



# Black History Month

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# The Portland Observer

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'City of Roses'

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Valentines Day is February 14



## Governor Honors Black History



Oregon Gov. Kate Brown welcomes representatives of African American communities across the state to the state Capitol in Salem last week for her signing of a proclamation in honor of Black History Month. The contingency included members of the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs, the Oregon Black Pioneers, State Sen. Lew Frederick, and many others. (See related photo, page 4 )

## Esteemed Author Speaks Out on Inmate Justice

### Says system so flawed prisons should be abolished

BY BEVERLY CORBELL  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Speaking out and emotionally connecting in personal ways with people of color experiencing the criminal justice system is a passion for Walidah Imarisha, an esteemed Portland author, teacher and scholar from the African American community.

Sharing her thoughts for Black Histo-

ry Month with the Portland Observer, Imarisha explained how cruel and unusual punishment has put too many people in prison.

It's especially true for black people where incarceration rates have historically been three to nine times those of whites, depending upon the decade and region of the country. In Oregon, African Americans, for example, make up 2 percent of the state's population and 10 percent of the



Walidah Imarisha

inmates in Oregon prisons and jails. And according to a 2016 publication from the Oregon Health Authority, at any single time in the state, there are about 22,200 people in lockup, including 1,800 housed in the federal prison at Sherwood and 550 youth.

Imarisha said there was a time when she believed that prisons existed to rehabilitate people and make communities safer, but after more than a decade of research and frequent visits

with inmates over the years, she is convinced that state and federal penitentiaries do more harm than good.

The first time that she saw a mother sobbing and clutching her incarcerated son when visiting hours were up only to have a guard drag him away, she knew nothing about that scene made her feel safe.

"Prisons don't make us safe and should be abolished," she said.

Imarisha blames the "war on drugs," profitable prison building booms of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



A full-page photograph of Prince playing a white electric guitar. He is wearing a white ruffled shirt under a dark, patterned jacket. The background is a deep blue with some light flares. The text "the most searched guitar solo" is overlaid in white, lowercase letters.

# the most searched guitar solo

Prince's guitar solos have been searched more than any other artist's guitar solos in U.S. Google Trends history.

Explore more at [g.co/blackhistorymonth](https://g.co/blackhistorymonth)

Google



# The INSIDE

## The Week in Review

page 2



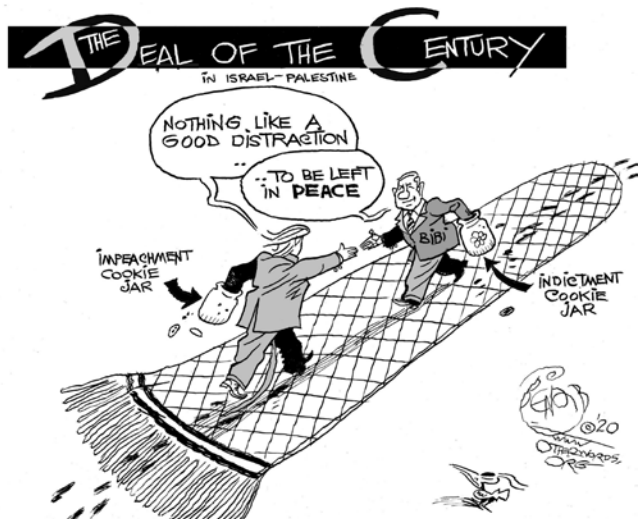
## METRO

page 6



## Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

page 7-8



## OPINION

pages 9

## CLASSIFIED/BIDS

pages 10

# LOCAL NEWS

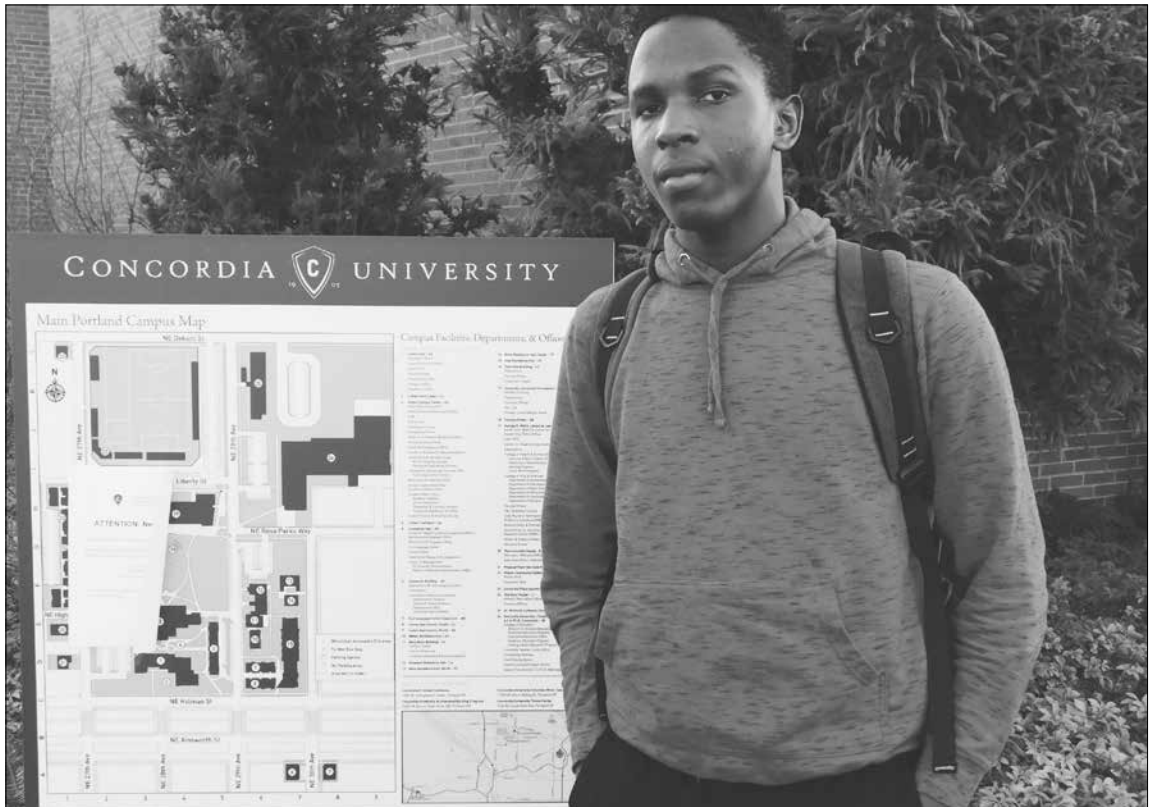


PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Goodness Adefope, who came to Portland from Nigeria to attend Concordia University, is looking for another school now that Concordia is closing its doors.

## Concordia to Shut Down

### Surprise decision stuns college community

BY BEVERLY CORBELL  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Goodness Adefope was still in shock on Monday afternoon upon learning his school was going to close. Concordia University, a northeast Portland landmark serving a diverse population, will close its doors after 115 years of operation.

There was no warning to students that the private college, founded by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1905, will permanently close after this semester, and many were in tears at the news, Adefope said.

"It feels really sad," said the second semester

freshman. "I'm new here and am just now making friends."

Adefope said when he told his family back in Nigeria, they agreed that he should stay in Portland and look for another school.

He said he will try to enroll Portland State University, which announced it is ready help Concordia and to "provide any needed assistance to the university and its students during this difficult time."

Concordia's interim president, Tim Ries, who joined the staff only a month ago, said the school's board of directors decided Friday that the university's current and projected enrollment declines and poor finances "make it impossible to continue its educational mission."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## Breast Cancer Survivor Celebration

An invite is out for breast cancer survivors and fighters from the African American community to enjoy a night of music, appetizers and beverages, along with a discussion of initiatives to help fight cancer in the community, coming Saturday, Feb. 22 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Village Ballroom, 704 N.E. Dekum St.

"This celebration is a monumental occasion to honor survivors/fighters and encourage the African American and all cultures to stay rooted in their healthcare advocacy," said Arya Morman, a member of a Susan G. Komen Oregon and Southwest Washington advisory council of leaders in the community, area health systems and businesses.

During the event, Komen representatives will update the community on recent data collection efforts and progress in developing an innovative, multi-year project

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Arya Morman, 2020 Ms. Black International Ambassador, and a clinical operations manager for Lifeworks NW, is helping promote a Feb. 22 cancer survivor celebration geared to the African American community.





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## Publisher Meets Governor

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown welcomes Portland Observer Publisher Mark Washington Sr. to her office at the Capitol in Salem last week for her proclamation signing ceremony in honor of Black History Month.

### The Portland Observer

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# The Week in Review

## Max Attack Defense Begins

Defense lawyers for Jeremy Christian, the man accused of stabbing three people, killing two of them, during a racist tirade on a MAX train in May 2017, began laying out their case Monday. They called an expert in de-escalation and use of force who testified how he believes Micah Fletcher, who survived the attack, was being confrontational and escalated the conflict, not Christian.

## Principal Out for Kobe Post

Camas High School Principal Dr. Liza Sejkora resigned on Friday after controversy over a social media post she made about Kobe Bryant's death, referencing a 2003 arrest for a rape accusation that was eventually dropped. She issued an apology to what she called a "personal, visceral reaction" that was "inappropriate and tasteless."

## Legion Post Leader Resigns

Gregory Isaacson, a conservative protester and city of Portland employee, resigned Feb. 3 as commander of American Legion Post 134 after a unanimous no-confidence vote held at the post's Northeast Alberta Street headquarters. Isaacson's election as post commander drew scrutiny in January from military veterans who said his attendance at Patriot Prayer protests ran counter to the post's mission of being a welcoming space.

## Vigil for Teen Killed by Police

Loved ones and social justice advocates gathered Sunday to remember the life of 17-year-old Quanice Hayes, who was shot and killed in a confrontation with Portland Police three years ago. Positive stories and laughter were shared amongst those who gathered for a potluck dedicated to the black teenager. Family members said he would have turned 21 this August.

## Trump Acquitted; Fires Officials

President Donald Trump started firing key government officials Friday who cooperated with Congress after the Senate acquitted him of impeachment charges. Army Lt. Col. Alex Vindman was removed Friday from the White House and reassigned, as was his twin brother, Lt. Col. Yevgeny Vindman. Also out was Gordon Sondland, a Portland hotelier who had been Trump's ambassador to the European Union.

## Foreign Film Wins Best Picture

"Parasite" was the first non-English language film to win best picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards Sunday. Bong Joon Ho's masterfully devious class satire took Hollywood's top prize, along with awards for best director, best international film and best screenplay.



## Black Church Arsonist Guilty

A white man charged with torching three historically African-American churches in a 10-day span to raise his profile in the "Black Metal" music community pleaded guilty on Monday to federal hate crime charges. Golden James Matthews, the 21-year-old son of a sheriff's deputy, changed his plea from not guilty to guilty during a federal court hearing in Lafayette, La. officials said.

## Facial Recognition Bias Extensive

Federal researchers have found widespread evidence of racial bias in nearly 200 facial recognition algorithms in an extensive government study, highlighting the technology's shortcomings and potential for misuse. Racial minorities were far more likely than whites to be misidentified in the US government's testing, in some cases up to 100 times more likely, the study found.

# Breast Cancer Survivor Celebration

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

to address the startling breast cancer disparities for African Americans.

"We're enthusiastic to take action with the African American community to change statis-

tics that negatively impact their health," said Andrew Asato, Komen chapter chief executive officer. Reservations to the celebration are required, as space is limited. RSVP at [komenoregon.org/african-american-initiative](http://komenoregon.org/african-american-initiative) or call at 503-552-9160

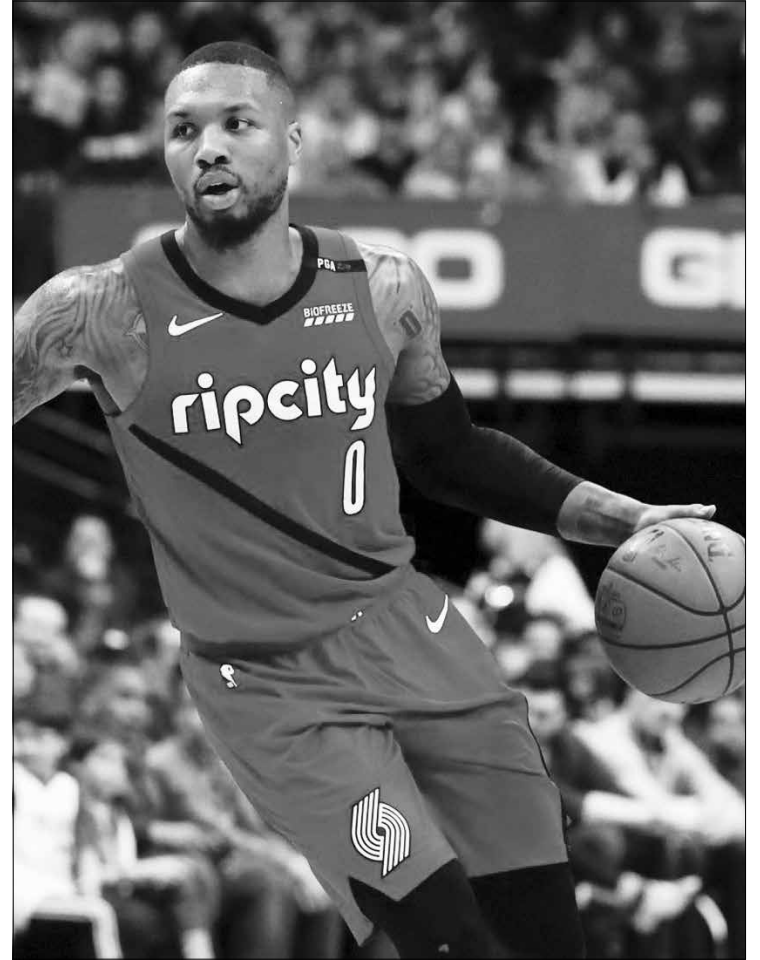
# Double All Star Duty for Lillard

Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard is set to participate in the NBA All Star game on Sunday, Feb. 16 and the All-Star weekend's 3-Point Contest the night before on Saturday, Feb. 15 at the United Center in Chicago. Both will be carried live on TNT starting at 5 p.m.

This will be Lillard's fifth All-Star game and the third time to compete in the 3-Point Contest. Through 48 games this season, he is averaging career highs of 29.8 points and 7.9 assists to go with 4.4 rebounds and 1 steal. Among league leaders, he ranks third in scoring, sixth in assists, second in three-pointers made (192) and third in free throws made (340).

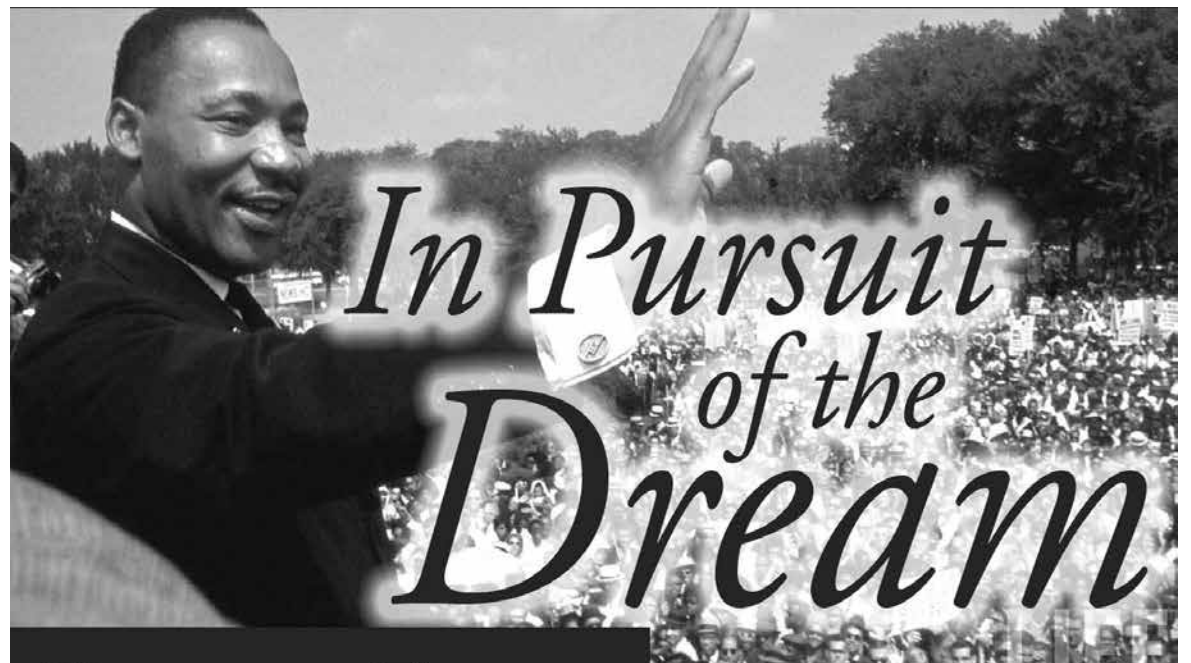
Lillard also is having the most accurate season from the field and from the three-point line, making at least five three-pointers in 17 games this season, tied for the second-most in the league. He has made 49 three-pointers over the last six games (Jan. 20 – Feb. 1), marking the most three-pointers in a six-game span in NBA history.

Lillard will be joined in the 3-point contest by Davis Bertans (Wizards), Devonte' Graham (Hornets), Joe Harris (Nets), Buddy Hield (Kings), Zach LaVine (Bulls), Duncan Robinson (Heat) and Trae Young (Hawks).



AP PHOTO/TONY GUTIERREZ

Sensational guard Damian Lillard will represent the Portland Trail Blazers this weekend as he suits up for the NBA All-Star game on Sunday, Feb. 16 and the 3-point contest on Saturday, Feb. 15



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# Fear of a Black Republic

## Scholar Explores US - Haiti Relations



Leslie M. Alexander

It's been 10 years since a massive earthquake struck the island nation of Haiti, devastating large portions of the small country and killing nearly 300,000 people. In the quake's immediate aftermath, U.S. media incessantly repeated the

mantra: "Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere."

How did Haiti go from being the "Pearl of the Antilles" and the most profitable New World colony in the 18th century to being the most despised and persecuted nation on

earth?

Celebrating Black History Month, Reed College invites the community to hear from Leslie M. Alexander, associate professor of history at the University of Oregon, when she presents a free public lecture "Fear of a Black Republic in the Aftermath of the Haitian Revolution," on Monday, Feb. 17 at 4:30 p.m. in Psychology, Room 105. Reed is located at 3203 S.E. Woodstock Blvd.

The presentation will explore how US and western European nations used their economic and diplomatic strength to isolate and impoverish the "Black Republic" from its birth in 1804 through the 20th century.

Professor Alexander is an esteemed scholar and a former professor at Ohio State who relocated to Oregon in 2017. She is also the sister of Michelle Alexander, author of widely acclaimed "The New Jim Crow."

# Concordia to Shut Down

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Concordia currently serves about 6,000 students – 1,600 undergraduates and 4,300 graduate students, down from 8,000 students just a few years back. The school's closure will also include its law school in Boise. The school says it will work with students, but just where they will continue their education and where Concordia employees will find jobs is still up in the air. The college had 340 employees, including 200 full-time and part-time faculty.

The Concordia campus on Northeast Holman Street will likely be sold, officials said, but the sale will not impact Faubion Elementary, an adjacent school building facing Northeast Dekum, official said.

Faubion, a newly constructed school that replaced an outdated building, is owned by Portland Public Schools. Concordia students and faculty worked with Faubion teachers in a wrap around program called "3 to Phd," helping low income families and students of color obtain success in life, from age three to advanced college degrees.

The college was known as an important resource for its education and nursing programs, bringing new teachers and nurses of color to local schools and medical facilities. The campus also ex-

panded its footprint in the last decade with new athletic fields and a library.

According to a recent U.S. News & World Report, many small colleges are shutting down because of financial pressure and declining enrollment.

Marylhurst College in Lake Oswego, which awarded its first degree in 1897, closed at the end of 2018, citing declining enrollment as the main reason. Some Marylhurst students went on to study at Concordia University.

Ries came to Portland in January after serving as president of Concordia University in St. Paul, Minn., where he was able to lower tuition and increase enrollment, something he had hoped to do here.

But the financial hurdles were too large to overcome, Ries told KGW New8.

"It has had negative cash flow for quite some time and its assets and its liabilities are out of balance," he said. Ries said enrollment has dropped dramatically in recent years.

Ries said the school will help students transfer to other schools and faculty and staff would be told more about their options in coming weeks.

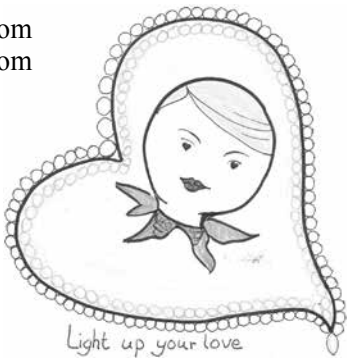
The last commencement ceremony at the university will be on April 25 and the law school graduation will be on May 2.

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# Isham 'Ike' Harris for Portland City Commissioner, Position 1

*I am running for Portland City Commissioner because, like the Biblical land of Canaan, America is a good land flowing with milk and honey, but it has giant problems that must be defeated.*

## Giant Problem #1, Poverty:

56 years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an unconditional war on poverty and \$22 trillion was spent on poverty programs, but the war on poverty was a failure. Six types of poverty exist: Situational, generational, absolute, relative, urban and rural poverty. There are also 40.6 million people living in poverty in America.

## Giant Problem #2, After School Funds:

We need sustained funding for after-school programs.

## Giant problem #3, Achieving Clean Air:

In the age of global warming, we can improve air quality by controlling carbon emissions and adopting a system of cap and trade.

## Giant Problem #4, City Government Structure:

I support a change from the commission/mayor form of city government to one of elected representatives by individual districts and hiring an executive manager who oversees the various city bureaus.

## Giant Problem #5, Supporting Neighborhood Associations:

I encourage the sustainability and longevity of Portland's 95 Neighborhood associations by encouraging participation; by getting to know your neighbors; and by attending community potlucks, block parties and social events, all in the name of promoting safety, livability, the love for neighbors and changing my neighborhood to a brotherhood.

## Giant Problem #6, Portland's Racist History

We need to revisit the historical displacement of families of color from the Albina district. Bring representatives of Legacy Emanuel Hospital, the Rose Quarter's Memorial Coliseum and Moda Center, and the Oregon Department of Transportation together to discuss how to atone for sins of displacement for people of color.





# Esteemed Author on Prison Justice

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT

1980s and 90s, and mandatory sentencing laws for all contributing to extreme overcrowding in prisons, a result that she says is both cruel and unusual punishment as well as a war on people of color.

On a recent journey to visit with inmates at the Oregon State Penitentiary, she expanded on her views and thoughts, “How do we go about imagining different ways of existing without prisons?” she asked.

The same subject was the topic of her book, “Angels with Dirty Faces: Three Stories of Crime, Prison and Redemption,” which won the 2017 Oregon Book award.

“I strongly believe in prison abolition, the idea that prisons make us all less safe, and that there are ways of creating community accountability without relying on police and prisons,” she said. “The book focuses on the lives of three people who have dealt with harm, as well as how the prison system itself is harm.”

Imarisha does a lot of volunteer educational work in the criminal legal system. She personally reaches out to people currently under lockup, evidenced by her heading to the prison in Salem for a meeting with Uhuru Sasa, a black cultural group for inmates.

“They put on amazing programs and events in prison, and also do incredible work connecting with the community and being a positive force, she said about the organization,” she said. “This past sum-

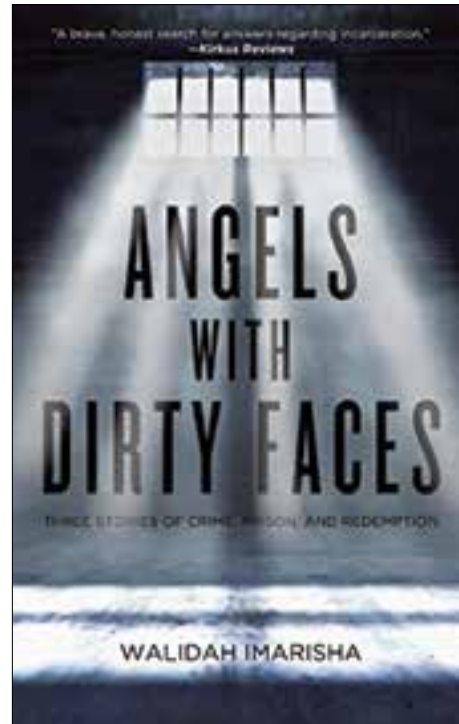
mer I facilitated a 10 week cultural workshop to really explore black culture and how it is a positive force in the community, historically and currently.”

When considering all the communities in Oregon, Imarisha said the people housed in prisons must be counted in as well, because “If you are not talking about the black people who are incarcerated, you are not talking about the entire black community.”

She stresses a number of ways to support our incarcerated brothers and sisters.

“There are myriad ways to get involved in prison justice, to connect with organizations doing that work in that area,” Imarisha said. “There are prison writing groups, groups working on legislation, and community-based leadership programs, and you can work directly with organizations working in the prisons as well, pending approval. There are many ways to encourage people to do research and connect with organizations doing work they are interested in to support the people inside.”

Imarisha teaches creative writing in the masters of fine arts program at Pacific Northwest College of the Arts, as well as conducting community workshops both in the community and at several different state prisons. She has also taught at Stanford University, Portland State University and Oregon State University, and created the Oregon Black History Timeline, available on YouTube, exploring key moments in Oregon black history.



PHOTOS COURTESY WALIDAH IMARISHA  
Walidah Imarisha, the nonfiction book author of ‘Angels with Dirty Faces: Three Stories of Crime, Prison and Redemption’ won a 2017 Oregon Book award.

She also co-edited the anthology, “Octavia’s Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements,” a collection of 20 short stories and two essays written by organizers, activists and change makers.

Imarisha said one premise behind “Octavia’s Brood” was that you need to

imagine a just prison system because one doesn’t exist.

“So every time we imagine a world without prisons, without borders, without oppression, that’s science fiction because we’ve never seen that world,” she said. “But we can’t have what we can’t imagine, so we absolutely need imaginative spaces like science fiction that allow us to imagine beyond what we’re told is possible.”

Imarisha also talked about racism in Portland, the whitest major city in America.

“Institutional racism is built in every aspect of society and our lives and the way power functions, and unless folks are committed to keep doing the difficult long term work of uprooting institutional racism, and recognizing the extent of oppression, they aren’t committed to making real change,” she said.

She was even more pointed in a recent speech at the University of Portland on honor the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday:

“Portland specifically, and Oregon in general, has been incredibly good at marketing itself in a multiplicity of ways as a progressive city, as a liberal city, as a city that cares about diversity and inclusion. How is it possible to be a city that proclaims itself to be the liberal capital of the United States, and be the whitest city in America?” she said, as quoted in the University of Portland student newspaper the Beacon.

“The reality is Portland and Oregon are exactly as they were intended to be: a racist white utopia. That is the foundation

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



Portland movie actor and producer Ramone Palmore tackles gun violence in two new films, “Saving District,” coming out March 14, and “Two Sons in a Day,” a film to begin production this summer about the 2010 police shooting death of Aaron Campbell in Portland.

## Actor Stars in Films on Gun Violence

Finishes one picture; plans next role as Aaron Campbell

Ramone Palmore, a Portland actor and producer is celebrating the completion of a new movie, “Saving District,” a short film about school shootings in America, and he will soon take on the role of Aaron Campbell in a new movie about the black Portland man who was killed by a police sniper 10 years ago in a confrontation outside his apartment while mourning the death of his brother.

“Saving District,” a short independent film that is coming

out on March 14, is about a kid named Dennis, a high schooler with a rough life who feels like he is at the end of his rope. He’s been pushed down his whole life, and for once he doesn’t feel like getting back up. The extremes he is willing to go to make his voice heard is a reflection of the chaos and gun violence happening in America right now.

This summer, Palmore will begin production of “Two Sons in a Day,” the film based on the events leading to Campbell’s death when he was gunned down by law enforcement on the same day his brother Timothy Douglas passed away from heart complications leaving Campbell hurt and emotionally raw.

As police showed up to his home, Campbell complied to or-

ders of walking backwards out of his apartment with his hands over his head, but a police sniper shot him, leaving Marva Davis, the mother of both sons, heartbroken and searching for answers. Two Sons in a Day will be directed and written by Mischa Webley and produced by Elevate Pictures and Global Millennium Pictures.

Palmore, 35, started acting with Director Beth Harper at Portland’s Actors Conservatory. He studied at the Artists Repertory Theatre with instructor Chris Harder. He was cast in “A Street Car Named Desire” at the Second Story Repertory theatre with Director Jane Ryan. He was then asked to lead in commercials for KGW news and Modus. Palmore has appeared in Grimm and the Librarians on TV.



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# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



## Do the Right Thing

Racial tensions rise to a boiling point on the hottest day of the year in 'Do the Right Thing,' a 1989 comedy-drama masterpiece produced, written and directed by Spike Lee. With the opus on racism and police violence in America, the film still resonates today and will get a screening as part of the Portland Black Film Festival on Saturday, Feb. 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Hollywood Theater.

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# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

## 'Alternative Facts' Screens

Documentary, showing at PCC, exposes lies justifying internments

Portland Community College will remember the anniversary of the presidential executive order that led to Japanese-American internments when it hosts the movie premiere of "Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066" at 2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 23 in the Performing Arts Center on the PCC Sylvania Campus, 12000 S.W. 49th Ave.

A discussion with the filmmakers will follow the screening. The event is free and open to the public.

The award-winning documentary examines fabricated evidence of espionage by Japanese Americans,



which led to their forced incarceration during World War II.

The panel discussion will include Jon Osaki (director and producer); David Ono (Los Angeles-based news anchor); and Peggy Nagae (lead attorney for Min Yasui who challenged Executive Order 9066).

## Zoo raises awareness of ocean pollution

"Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea," a series of giant sea-life sculptures made from ocean debris, has made its debut at the Oregon Zoo.

From Chompers the Shark, who greets visitors on the boardwalk, to Hugo the Humpback Whale, who can be spotted near the concert lawn, each sculpture is made from found materials in the hopes of raising awareness of plastic pollution in our oceans.

The sculptures were designed by artist and educator Angela Haseltine Pozzi at her studio in Bandon. She creates each piece using debris collected on the beaches of Oregon, and assembles them in her studio with the help of thousands of volunteers.

Nearly 9 million tons of plastic enter our oceans each year, and that number is expected to grow by 2025. All of this plastic poses a threat to the majority of sea turtle, marine mammal and seabird species that call those oceans home, whether by inges-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL DURHAM/COURTESY OREGON ZOO

Made from washed up beach debris in the hopes of raising awareness of the plastic pollution in our oceans, "Washed Ashore" sculptures like "Chompers the Shark" are on display at the Oregon Zoo until September.

tion or entanglement. Turning the tide of plastic consumption is a daunting task, but even small efforts can make a big difference.

"Washed Ashore: Art to Save

the Sea" will be at the Oregon Zoo through September. The sculptures are located throughout the zoo, and viewing is included with zoo admission.

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PHOTO COURTESY ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CENTER/BOSCO-MILLIGAN FOUNDATION

The historic Royal Palm Hotel, located at 310 N.W. Flanders, was one of Portland's first facilities to hire African-American employees and accept African-American guests. Advocates for preserving Portland's black history have added the structure to a list of buildings the Architectural Heritage Museum is compiling to protect from demolition.

# Preserving Black History

## Moving ahead on effort to save cultural landmarks

Buildings and sites that are important to the history of African Americans in Portland may soon have more protection for demolition thanks to the efforts of Portland's Architectural Heritage Center/Bosco-Milligan Foundation and the city's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

The nonprofit Heritage Center conducted a comprehensive and cultural study of the African Amer-

ican community in Portland from 1865 to 1973 to identify buildings that were part of the community, including houses, churches, fraternal lodges and more. The plan is to protect these buildings from demolition. It completes the study started in 2017 by Cathy Galbraith, the founding director of the foundation, who died in late 2018.

When the Oregon Advisory Committee on Historic Preser-

vation meets later this month, it will consider adopting the foundation's work and consider approving an application to place the historic Billy Webb Elks Lodge, an epicenter of African-American life, on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Bill Webb Elks Lodge on North Williams Avenue in the historic Albina Neighborhood has served as a gathering place for Af-

frican-American social, political, educational and civil rights groups since 1926, according to the foundation.

The lodge was named for Billy Webb, a prominent musician who led an African American band that played in Portland and on steamships in the 1920s. By the end of the 20th century, the building was in disrepair, but was renovated in 2009 with the help of the National

Association of Minority Contractors of Oregon.

Designed by the Portland architecture firm DeYoung and Roald, the structure was completed in 1926 for the Portland YWCA to serve the black community during those segregated times. Facilities included a gym, auditorium, stage, lounge and locker rooms for both

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



## Obituary

### In Loving Memory Lloyd Noble

Aug. 6, 1935 – Jan. 28, 2020

Lloyd Noble was born Aug. 6, 1935 in Seminole, Okla. to Stephen Noble and Estella Jackson. On Jan. 28, 2020, the Lord called him home after being ill for a number of years. His mother passed at an early age, and he was raised in Bakersfield, Calif. He also lived in Spokane with his oldest brother Everett and wife Violet. Later on he moved to Portland and stayed with his sister Frances Odom and Olene Rosemon.

He was active in life and was president of the AARP Chapter 5264 for many years. He worked many jobs, such as a longshoreman and as an assistant chef at a Bohemian restaurant. Later on he joined the Merchant Marines and worked as a cook on a ship. He also joined the electricians union and became an electrician on the vessels he worked on. He was very proud of that. He carried ammunition for three years and never shot a bullet. He travelled around the world for 27 years, countries as Africa, Japan, Egypt, Korea, and many states in the USA.

He was sharp dresser and very outgoing. He married Louise Kinsey on April 7, 1960 and adopted Linda, Tanya and Malcolm and raised them from an early age. He joined the Church of Living God in 2006 as a deacon under Pastor Maxie. Later on in 2016 he joined the Bethesda Church under pastor Jointer.

He leaves his beloved wife Louise, his adopted children, many family members and friends.

A memorial service will be held Thursday, Feb. 13 at 1 p.m. at Bethesda Baptist Church, 1730 S.E. 117th Ave.

# Clarence Thomas in His Own Words

## New film on the one black justice

BY DWIGHT BROWN

To many, he is an enigma. Or that controversial 1990s political/judicial figure who faded into a quiet corner of the Supreme Court of the United States. RBG gets all the press. Clarence Thomas does not. Rarely interviewed, rarely in front of a camera.

If political junkies, students of history, the African American community and others want to delve deep into the psyche of the one black SCOTUS judge, they will have to do their own research. What's on view in the new film 'Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in his Own Words,' is a one-sided scrapbook, with no dissenting points of view. No friends, colleagues or rivals to pose a counterpoint—the kind of good friction that makes a documentary a documentary and not a promo reel.

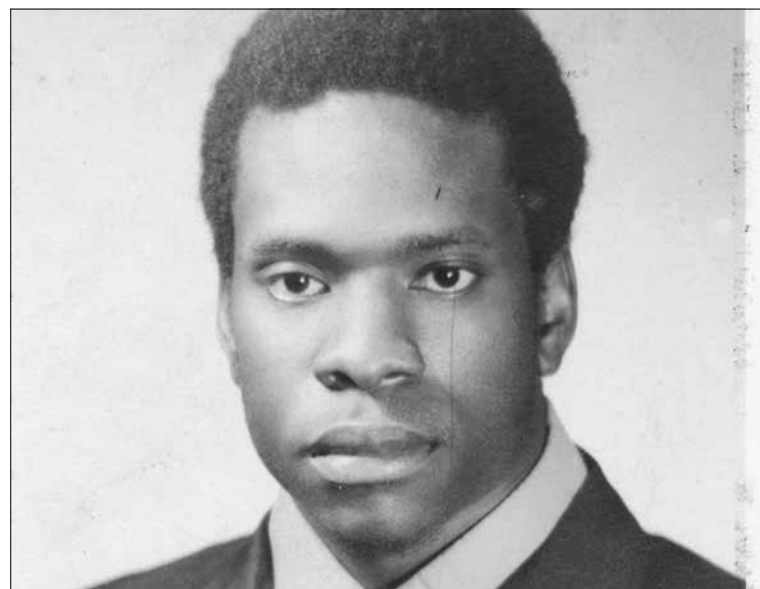
However, this non-fiction film does shed light on certain historical aspects of Thomas' life. Born in the very segregated Pin Point, Georgia in 1948, he was raised initially by a single mother in abject poverty with virtually no interaction with his father. His brother and he were taken in by his middle-class maternal grandparents. A stern granddad became his father figure, applying strict discipline and telling his two young grandsons that the door swings in and out. They came in with it, and will go out with it if they don't behave.

Thomas was sent to a Catholic elementary school. His teenage years were spent in an all-white, all-male Catholic seminary, where he was often the target of racial taunts, especially during the tumultuous civil rights movement. Somehow he attended the College of the Holy Cross, a private Jesuit school in Worcester, Mass. in 1968 even though his grandfather refused to pay for college. He fell in with some black radical students, embraced the Black Panther movement and was disowned

by his grandfather for being a revolutionary. Thomas eventually graduated from Yale Law School, and no family members came to his graduation. That affected him greatly.

Fast forward to 1980, and something changed his social opinions, politics and viewpoint on the fight for equality. This is where the footage feels like it skates over a crucial part of his life. What makes a black man go from a poor kid, to a bright student, a militant, a counterculture "lazy Libertarian," to a Republican? It's like he walked through a door, left his blackness outside and embraced a party that caters to whites with no reasonable explanation (only 8% of black voters identify in some way with the Republican Party). How did this conversion occur? What was the trigger?

"In the fall of 1980, I had decided to vote for Ronald Reagan," Thomas says. "It was a giant step for a black man. Then license is given to others, to attack you in whatever way they want to. You're not really black because you're not doing what you expect black people to do. You weren't supposed to



As young black man, future Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas had more opportunities than other poor kids in his neighborhood and took them.

oppose busing; you weren't supposed to oppose welfare."

Director/writer Michael Pack's inability to ask a tough question becomes egregious here. Thomas is known as the Supreme Court judge who consistently votes against measures that will even the playing field for African Americans. Affirmative action, college admissions, quotas —his opinions

are notoriously against them. Unlike his predecessor Thurgood Marshall, who the black community could look to as someone who understood their challenges, Thomas has been resolutely the opposite. Why?

As Thomas sits in a dark room recollecting, cinematographer James Callanan shoots him from unflattering angles, with horrendous lighting that makes him look like he's in a low-budget sci-fi movie. Photos and footage from the 1950s, 60s and 70s detail poverty in the south and black life under the oppression of Jim Crow laws. They also reveal a young black man who had more opportunities than other poor kids in his neighborhood, and took them.

Thomas attended Yale Law School at the time when its policies, involving race-conscious admissions programs embracing diversity, opened the doors for people like him. Yet he dissented from the court's landmark 2003 decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, which upheld the use of race as a factor in state university admissions decisions. It's that hypocrisy that made him an outcast in the African American community, and particularly to the black intel-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas pictured with his second and current wife, Virginia, who gets plenty of airtime in a new one-sided bio about his life.

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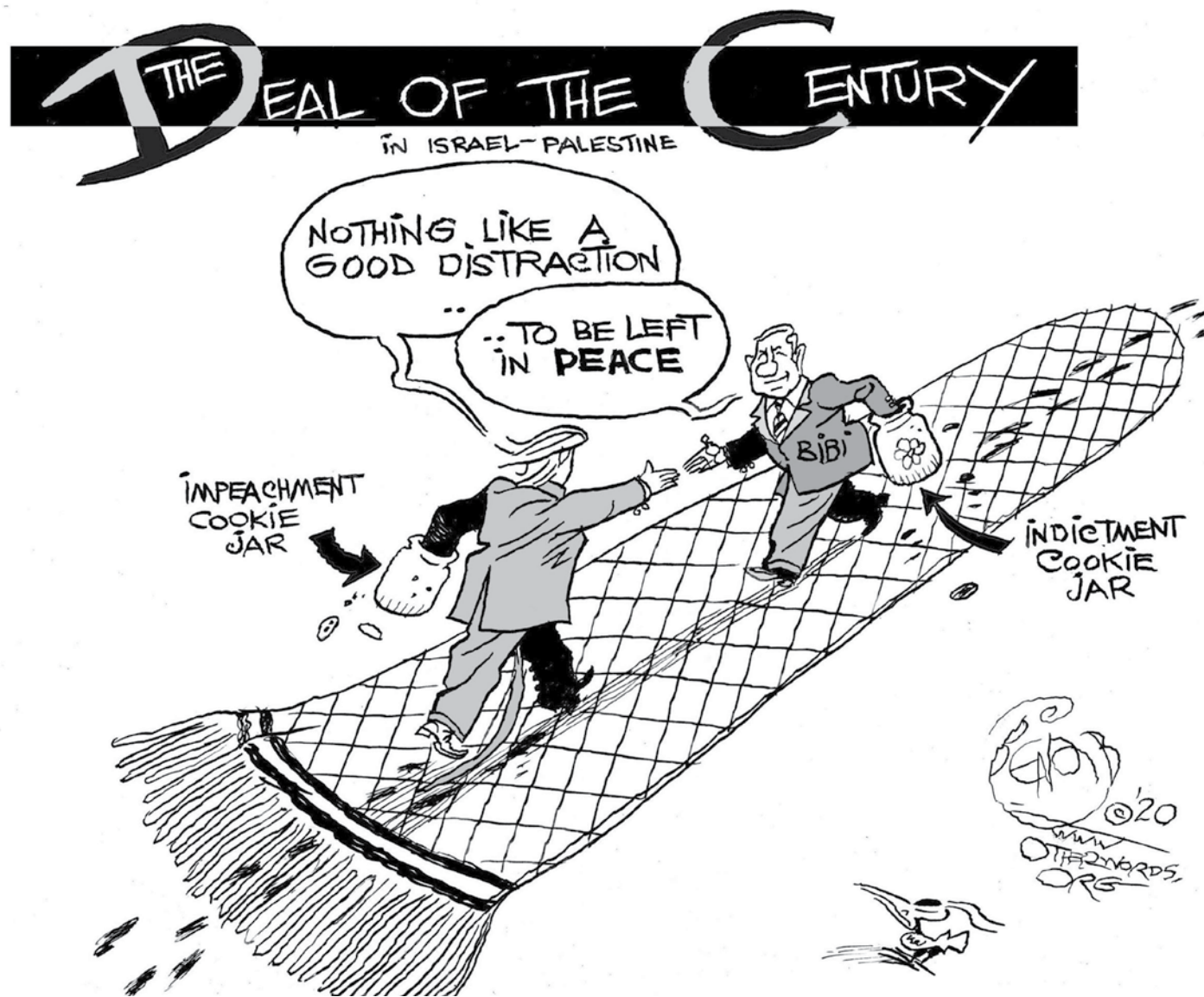
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# OPINION



## Light Your Candle in the Darkness

BY MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN



So many people feel so overwhelmed and disempowered by the stress of the current moment that they convince themselves they can't make a difference. So they don't even try. They bury their talents in the ground and let their spirits wither on the vine of life. I hope they will bestir themselves at least to say every day as an anonymous old man did: "I don't have the answers, life is not easy, but my heart is in the right place."

It is so important not to let ourselves off the hook or to become apathetic or cynical by telling ourselves that nothing works or makes a difference. Every day, light your small candle. Tutor or mentor or speak to or smile at that one child—your own or one you teach or serve in

*The inaction and actions of many human beings over a long time contributed to the crises our nation and children face, and it is the action and struggle of many human beings over time that will solve them...*

some way. Every month decide to write a letter to the editor and to your representatives about a need children have in your community. Every election, take the time to vote for leaders who put children first and against those who don't.

The inaction and actions of many human beings over a long time contributed to the crises our nation and children face, and it is the action and struggle of many human beings over time that will solve them—with God's help. So every day, light your small candle. It just might be the one that sparks the movement to save our children's and nation's future.

God, please help us remember that all the darkness in the world cannot snuff out the light of one little candle. Help us to keep lighting our little candles until a mighty torch of justice sweeps our nation and the world.

Marian Wright Edelman is founder and president emerita of the Children's Defense Fund.

## It's Our Duty to Fight for a Better Country

Impeachment is over, but don't despair

BY DIALLO BROOKS

Hours before the House of Representatives impeached Donald Trump for using the power of his office to sabotage our elections, Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., gave a passionate speech on the House floor emphasizing that his colleagues' duty with their pending votes was far more than political—it was a moral obligation.

"Our nation is founded on the principle that we do not have kings. We have presidents. And the Constitution is our compass," Lewis said. "When you see something that is not right, not just, not fair, you have a moral obligation to say something. To do something. Our children and their children will ask us, 'What did you do? What did you say?'"

"For some," he concluded, "this vote may be hard. But we have a mission and a mandate to be on the right side of history."

He's right. Trump admitted to asking a foreign country to interfere in our elections—a direct threat to our democracy. And since the impeachment trial began, advocates have continued to impress upon Con-

gress its constitutional duty to hold Trump accountable to the law.

Instead, Senate Republicans chose to stage a shameful cover-up and protect a lawless, corrupt president.

Our country is at a somber moment in history, but it's also a pivotal one. Senate Republicans had an obligation to make a choice—a tough choice for some—to check Trump's abuses of power as president. Regardless of the political implications for their own reelections, they had a constitutional duty to do what's right.

But they failed to do their jobs—and their votes to cover up Trump's lawlessness didn't just excuse interference in our elections, they serve as an endorsement for him to do it again. But as we grapple with the consequences, we must not fall into despair.

Rep. Lewis reminds us not just of our duty to continue to fight for a better country—his story reminds us of the transformational change we can achieve when we do.

As a young Black civil rights leader, Lewis suffered a head injury on Bloody Sunday fighting for the rights of people like me to vote in our elections. Today, the scores of Republican voter suppression schemes to stifle the Black vote show the same kind of cowardice that led them sign off on the sham Trump trial.

But their failure to do their jobs doesn't mean we shouldn't do ours.

Ordinary citizens have a responsibility to make sure our government works for the people, and now is not the time to stand down. That's what they're counting on. They're counting on us to lose hope, to not show up, because they know how much power we have when we fight for justice.

There's just too much at stake right now to allow our country to be hijacked. We need to keep fighting to protect our democracy.

That means fighting to protect our access to the ballot box and for the right to have every vote count.

It means participating in the census, a critical tool that determines whether we are fairly represented in our voting districts and much money is invested in our children's schools and in our families' health care.

It means standing against Trump's narrow-minded, discriminatory judicial nominees whose decisions are rolling back our rights at every turn.

It means fighting for our future and for our children's futures.

So let's cling to our courage and keep fighting for justice. Let's continue to remind Trump and his cronies in the Senate that they work for us—and let's use our voices to remind them we will hold them accountable.

Diallo Brooks is People for the American Way's Senior Director of Outreach and Public Engagement.





# New Chief Fronts Hiring Video

Portland's new police chief is encouraging applicants of all backgrounds and experiences to apply for police work in a new police officer recruitment video.

Resch, who was named police chief last month after former chief Danielle Outlaw resigned to take over the Philadelphia Police Department, talks in the video about how law enforcement has been a great career for her, an occupation she did not think about early in her life.

She said if you or someone you know cares about the community and wants a job that makes a difference, now is the time to apply.

There are currently 104 vacan-

cies in the Portland Police Bureau.

"We need to hire the next generation of Portland Police Officers to join our team to help keep our community safe," Chief Resch said. "We need individuals of all backgrounds to become community police officers; law enforcement experience is not required. This career is rewarding in so many ways and we are excited to hire and train individuals who want to do something that matters. Join us!"

For more information about the job, pay, benefits, and frequently asked questions, visit [joinportlandpolice.com](http://joinportlandpolice.com).



*Portland Police Chief Jami Resch calls for applicants of all backgrounds and experiences in a new police officer recruitment video.*

## CLASSIFIED/BIDS

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Prosper Portland is seeking competitive proposals from qualified firms to provide On-Call Commercial Tenanting Services, as outlined in RFQ #19-09. The full RFQ may be obtained from the Prosper Portland website, <http://www.prosperportland.us/bids> (under "Open Public Bid Opportunities"). No pre-proposal meeting is scheduled. Proposals must be received no later than the proposal due date and time listed above at 222 NW 5th Avenue, Portland, OR 97209. Fax or email proposals will not be accepted. Direct any questions regarding this RFQ to solicitation coordinator Breanna Rodriguez at 503.823.3199 (office) or [rodriguezbr@prosperportland.us](mailto:rodriguezbr@prosperportland.us) (email). Prosper Portland encourages participation of D/M/W/ESB firms in this and all other contract opportunities.

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## Preserving Black History

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

boys and girls, according to the foundation, and activities for both sexes were programmed in coordination with black church congregations in the neighborhood.

During World War II, the USO (United Service Organizations) used the building to entertain troops, and after the 1948 Van-

port Flood, the building became a Red Cross emergency shelter and clearinghouse for families separated by the flood.

After the passage of the Oregon Public Accommodations Law in 1953, which outlawed discrimination in public venues, the YWCA sold the Williams Avenue building to the Billy Webb Elks Lodge.

The State Advisory Committee

will allow oral testimony on the draft proposal and the nomination of the Billy Elks Lodge at its meeting at 9:45 a.m. on Feb. 28 at Nordic Northwest's Nordia House, 8800 S.W. Oleson Road. Oral testimony is limited to two minutes. Written comments can be sent to Tracy Collis at 725 Summer St., NE, Suite C, Salem OR 97301 or emailed to [tracy.collis@oregon.gov](mailto:tracy.collis@oregon.gov).

## Esteemed Author

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

of Portland; that is the foundation of Oregon. It was a place where white folks could come and build the sort of idealized white society

they had dreamed about."

Imarisha said imagining a better world is the key to making changes to society, whether it's fighting racism or finding a way to live without prisons.

"A lot of my work focuses on 'visionary fiction,' a term I began using to talk about fantastical art that helps us to imagine and then work to build different just futures," Imarisha said, and "Octavia's Brood" was part of that process.

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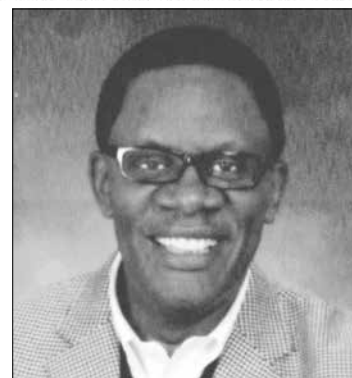
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Dr. Billy R. Flowers

the nauseating effects of the migraine were leaving her. One day, relaxed and without pain, she said to me "I can't believe that I waited 20 years for this!"

That's one comment I'll never forget! The story had a happy, but isn't it sad that it had such an unfortunate beginning. So many suffer for so long with their pain. They literally waste years of their lives, waiting, thinking that it is just a temporary condition. Life itself is a temporary condition. We are all here for only a while. Why waste one precious moment, let alone years suffering needlessly? Find your freedom through good health NOW... naturally.

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# Clarence Thomas in His Own Words

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

ligentsia. A cartoon of Thomas as a lawn jockey on the cover of the very edgy black newsmagazine *Emerge* is just one of the examples of biting political satire that has followed his career.

In the footage, Thomas firmly believes that attacks on him are because he is a free thinker. Not because of his deeds. After his very public and stormy confirmation as a Supreme Court judge in which he out-manuevered Democrats like Joe Biden by using the term "high tech lynching," and swayed public opinion in his favor, he equated white liberals as oppressors:

"I felt as though in my life, I had been looking at the wrong people, as the people who would be problematic toward me," he said. "Ultimately the biggest impediment was the modern day liberal."

There's scant mention of his first wife, Kathy Ambush or son Jamal, both African Americans. His white wife Virginia gets plenty of airtime, and is the only other interviewee in this 1 hour 56 minute promo reel. The two live in a protective bubble, able to see what goes on in society, but completely sheltered. If they didn't, and he let the outside world in, he might hear and absorb constructive criticism that could lead to deep self-examination. The kind of introspection that challenges people to



Lawyer and academic Anita Hill in 1991 when she accused U.S. Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, her supervisor at the Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, of sexual harassment.

grow. The film's basic, insular format just fortifies his cocoon. No rivals. No other judges. No historians. No other family members. Nothing.

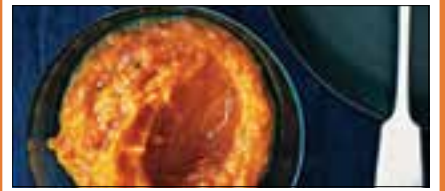
How out of touch is Clarence Thomas, especially concerning the African American community? A voiceover states that Thomas doesn't recruit interns from Ivy League schools, and prefers students from less prestigious institutions. Like he's trying to get down with the real folk. The camera shoots a scene of him in his judge's chambers with a flock of new interns. The

gut check is that they are all white. All blond! And this is his norm. What happened to his blackness? Sense of community?

A two-hour unperceptive documentary leaves the quietest man on the Supreme Court no less an enigma than before the opening credits rolled. Thomas: "I'm different than what people paint me to be." How would anybody know?

*Dwight Brown is the film critic for the National Newspapers Publishers Association, the Black Press.*

## FOOD



### Kabocha Squash Puree

#### Ingredients

- 1 (3-pound) kabocha squash
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. Cut squash in half, and discard seeds. Place the squash halves, cut sides down, in a 13 x 9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish, and add 1/2 cup water to dish. Cover and bake at 450° for 40 minutes or until squash is tender. Remove the squash from pan, and let stand for 10 minutes. Remove pulp from skin, and discard skin. Combine squash pulp, 1/2 cup brown sugar, and the remaining ingredients in a food processor, and process until smooth.

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# Celebrate BLACK HISTORY Month

with Multnomah County Library

## Albina Library

3605 NE 15th Ave.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **South African Gumboot and Pantsula Dance**, Sat., Feb. 8, 12:30–1 pm
- **Power to the People: The Black Panther Party's Legacy in Albina**  
Sun., Feb. 16, 2–4 pm at the Rose City Book Pub, 1329 NE Fremont St.

## Central Library

801 SW 10th Ave.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **Story Hour with Niki Brown Clown**  
Fri., Feb. 14, 10:30–11 am
- **Ken Burns' Central Park Five Movie Screening**, Sun., Feb. 16, 2–4 pm

## Gregory Heights Library

7921 NE Sandy Blvd.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month

## Hollywood Library

4040 NE Tillamook St.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **I Never Knew There Were So Many Books About Us!**  
Sat., Feb. 22, 1–2:30 pm

## Kenton Library

8226 N Denver Ave.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **South African Gumboot and Pantsula Dance**, Mon., Feb. 10, 5–5:30 pm
- **Honoring Black Heritage Through Art**, Sun., Feb. 16, 2:30–4:30 pm

## Midland Library

805 SE 122nd Ave.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **Hadisi ya Tuamini — Swahili Storytelling**, Wed., Feb. 5, 5:30–7:45 pm
- **A Place Called Home: From Vanport to Albina**, Wed., Feb. 12, 6:15–7:15 pm

## North Portland Library

512 N Killingsworth St.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **African American Read-In**  
Sat., Feb. 8, 1 pm
- **I Love Being Me**  
Fri., Feb. 21, 12–1 pm
- **Black History Month Tribute to Toni Morrison**, Sat., Feb. 22, 2:30 pm
- **Power to the People: The Black Panther Party's Legacy in Albina**  
Sun., Feb. 23, 1 pm
- **Keep the Beat!**, Sat., Feb. 29, 12 pm

## Northwest Library

2300 NW Thurman St.

- **A Place Called Home: From Vanport to Albina**, Mon., Feb. 24, 6:30–7:30 pm

## Rockwood Library

17917 SE Stark St.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **Urban Head Wrapping**  
Sat., Feb. 8, 3–5 pm
- **HeART Gallery**, Sat., Feb. 15, 3–5 pm
- **Story Hour with Niki Brown Clown**  
Sun., Feb. 16, 12:15–12:45 pm

## St. Johns Library

7510 N Charleston Ave.

- **Black History Month Display**  
All Month
- **Black History Month Film Fest**  
Saturdays, 3–5 pm
- Feb. 8: *Moonlight*
- Feb. 15: *Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise*
- Feb. 22: *Rafiki*
- **Power to the People: The Black Panther Party's Legacy in Albina**  
Sat., Feb. 29, 3–5 pm



## The Wiz Movie Screening Hollywood Theatre

4122 Sandy Blvd.

Mon., Feb. 24, 7–9:45 pm

Free standby tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis on the Hollywood Theatre's website: [hollywoodtheatre.org](http://hollywoodtheatre.org)

**All libraries: 503.988.5123**  
**[multcolib.org](http://multcolib.org)**

All abilities are welcome. For disability accommodations, call 503.988.5123 or email [help@multcolib.org](mailto:help@multcolib.org) 2–3 days before a program.

