process that "[My] approach to community projects such as this, monumental murals, or mentoring and teaching youth includes conducting research through direct contact with community members. I aim to understand residents' desires for their neighborhood, the area's history, grasp the project's purpose and intent, and incorporate my artistic vantage point. I create with the belief that creative expression and appreciation can be a tool for empowerment, education, and unity."

The installation for the remaining sign toppers to extend along the length of Rosa Parks Way from the west terminus at N Willamette Blvd in Arbor Lodge neighborhood, through the Woodlawn neighborhood, and to the eastern end at N Cesar Chavez Blvd, in the Concordia neighborhood, is projected in stages by PBOT for each Fall 2026 and 2027.

## OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING RESOURCE

# OPGR

### TIME TO REFLECT

You may have heard that any day is a good day to make healthy changes. But if you've been thinking about how to change your gambling, you might be wondering where to start. Exploring is a great first step; simply reflecting can help you gain a new perspective. But where do you go from there?

### CHANGE STARTS HERE

Counseling through Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR) can be a great place to start. OPGR can connect you with experienced professionals who understand and can help you make a change – and it's free. Not ready to try counseling? It's just one of many tools available at [OPGR.org](http://OPGR.org), like quizzes, resources, and even Evive, a free app to support you on your journey.

Visit [OPGR.org](http://OPGR.org) and take back control