

## Madison Grad Makes History

*As Valedictorian, Taj Ali achieves highest academic honor*

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## Summer Free for All

*Portland parks all geared up to keep kids active, healthy*

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# Portland Observer

Established in 1970

Volume XLVIII • Number 21



www.portlandobserver.com  
Wednesday • June 12, 2019



Committed to Cultural Diversity

# Hail Queen Mya!

A dream comes true for St. Mary's senior



Rose Festival Queen Mya Brazile

Mya Brazile of St. Mary's Academy was crowned 2019 Rose Festival Queen Saturday, an amazing accomplishment for the 18-year-old senior and the fulfillment of a childhood dream.

Brazile said she's wanted to be part of the historic Rose Festival Court ambassador program since she was just 9 years old. The best part so far has been the community outreach and getting to know the other 14 Rose Festival princesses, she said.

"To give back to the community which has given so much to me, is something I'm excited for and I can't wait to start," she told reporters after the coronation, anticipating even more responsibilities in the upcoming year of her reign.

Her selection was announced in a ceremony just ahead of the Rose Festival's Grand Floral Parade at Veterans Memorial Coliseum. She was joined by her parents, Montral and Michelle Brazile, and other family members.

An all-league standout varsity basketball player at St. Mary's, Brazile said she plans to attend Concordia University in northeast Portland where she can continue playing sports and pursue an education in social work and computer science. She also said she wanted to attend the school because it's close to the family and Portland community she loves.

# Fostering Diversity Behind the Lens

## New black filmmakers celebrate

BY DANNY PETERSON

Black and women filmmakers, who are sorely underrepresented nationwide in the television and movie industries, were the focus of a yearlong fellowship for filmmakers of color at Open Signal Labs, the nonprofit community media organization in northeast Portland. Now the culmination of their work will be shared with film screenings and an after party celebration this Friday starting at 7 p.m. at Hollywood Theatre in northeast Portland.

The pilot year fellowship was overseen by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Ifanyi Bell, the executive producer of Open Lab Signal. The first screenings will come from six local black filmmakers: Kamryn Fall, Elijah Hasan, Tamera Lyn, Sika Stanton, Noah Thomas, and Dustin Tolman.

Project Coordinator RaShaunda Brooks, who is herself an African American film-

maker, told the Portland Observer the screening is to highlight the work and let people know more about the program.

"There are people of color here in Portland; there are black, brown filmmakers, people who just want to have access to this type of equipment, access to this type of work," she said.

The films include documentary and narrative works that cover topics including law enforcement, African identity, music, fashion, and gentrification. Brooks said beyond that description, "it's more of a surprise."

"We want people to come out and see

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

PHOTO BY SAM GEHRKE

Portland filmmaker Ifanyi Bell behind the lens. The executive producer of Open Signal Labs on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard spearheaded a unique black filmmaker incubator program for the nonprofit community media organization, which will screen six film projects made by local black filmmakers this Friday at 7 p.m. at the Hollywood Theatre.



# PORTLAND OBSERVER AutoReview Comfort in a Compact SUV

With its lengthy list of features, excellent fuel economy estimates, and a cabin lined with first-rate materials, the GMC Terrain is certainly a good compact SUV. The Terrain SLT starts at \$30,900 with the driver convenience package and Infotainment I package (minus navigation) as standard equipment, along with



leather-trimmed seats and remote start.

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**PUBLISHER:** Mark Washington, Sr.  
**EDITOR:** Michael Leighton  
**ADVERTISING MANAGER:** Leonard Latin  
**Office Manager/Classifieds:** Lucinda Baldwin  
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PHOTO COURTESY BOBBY FOTHER

Portland artist Isaaka Shamsud-Din (center) poses with his freshly printed, 2019-2020 artwork calendars in honor of Juneteenth. He is joined by Fyndi Jermany (left) of Don't Shoot Portland and a representative of Moral Ink.

## Juneteenth Calendars Honor History

Portland artist Isaaka Shamsud-Din has created 2019-2020 calendars to honor Juneteenth and highlight significant people, places and events in the history and culture of the Black

Diaspora.

Shamsud-din is known for his murals across the city, including two major works installed for the new shopping plaza at Northeast Martin Luther King and Alberta Street. The new calendars were made possible with contributions from activists at Don't Shoot Portland.

Signed copies from Shamsud-din himself will be distributed during a special public reception this Sunday, June 16 at 3 p.m. at the Dismantle Change Build Center, 14 N.E. Killingsworth St., the former home of the Albina Art Center.

For more information, contact Friends of Albina Art Center founder Bobby Fother at mr-bobbydance@gmail.com or 503-422-3076.

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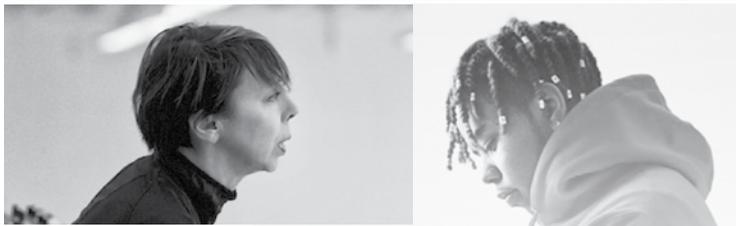
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# LOCAL NEWS



Madison High School graduate Taj Ali (left) is congratulated for becoming the Valedictorian of his Class of 2019, the highest-scoring senior academically, from long time educator and mentor Michael "Chappie" Grice.

## Highest Academic Honor

### Senior makes history as Valedictorian

Madison High School Senior Taj Ali is an incredible human. The graduate has been named Valedictorian of his class of 2019 becoming one of the few male African-Americans to achieve the highest academic honor in this history of Portland Public Schools and in the annals of Oregon high schools.

Ali's hard work and consecutive years of dedication also has earned him several scholarships

and other academic honors, including an award for exemplifying the value of equity at the northeast Portland school. Valedictorian is a recognition accorded to the highest performing senior in each high school class.

He is known for his quiet and affable personality, a humble demeanor and fierce pursuit of excellence, all of which have earned him the admiration of his brothers, his peers and the entire staff at school.

The eldest of three brothers, Ali has interests in engineering, photography, law, social justice and environmental studies.

When asked his secret, he

calmly says it was the support of his family, who never pressured him, and the "joy of the results of consistent effort to be the best."

His mother Amina Ali, a retired and decorated teacher from the David Douglas School District, says, "Whether Taj becomes a great civil engineer, photographer, pilot or attorney he will be great, no doubt about it."

Ali received offers to enroll at colleges as far away as Clemson, Penn State, the University of Massachusetts and others, but settled on the Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon in Eugene, where he plans to attend next fall.

## Police Reform Panel Falls Short

### Feedback comes from judge and community

A federal judge has held off on giving his approval of a new community group charged with overseeing police reforms.

U.S. District Judge Michael H. Simon said of Portland's Committee on Community-Engaged Policing that he thinks it's going in the right direction, but that "I'm not ready to conclude it's adequate... until I see a record of positive performance."

Though he said the group has shown "tremendous promise" since it began monthly meetings in November, more assurance that the committee is effective is needed,



Rev. T. Allen Bethel

especially since its predecessor fell apart during inner tumult and lack of city support and then the gap went unfilled for more than a year.

The judge's comments came last week after hearing almost six hours

of testimony about the 2014 settlement between the city and the U.S. Justice Department over police mistreatment of people with mental illness, including from community activists who urged the judge to withhold making any judgments yet about the new committee.

Rev. T. Allen Bethel from the Albina Ministerial Alliance's Coalition for Justice and Police Reform said the 13-member committee hasn't been the new, improved, and better model that it was supposed to be and lacks the essential charge of community engagement.

Bethel added that its predecessor—the Community Oversight Advisory Board—often held contentious meetings, but they were publicly attended.

"We're lacking that here," he said.

# Fostering Media Diversity

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT

the work itself and let the work speak for itself," she said.

Bell, who conceived the program, is a northeast Portland native who grew up just blocks from the former Portland Community Media building, which was re-launched as Open Signal in 2017. Having worked in public media on both coasts, as well as in the production side of major motion pictures like "The Departed" and "Mystic River," Bell was inspired to create the incubator to address the stark lack of black voices like him in film and television industries.

The program provided its six fellows with training, mentorship,

a stipend, and access to professional equipment. The filmmakers met weekly on Friday evenings to talk about their individual projects.

A talk from a lawyer about intellectual property, watching then dissecting popular films, and even travelling to Seattle and other places to work on video shoots, were some of the other experiences the fellows were able to have through the program.

In addition, the program connected the filmmakers to prominent black storytellers in the industry, such as Ime Etuk, the first assistant director of the Netflix series "Everything Sucks" and the upcoming feature film "The Water Man," directed by David Oyelowo.

Brooks expressed gratitude to have been a part of the program that Bell and Open Signal worked together on to launch.

"I feel like it's been really impactful for myself just being able to submerge myself back into film work and help other people get more invested in their own personal craft," she said.

She added that Open Signal continues to do a lot for people who might not otherwise have access to professional video equipment or training, such as offering community members free access to industry standard equipment so long as they become certified in using it through one of their low-cost classes beforehand and agree to share their work on one of Open



PHOTO BY SAM GEHRKE

Black and women filmmakers, who are sorely underrepresented nationwide in the television and movie industries, were the focus of a yearlong fellowship for filmmakers of color, called Open Signal Labs, which will premiere its first cohorts' work this Friday.

Signal's cable channels.

"It's not just starting projects and dropping them, but having the bandwidth to continue to create and bring people along that you know are not always recognized," Brooks said.

Open Signal Marketing Director Rebecca Burrell added that the black filmmaker incubator is also a notably unique endeavor.

"[A]s far as we know this the only program of its kind in our state, and potentially in the region, maybe more. It's a rare program for sure," Burrell said.

Kamal Sinclair, Senior Consultant of the Future of Culture Initiative at the Sundance Institute will give a talk at the screening to contextualize the program's importance in the larger film industry, Burrell added.

Black filmmakers made up only 5 percent of the industry's top directors in the country in the

past decade, according to a 2018 University of Southern California study, and a much smaller percentage were black women.

The screening will also feature a behind-the-scenes documentary short about program.

While the screening starts at 7pm, the doors open at 6:30pm with a pre-show DJ set from VN-PRT. The screening is at the Hollywood Theatre on Ne Sandy Blvd for \$10 general admission and \$75 VIP tickets.

An after party for \$15 general admission at Doug Fir Lounge starts at 9pm and features performances by local musicians Fountain and Brown Calculus, with DJ Kream of Oakland, California.

All proceeds for the event benefit the next black filmmaker fellowship cohort, in 2020.

More information, including online ticket purchase options, can be found at [opensignalspdx.org](http://opensignalspdx.org).



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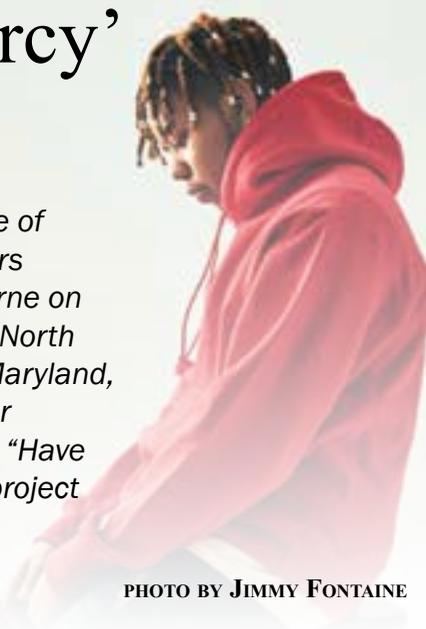


# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

## 'Have Mercy' Rapper

Rapper YBN Cordae, one of music's young rising stars performs at the Hawthorne on Friday, June 14. Born in North Carolina and raised in Maryland, Cordae is on a world tour featuring his lead single "Have Mercy" and debut solo project "The Lost Boy."

PHOTO BY JIMMY FONTAINE



## NW Dance Summer Premieres



PHOTO BY MICHAEL SLOBODIAN  
NW Dance Project Founding Artistic Director Sarah Slipper.

NW Dance Project presents a limited series of new contemporary dance works to close the company's 15th anniversary season.

For three nights only, Thursday,

June 13 through Saturday, June 15, the "Summer Premieres" will provide a rare opportunity to experience three brand new dance works in a single evening.

James Canfield, the founding artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theater and more recently of the Nevada Ballet Theater returns to Portland for his world premiere "Each Desperate Choice," based on "A Streetcar Named Desire."

NW Dance Founding Artistic Director Sarah Slipper will perform a new male/female duet inspired by Pablo Neruda's poem "Tonight I Can Write the Saddest Lines." Award-winning German choreographer will perform "All's Been Said," taking on the issue of climate change.

"Summer Premieres" will take place at Lincoln Performance Hall at Portland State University, downtown. For tickets and more information, visit [nwdanceproject.org](http://nwdanceproject.org).



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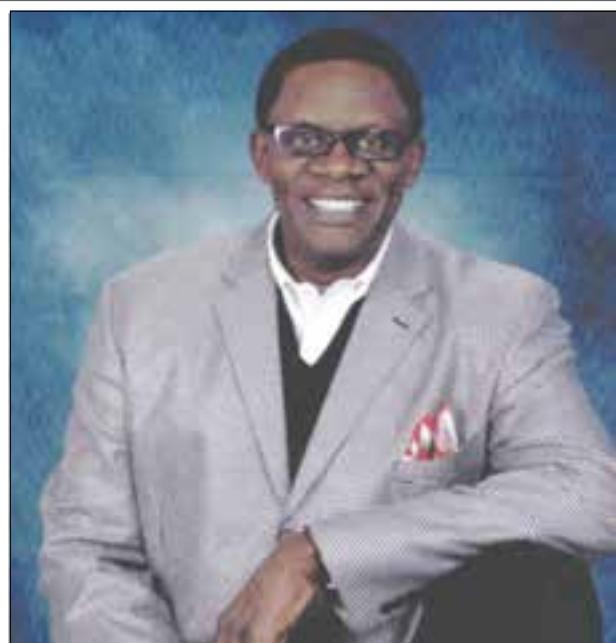
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PHOTO BY BEN BRINK/PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Portland Parks & Recreation's "Summer Free For All" returns with a series of events for both kids and adults all summer long, including movies, concerts, free lunch and play events and more.

Portland Parks & Recreation popular Summer Free For All series is back with amazing events all summer long.

Summer Free For All keeps kids active and healthy, builds community, and celebrates our diverse city by providing free, accessible, and family-friendly summer activities – like live music, movies, crafts, sports, games, and free lunches.

This year, Movies in the Park and Concerts in the Park will take place at 41 different parks across

# Summer Free for All

*Parks all geared up to  
keep kids active, healthy*

the city, and the Free Lunch + Play program will again provide healthy lunches to kids in need, in partnership with five local school districts and Meals on Wheels People.

The summer events officially begin on Monday, June, 17; and everyone is welcome to join the kickoff celebration at lunchtime on Thursday, June 20 at Luuview Park, located at Northeast 127th and Fremont Street.

All summer event guides are posted online at [portlandoregon.gov/parks/sffa](http://portlandoregon.gov/parks/sffa).

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
 A Portland tradition started 45 years ago by the late and beloved community leader Clara Peoples, the annual Juneteenth Oregon Celebration, will once again start with a parade along Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Russell Street and conclude with a daylong celebration at the Legacy Emanuel Hospital Field. This year's annual event is coming Saturday, June 15.

## Lining Up for Juneteenth

The Juneteenth Oregon Celebration is a great way to celebrate diversity, learn about our history, and experience in the sharing of cultures.

Free to the community, the annual event makes its return on Saturday, June 15, kicking off with an 11 a.m. parade along Northeast Martin Luther

King Jr. Boulevard and Russell Street and continuing all day until 7 p.m. at the Legacy Emanuel Hospital Field on North Russell and Williams Avenue where

there will be vendors, food and entertainment and children's activities.

Juneteenth encourages the community to learn from one another in order to facilitate collaboration and cooperation. Oregon's ties to Juneteenth, a na-

tional celebration for the ending of slavery in the United States that originated in Texas, was started in Portland 45 years ago by the late and beloved community leader Clara Peoples.

For more information, visit [juneteenthor.org](http://juneteenthor.org).



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CALENDAR

June 2019

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>☾ 10</span> </div> <p><i>Maurice Sendak born, 1928</i> National Yo-Yo Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>11</span> </div> <p><i>E.T. Movie Premiered In 1982</i> <i>Robert Munsch born, 1945</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>12</span> </div> <p><i>Anne Frank born, 1929</i> <i>The Baseball Invented In 1839</i> Magic Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>13</span> </div> <p><i>Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen born, 1986</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>14</span> </div> <p>National Flag Day (U.S.) 'Pop Goes the Weasel' Day <i>Sand Paper Invented, I. Fischer Jr., 1834</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>15</span> </div> <p>Fly a Kite Day Power of a Smile Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>16</span> </div> <p><b>Father's Day</b> National Fudge Day</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>☉ 17</span> </div> <p>World Juggler's Day Eat Your Vegetables Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>18</span> </div> <p><i>Chris Van Allsburg born, 1949</i> International Picnic Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>19</span> </div> <p><i>Garfield Debuted in 1978</i> <b>Juneteenth</b> <i>Tasmanian Devil Debuted in 1954</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>20</span> </div> <p>American Eagle Day Ice Cream Soda Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>21</span> </div> <p>First Day of Summer</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>22</span> </div> <p><i>US Department of Justice Established in 1870</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>23</span> </div> <p><i>Theodore Taylor born, 1922</i> <i>Typewriter Patented In 1868</i></p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>24</span> </div> <p>World U.F.O. Day (also July 2) 1st modern UFO sighting (by Kenneth Arnold)</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>☾ 25</span> </div> <p>LEON Day - LEON is NOEL spelled backwards. It means six months until Christmas</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>26</span> </div> <p><i>Bicycle Patented In 1819</i> National Chocolate Pudding Day <i>Toothbrush Invented In 1498</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>27</span> </div> <p><i>Captain Kangaroo (Bob Keeshan) born 1927</i> Helen Keller Born in 1880</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>28</span> </div> <p>Paul Bunyan Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>29</span> </div> <p><i>First iPhone released, 2007</i> Camera Day</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>30</span> </div> <p>Meteor Day <i>National Organization of Women Founded In 1966</i></p>



Photo by Andie Petkus

Twenty-four recipients honored at the 22nd Annual Black United Fund Scholarship Awards Luncheon.

**Front row (left to right):** Dario Rolon-Manzo, Mya Brazile, Amy Vargas-Moreno, Jordan Hammock, Angela Gonzalez, Amaya Gustave, Rae Tekie, (friend of Rae), Andre Tharp III, Laetitia Mihigo, Pearl Tommy, Johana Amani and Justice English.

**Back row (left to right):** Symone Sparrow, Ayan Salat, De'Reanna Holmes, Bella Myers, Alec Jackson, Zion Ward, Miles Rodriguez, Kerim Semed, Seven Antoine, Jeanette Mmunga, La'don Archie, Yasmin Abdulaziz and Dr. Alaiyo Foster.



Photo by Antonio Harris

**Oregon Alliance of Black School Educators Award (OABSE) Winners: Front Row:** Travis West, Central Catholic; \*Chinemerem Amadi, Jefferson; Dominic Wilson-Carr, Beson; \*Japhety Ngabireyimana, Roosevelt; Des'Smen Pooler, Parkrose; Izayah Green, Beaumont; AndreTharp III, Grant.

**Back Row:** \*Veronica Rasheed, Grant; \*Sarah Steele, Jefferson; \*Rahewa Tekkie, Beson; Jameshac Branch-Bell, Parkrose; \*Zanaya Noel, Franklin; \*Gabrielle Cosey, Lincoln; \*Michael-Ann Scardino-Moore, Cleveland; \*Lily Rayer, Cleveland. **\*These Students received OABSE Scholarships.**

**Other scholarship winners not pictured:** Khadija Gedi, David Douglas; Ganiyat Karimu, De La Salle North Catholic; Ramone Gumina, Franklin.

Opinion articles do not necessarily represent the views of the Portland Observer. We welcome reader essays, photos and story ideas. Submit to news@portlandobserver.com.

# OPINION



**MCS Still in Business**

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## Combating Racism as a Public Health Crisis

An approach that should inspire others

BY JESSICAH PIERRE

Racism is often viewed as an action performed by individuals. But even if we got rid of all America's prejudiced individuals, racism would still exist in the systems they built.



Systemic racism, writer Jenee Desmond-Harris explains, refers to how racial disparities operate "in major parts of U.S. society: the economy, politics, education, and more."

Racism, in other words, isn't just someone using a racial slur. It's also the poor schooling in predominantly black and brown neighborhoods, the racial wealth gap, housing discrimination, mass incarceration, police killings of unarmed black and brown people, higher infant mortality rates for people of color, and unequal access to health care.

As governments struggle to address (or even acknowledge) these racial inequalities, officials in Mil-

waukee, Wisc., decided to take a unique approach by declaring racism a public health crisis.

Milwaukee is one of the most racially unequal cities in the country, coming in at No. 2 last year on a list of "The Worst Cities for Black Americans" by 24/7 Wall Street, a financial news site. The report blamed Milwaukee's discriminatory housing policies throughout the 20th century for the city's current inequality.

deep income and wealth inequality today.

Even now, the typical black household in Milwaukee earns less than half the typical white household. And "while the white poverty rate in Milwaukee of 7.6 percent is one of the lowest in the country," the report notes, "the black poverty rate of 36.4 percent is among the highest."

When it comes to imprisonment, the story is the same. Black people in Wisconsin are locked up at nearly 11 times the rate of

ties at the local level.

By declaring such racism a public health crisis, Milwaukee County officials are committing to put racial equity at the core of all city procedures, to advocate for policies that improve health in communities of color, and to train their employees on how racism impacts residents.

Finally, they hope to encourage other local, state, and national officials to recognize racism as a public health issue. "We have a moral imperative to put our indifference aside in the face of injustice," said Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele, and to "ensure every resident in every neighborhood benefits."

Abele couldn't be more right. Like the late great Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Black Americans deserve an end to racial inequality, but eradicating systemic racism would strike at the heart of inequalities that hold down Americans of all colors. The solutions can be complex, but bold ideas like Milwaukee's are a great start.

Jessica Pierre is the inequality media specialist at the Institute for Policy Studies.

*Even now, the typical black household in Milwaukee earns less than half the typical white household.*

Citing research by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, it noted that "16 of the 18 suburbs of Milwaukee County enacted restrictive housing covenants in the 1940s, many of which remained in effect into the 1960s and 1970s." This segregation contributed to

whites, and more than half of Milwaukee's black people in their 30s have served time behind bars.

In the end, where does all this lead? Across the state of Wisconsin, it means black people live about six years fewer than white people, with even greater dispari-

# BIDS/CLASSIFIEDS

## SUB BIDS REQUESTED

### PDX TCORE – Terminal Core Redevelopment Portland, OR Bid Package: #2 Trade Partners

(Includes: Excavation/Site Utilities, Demolition, Expansion Joints, Fire Suppression, Metal Panels)

**Pre-Bid Meeting:** June 14th 10:00am

**Bids Due:** July 2nd 2:00pm

**Bid Documents:** [www.hoffmancorp.com/subcontractors](http://www.hoffmancorp.com/subcontractors)



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## SUB BIDS REQUESTED

### Portland International Airport (PDX) Parking Additions and Consolidated Rental Car Facility (PACR) Bid Package 11

JE Dunn Construction invites written Bids from qualified Trade Partners to provide construction services for the following scopes of work on the PACR project:

- Masonry
- Fireproofing
- Miscellaneous Metals
- Glazing
- Expansion Joints
- Glass Canopies
- Below-Grade Waterproofing
- Drywall & Framing
- Traffic Coating
- P3 Garage Paint
- Roofing
- Fire Sprinklers
- Metal Panels

Bidding Documents may be viewed and/or obtained electronically on SmartBidNet through a Bid Invitation issued by the Contractor. To be issued a Bid Invitation, contact Robert Means at: [Robert.Means@jedunn.com](mailto:Robert.Means@jedunn.com). Bidding Documents may also be viewed at the locations listed in Plan Rooms section below.

Use the Bid Proposal Form in Section 00 41 23 and include other bid information (scope breakdowns, narratives, etc.) for reference. Bids will be received by the Contractor Attn: Robert Means, 424 NW 14th Ave, Portland, OR 97209. Bids may also be delivered by email to [Robert.Means@jedunn.com](mailto:Robert.Means@jedunn.com)

**Bids due 2:00pm PST June 21, 2019**

Any Bid received after the specified date and time will not be considered.

A non-mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be located at The Port of Portland Headquarters, located at 7200 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97218 in the Multnomah Conference Room on Wednesday, May 29th, 2019 at 1:00pm for the purpose of answering any questions from prospective Bidders. Attendance is strongly encouraged. No other Pre-Bid Conference will be held.



JE Dunn Construction reserves the right to select the best value response, negotiate with multiple bidders, or reject all responses. This is an Equal Opportunity and encourages Minority, Woman, Veteran, and Emerging Small Business participation.

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**Lead Electrician, full-time,** Oregon Convention Center, \$41.04 - \$42.98 hourly. Deadline date: June 17, 2019

**Production Supervisor, full-time,** Portland's Centers for the Arts, \$54,879 - \$79,574 annually. Deadline date: June 21, 2019

**Utility Lead - Swing Shift or Day Shift, full-time,** Portland's Centers for the Arts, \$22.10 - \$23.13 hourly. Deadline date: June 20, 2019

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Visit [oregonmetro.gov/FOTA](http://oregonmetro.gov/FOTA) for the complete job announcement and a link to our online hiring center or visit our lobby kiosk at Metro, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland.

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# OPINION

## Coming Together to Fight for Our Rights Celebrate Pride, mindfully

BY JILL RICHARDSON

Happy Pride month! It's June so it's time to bust out the rainbows and... actually, I have a lot of conflicted feelings about it.

Supposedly, Pride is when we all come together to celebrate queerness in all forms. Yet, we non-strights are not all the same, and many of us hold various overlapping identities (like trans women who are also lesbians, or queer people who are also people of color).

While there's greater political power in pooling together in unity to fight for all of our rights, it's difficult to negotiate unity within such a heterogeneous group. Within the LGBTQ+ community (an acronym that gets longer as more communities make their presence known), we're not all on the same journey. As a woman attracted to other women, and fully at home in my assigned gender, my journey looks a lot different from folks who've had to fight to have their very existence acknowledged.

Transgender people are fighting for inclusion and acceptance in a gender they weren't assigned at birth. Non-binary people are working to live outside the gender binary in a world that wants to give everyone only two options. Bisexual and pansexual people (who are attracted to others of all genders and orientations) have different challenges. They're often invisible, because people think they're straight if they date someone of the opposite sex or gay if they date someone of the same sex.

I support all these people while recognizing that their journey has been different from my own. Our need to come together despite our differences arises from our marginalization in a world dominated by heterosexual cisgender people. Cisgender straight people grow up never needing to figure out that they're straight, never needing to figure out what gender they are, never needing to come out to anyone, and never risking rejection or marginalization for being straight.

ney has been different from my own. Our need to come together despite our differences arises from our marginalization in a world dominated by heterosexual cisgender people.

Cisgender straight people grow up never needing to figure out that they're straight, never needing to figure out what gender they are, never needing to come out to anyone, and never risking rejection or marginalization for being straight.

The world they live in reflects — and was constructed to reflect — their own internal reality. Movies, books, music, laws, language, and every part of the world around them says that a person assigned female at birth will grow up as a woman and fall in love with a man.

For those of us for whom that isn't true, we gain strength in numbers when we band together. However, within the queer community, some groups are marginalized more than others, and other parts of our identity do not fade away.

The dominance of men over other genders, cisgender people over trans and non-binary people, white people over people of color, able-bodied people over disabled people, and rich and middle class people over the working class and poor continues even within the LGBTQ+ community.

Our challenge, when we come together to fight for our rights, is to remain sensitive to our other differences, and to avoid perpetuating the further marginalization of those who are not white, cisgender, able-bodied, middle class gay men within the broader queer community.

*OtherWords columnist Jill Richardson is pursuing a PhD in sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She lives in San Diego. Distributed by OtherWords.org.*



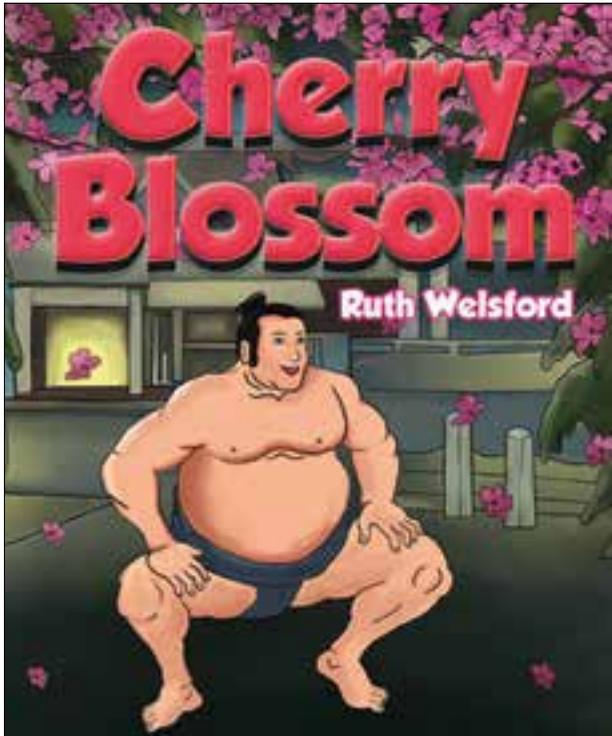
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## Sumo Wrestler Plays Hero

He could pick up an opponent by his mawashi belt and lift him out of the ring. He was agile! He could dodge with his big body, then, quick as lightning, thrust his opponent beyond the dohyo. But for all his strength, Cherry Blossom felt powerless when an earthquake struck his beloved country. The many faces of strength, courage, love, loss, and how this informs our actions in times of adversity are at the center of the story of a beautifully illustrated new book, "Cherry Blossom" by Portland author and preschool teacher Ruth Welsford. Cherry Blossom is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and other bookstores.



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"Equal Value, Different Shades" is the title of Sherri Culver's creative quilt.

## 'On the Edge' Art Quilts

This summer, the Oregon Historical Society hosts an original exhibit of art quilts developed by local Studio Art Quilt Associates artists titled "On the Edge."

The group invited members to interpret, either in a representational or abstract way, a response to the theme of being on the edge, be it physically, geographically, emotionally, philosophically or in personality

quitting, will appreciate the original interpretations of the theme as well as the technical skill employed to design the works of art.

"The stellar quality of the works are a testament to the skill and creativity of the artists involved," said Karen Sunday Spencer, curator of the exhibit.

A two-gallery show, the exhibit is now showing through Aug. 15 at the Oregon Historical Society Museum at 1200 S.W. Park Ave.

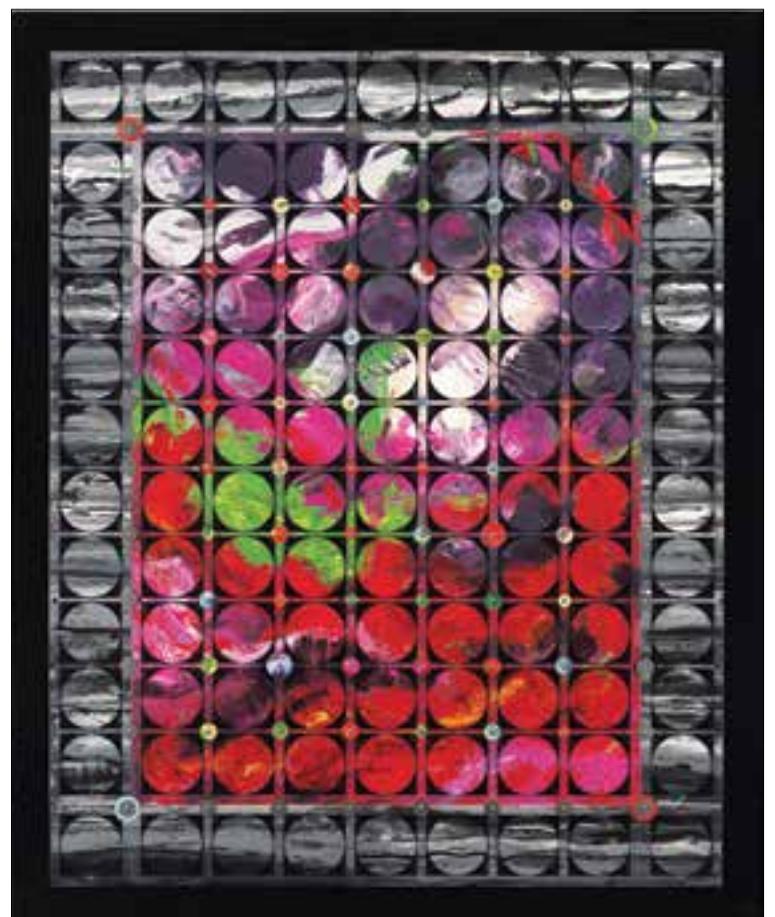


PHOTO COURTESY PUSHDON STUDIO  
A quilt by Judith Quinn Garnett is from a collection of art quilts made in Portland that are on display this summer at the Oregon Historical Society.

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