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'City of Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

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Important Election Looms



PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland Attorney Ernie Warren puts his 31 years as lawyer heading up his own law firm and a lifetime of pursuing justice issues as qualifications in a campaign for election as an Oregon Circuit Court Judge for Multnomah County.

Ballots out; countdown begins

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
PORTLAND OBSERVER EDITOR

Voters in the May 19 Primary have less than two weeks to mark their ballots in an important vote-by-mail election that will decide who wins many local offices outright or sends their campaigns into a runoff in November. In addition, two ballot measures face ratification and adoption with a simple majority.

In Portland, a diverse field of candidates faces votes with candidates of color and clearly liberal credentials running in all four contested races for seats on the Portland City Council, including mayor; an open position on the Oregon Circuit Court in Multnomah County; and contested positions for Metro Councilor and Oregon Secretary of State. The names of Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders will appear on the Democratic Primary Ballot for President, but Biden is already the presumed nominee after beating Sanders in recent contests and holding what political experts say is an insurmountable lead. Sanders and Warren have already conceded, but in some cases they can collect more delegates for the party convention.

A two-way race for Multnomah County District Attorney features Mike Schmidt, a former deputy DA and justice reform candidate who has won endorsements from civil rights and racial justice advocates versus Ethan O. Knight, another former deputy DA and assistant U.S. Attorney who has endorsements from a wide swath of the legal establishment, prosecutors, police and firefighters.

Two ballot measures face voters in Portland, a proposed city measure to renew a 10-cent per gallon fuel tax to pay for street repairs, maintenance and safety; and a proposed Metro tax on high incomes and business profits of over \$5 million to pay for homeless services.

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Warren Campaigns for Judge

Experience and community ties win accolades

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ernest "Ernie" Warren Jr., a seasoned Portland lawyer, passionate civil and criminal defense attorney and long time advocate for pursuing justice issues, is asking voters to put him on the bench for an open seat on the Oregon Circuit Court for Multnomah County, one of six candidates running in Oregon's May 19 vote-by-mail election.

Warren has been a mainstay in Portland's African American community since his family migrated here from Texas in the 1930s and '40s.

The Warren clan came to Portland from Pleasant Hill, Texas after mechanization took their farming jobs. During World War II, employment at ESCO Corporation, today a global manufacturer of metal parts, provided economic opportunity. By the 1960s, there were more Warrens in Portland than back in Texas, and like other second and third generation members of the black community, they were employed in many different professions.

In an interview the Portland Observer, Warren told how his father, Ernest Warren Sr., was a successful insurance

broker. But far from coddling his son, the senior Warren was insistent that his son learn the value of work. From the time he was just 9 years old, while other kids were playing summer sports, Warren Jr. was expected to work and work hard.

Warren said he remembers joining his grandfather at the time, who would pick him up before daybreak, to go pick whatever produce was in season on local farms.

"So I know what it's like to go out and pick berries and beans all summer long and have your hands all stained with dirt," he said.

Warren said the values he learned growing up in a big close knit family formed the basis for his lifelong involvement in the community. In 1990, he opened the first African American-owned law firm in the state with the goal of "being a resource to the community, serving the common good and steadfastly pursuing justice." He said he was inspired by the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

"I'm running because I want to be a person who maintains justice and always do what is right," Warren said.

In his 31 years in practice serving a diverse clientele, Warren earned a reputation as a passionate attorney and

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Ballots for the May 19 vote by mail election are out.

Young Activist Runs for Metro Council

Position has no incumbent in crowded field

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

When Cameron Whitten moved to Portland at age 18, he had no place to live and no resources, but a local nonprofit with a long history of helping homeless youth took him in. Now he wants to give back and is running for the District 5 seat on the Portland Metro Council, a regional government serving Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties.

"I was a client at Outside Inn, I had access to mentors, to meals, to shelter, and I had advocates that helped me enroll in school and be successful," Whitten said, describing his experience with the organization and a concern that too many others, like he was 10 years ago, are still vulnerable.

"Our world is so broken right now, and I think the resources that currently exist do not adequately meet the needs we have," he said. "There are people who are extremely vulnerable with very intense challenge."

Whitten, in an interview with the Portland Observer before the

coronavirus pandemic caused a worldwide health crisis, said he felt lucky that he had been able to find successful employment and a career in public service. But while he credited the support he's had, he also pointed to his own hard work to make a productive life for himself.

To focus on his campaign, Whitten ended his tenure as executive director of the Q Center to devote the time necessary to win an election. Besides the Q Center which offers programs to support the LGBTQ+ community, Whitten has served as founder of the racial justice nonprofit Brown Hope, known for the Reparations Power Hour and Blackstreet Bakery. He also serves on the boards of Reach Community Development and Pioneer Courthouse Square.

A long time activist, Whitten led protests following the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Eric Gardner, Sandra Bland and other people of color, and in 2012 he staged a 56-day hunger strike in front of City Hall that focused attention on the suffering caused by the city's housing crisis.

On top of all that, in 2016 he earned his bachelor's degree in economics from Portland State University, and he is currently studying for his master's in busi-



PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Steeped in Portland political activism for a decade, Cameron Whitten is running for a seat on the Metro Council in the May 19 Primary. He most recently served as executive director of the nonprofit Q Center and is founder of the racial justice nonprofit Brown Hope.

ness administration.

"I'm 28 and the impact I have made has been outsized to the

number of years I've been on this planet," Whitten said. "But I think it speaks to my passion and oppor-

tunities that have happened."

Service to others is his life's calling, Whitten said, but his great passion is racial justice, and his initial encounter with racism was when he first got to Oregon.

"We were in Albany and went there to stay at my friend's dad's house, but after one night the dad asked us to leave because he was uncomfortable having a black man in his house," he said. "Coming from Virginia, where I never had experienced overt racism like that, it made no sense to me. I actually laughed at myself and said, 'What! There are racist people in Oregon?' Ten years later I no longer find it funny."

The historic racist devastation of the black community in Portland by gentrification and so-called civic improvements or Urban Renewal, cannot be overstated, Whitten said.

"Place is so important. Place shapes our identity, it shapes our community and it shapes our future," he said. "In Portland, we took that from our black community."

Whitten is so passionate about the loss to the black culture in north and northeast Portland that he even launched a walking tour, "The Hid-

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PUBLISHER: Mark Washington, Sr.

EDITOR: Michael Leighton

ADVERTISING MANAGER: Leonard Latin

Office Manager/Classifieds:
Lucinda Baldwin

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt

REPORTER/WEB EDITOR: Beverly Corbell

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Mark Washington Jr.

OFFICE ASSISTANT/SALES:
Shawntell Washington

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The Week in Review

COVID Hospitalizations Fall

State officials reported the number of Oregonians sick enough to be hospitalized with coronavirus hit a new low Sunday. There were 92 active hospitalizations May 3. That number represents a drop of more than 40% from the 156 reported hospitalizations on April 8, the first day state officials disclosed active hospitalizations for confirmed cases of COVID-19.



Protest at State Capitol

Hundreds of people opposed to Oregon's stay-at-home order demonstrated at the state Capitol on Saturday as public health officials in the state announced dozens more cases and five additional deaths from COVID-19. Most of the protesters were white and did not wear face masks, and many waved American flags and Trump campaign signs.

Record Unemployment Claims

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown apolo-

gized last week to people who have encountered problems trying to apply for unemployment during the coronavirus crisis. A record number of people have applied for benefits, but many have been stymied by breakdowns in the system. "If you're waiting on an unemployment claim: I hear your frustration," Brown, a Democrat, wrote on Twitter. "I'm sorry for the delays."

Hispanics Hit Hard by Virus

New data show that nearly half of the people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in Washington County, representing Hillsboro, Beaverton and other local cities identify as Hispanic, even though the county's overall Hispanic population is 16.5%. The pandemic brings into sharp focus the systemic social, economic and health inequities that many of our Latinx residents already face, Washington County public health officials announced.

Bottle Drop Complaints

A dispute over large crowds at a BottleDrop center at Hayden Meadows in north Portland has escalated with the owner of the retail strip mall hiring guards and fencing off a vacant lot where people were lining up to return cans. The retail development's CEO Vanessa Sturgeon said the company needed to step in to prevent drug dealing and fights, but representatives of the bottle drop said it was the guards causing chaos.

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LOCAL NEWS



Adam Cherkaoui, the owner of Taste of Casablanca, found himself shuttering his food cart to protect his family and clients from the spread of COVID-19. He one of the small businesses served by Micro Enterprises Services of Oregon (MESO), a nonprofit born out of the Black United Fund. With MESO's help he received a grant to help him support his family until he can reopen.

Grassroots Lender on Front Lines Nonprofit community resource pushes ahead

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
PORTLAND OBSERVER EDITOR

A small business micro lender born out of the Black United Fund is building up its resources to help firms survive financially during the coronavirus pandemic.

Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon's (MESO) "40/60" loan product is gearing up to help very small businesses with flexible loans to help them pay rent and other expenses as public health stay at home orders have locked out customers and starved their businesses of cash flow. Because the loans are meant to be small, under \$10,000 each, they can help a lot of firms, according to MESO Executive Director Nita Shah.

The loan account will be backed by contributions from foundations, traditional banks and other donors.

Shah said her nonprofit is being inundated with requests for help.

"These obstacles seem insurmountable right now, but I believe and trust in what I have seen in the past 15 years: MESO entrepreneurs have the skills, grit and perseverance to not only survive the current situation, but emerge stronger for the experience," she reported.

In an interview with the Portland Observer, she described how the coronavirus public health crisis has brought "an alarming trajectory" of financial need from the variety of very small business owners her nonprofit traditionally serves, like

hair and nail salons, family-owned markets and dry cleaners.

The micro lender normally sees about 600 to 700 people a year, but is now getting nearly a hundred calls each week, she said.

"There's been small victories but there's also a lot of hardship" Shah said. "It's what it is right now. Quite devastating."

Shah is quite optimistic, however, over the long run. She worked at MESO through the 2008-2009 Great Recession, which had a very bad impact for many local minority businesses. But over time, she says MESO saw great success in helping small firms get a start or keep their doors open.

"These are people with amazing dreams, and we try to help them make their dreams happen," Shah said.

Always based in northeast Portland since its beginnings in 2005, MESO has offices on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Shaver Street. It also has satellite offices in Beaverton and Gresham's Rockwood neighborhood. But now because of the state stay at home orders, its 16 employees are getting used to working from home, utilizing video conferencing and other online tools to reach people.

Shah says her staff of is responding to twice the amount of work during the current crisis and "putting everything they can into helping." She is hopeful that small, minority businesses can make a rebound, especially based on what happened after the last major economic downturn.

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Felicia Wells-Thomas of the small businesses micro lender Micro Enterprises Services of Oregon (MESO) gets a big hug from Ime Etuk, a videographer and one of her clients who obtained services from the nonprofit. The photo was taken several weeks ago before the social distancing requirements of the coronavirus pandemic.



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Black Health Matters

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Grassroots Lender

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After the last recession, Shaw said lots of unemployed workers came to MESO wanting to access its resources and programs with help to start their own business and be their own boss. She expects this to happen again.

"There's no damper on people's ability to come back, though it's hard right now," she said.

A unique feature of MESO's new loans is providing flexible payment plans for its small loans, unlike banks. The patient and flexible lending will have payments that can be stretched out so the small business can catch up with expenses like rent until cash flow returns, Shah said. The loans are geared to businesses that often do not have financial relationships with banks and bigger financial institutions.

"We don't want to get any one in too much debt. We are not predatory," Shah said.

MESO also works to connect small business owners and entrepreneurs with other important resources, from links to emergency relief grants, to a free online platform to help connect with customers, to tips for marketing during COVID-19.

And when there is success, MESO likes to share the good news, as they did in a recent newsletter featuring two minority-owned firms

who worked with them and the city for help, Taste of Casablanca and Ladybugs Childcare.

Adam Cherkaoui, the owner of Taste of Casablanca, had invested \$2,000 earlier this year to relocate his food cart to a food cart pod in the Sellwood neighborhood from his previous location in St. John's. But instead of a grand opening celebration, Cherkaoui found himself shuttering his business to protect his family and clients from the spread of COVID-19, MESO reported.

Cherkaoui was able to negotiate with the owner of the food cart pod to temporarily pay reduced rent and recently learned he's been awarded a Small Business Relief Fund grant from Prosper Portland, the city's economic development agency, with support from the Oregon Community Foundation, another nonprofit.

The grant, along with the federal stimulus, will help him support his family until he can reopen his food cart.

Angela Benson has spent the past nearly three years building Ladybugs Childcare into a state-certified home-business serving between 16 and 22 families. In the space of a single day in March, however, Benson saw her monthly business revenue drop by more than 50%, MESO reported. While Ladybugs Childcare is still open for business, it is limited

to provide care for a maximum of 10 children at a time under state requirements adjusted for COVID-19.

MESO said Benson was happy she could help essential workers with much needed child care, but she worried about whether she would be able to keep all of her employees on the payroll. Her concern was eased after she was selected to receive a \$10,000 Small Business Relief Fund grant from Prosper Portland with support from Oregon Community Foundation.

Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon was formed by the Black United Fund as a grassroots initiative to assist small businesses that were experiencing challenges in the wake of gentrification, new development, and increased rents in North/Northeast Portland.

MESO is a designated Small Business Administration micro lender, an IDA fiduciary, a USDA Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program lender, and a Community Development Financial Institution.

For more information about MESO, email meso@mesopdx.org or call 503-841-3351. To make a donation or learn more about the "Open for Business" fund, email Nita Shah at nshah@mesopdx.org or visit mesopdx.org/donate. If you prefer to make a donation offline, you can send a check payable to "MESO" and mail it to MESO, 4008 NE MLK Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97212.




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Young Activist Runs for Metro Council

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den History of Albina,” and talked about the Albina neighborhood that was first divided by Interstate 5 and further replaced by Veteran’s Memorial Coliseum, the Moda Center, the Portland Convention Center and expansion of Legacy Emanuel Hospital.

“The reason why, sadly, we called it ‘The Hidden History of Albina’ tour is because when we walk down these historic streets, everything is gone, it’s hidden, everything’s been destroyed,” he said. “We have to have programs like these walking tours, because once it’s out of sight, it’s out of mind.”

These days, Whitten is more concerned with the future of the Albina neighborhood than its past, given current discussions about how proposed new construction to Interstate 5, built in 1947, might be used to bring the neighborhood back together.

The latest Rose Center project, as it’s called, was proposed by the Oregon Department of Transportation to add shoulders and auxiliary lanes to I-5 in the Rose Quarter area in order to smooth traffic flow between I-5 and two other interstate highways.

ODOT has stated that the project will “improve community connections by redesigning overpasses and reconnecting neighborhood streets, enhancing public spaces and promoting economic development opportunities.”

But just how that will play out is still up in the air. The nonprofit Albina Vision wants to rebuild a diverse neighborhood by seeing caps built over I-5 that will support a connection to the Willamette River with a

waterfront park, a public plaza with local markets and events, public park blocks with neighborhood emphasis, residential and commercial development and more.

The project as proposed by ODOT — without caps — is estimated at \$795 million, and with caps the cost could run as high as \$1 billion.

Whitten said he supports Albina Vision’s position to create caps over the highway.

“With a seismically sound cap, you could rebuild this community, bring it back together,” he said. We could have parks, streets, multi-use buildings, but they have to be done right. I believe the black communities deserve nothing less than a full, safe and seismically strong capping that allows us to recreate what was lost. I fully support Albina Vision and I will do what I can so they are successful.”

He further spelled his platform in the race for Metro Council.

“I will commit to working with a broad coalition in the fight to ensure that Portland has an economy that works for all, that we have affordable housing and that we take action on the climate in a way what does not leave our diverse communities behind,” Whitten said. “When it comes to the economy, we know that even as there have been new jobs in the region, the benefits have not been equitable. And for our black community there are huge disparities in access to living wage jobs and the ability to get advanced degrees and to secure positions of management and leadership.”

He said management should also pay attention to the way it treats employees.

“We need to increase the support that we have around anti-harassment in the workplace, we need to ensure that people have living wage jobs, and we need to make sure that we see the diversity within our own management and leadership,” he said.

Whitten is also closely watching developments for the massive Broadway Corridor project that will entail development of the 14-acre site of the downtown U.S. Post Office distribution center, which the city bought for \$88 million in 2016, that will eventually include “4 million square feet of new commercial, employment and residential development.”

Whitten said he plans to make sure that the city lives up to the goal listed on the project’s website at broadwaycorridorpx.com, “to connect the Old Town/Chinatown and Pearl District neighborhoods, with the goal to maximize community benefits, particularly to those groups that haven’t benefitted from other urban projects.”

“We need to have living wage jobs, project agreements, meet diversity goals for recruitment, implement strategies for retention, find resources for people to get drivers licenses and child care, monitoring and accountability, stop wage theft and create safe working conditions,” he said.

Other candidates running in the May 19 vote-by-mail election include Karen Spencer, a patent lawyer and business consultant; Chris Smith, a member of the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission; Mary Peveto, executive director Neighbors for Clean Air; and Mary Nolan, former Oregon House Majority Leader.



Robert Lewis IV, 34, died in a shooting on April 24, 2019.

Unsolved Homicide Hits One Year Mark Reward offered in cold case

The Portland Police Bureau, in partnership with Crime Stoppers of Oregon, is asking for the public’s help to solve a homicide that occurred one year ago.

On April 24, 2019, at 7:07 p.m., Portland Police and medical personnel responded to the report of a person injured in a shooting near Southeast 93rd Avenue and Henry Street. The victim, Robert Lewis IV, 34, was found dead. An autopsy determined that he died from a gunshot wound.

Officers located evidence of gunfire at the scene but did not locate any suspects in the area.

Crime Stoppers of Oregon offers cash rewards of up to \$2,500 cash for information, reported to Crime Stoppers, that leads to an arrest in any unsolved felony crime and tipsters can remain anonymous. Visit the App Store and download P3 Tips to submit secure and anonymous tips; online at p3tips.com/823 or call 503-823-HELP (4357).

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Don't Shoot Founder Runs for Mayor

Activist stands out in field of 19 candidates

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

After Teresa Raiford's young nephew was killed by gun violence in 2010, she moved from Texas back to Portland, her hometown, and became a community activist to demand accountability for senseless gun deaths.

Raiford's activism led to an invitation to meet former First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House. It was 2013. After visiting with Mrs. Obama she followed up the following year with the creation of the non-profit Don't Shoot Portland. By 2019, her organization was one of the top human and civil rights nonprofits in the city voted by a Willamette Week reader's poll.

Now Raiford is taking her activism a step further and is running for mayor of Portland, joining a field of 19 candidates, including incumbent Mayor Ted Wheeler.

Raiford said she became disappointed with Wheeler, the former State Treasurer and Multnomah County Chair, soon after he took the reins of Portland's government, accusing him of isolating himself in office and creating an environment of distrust and dishonesty.

"We got somebody full of excuses that picked allies so that he wouldn't have to be accountable or responsive to community members," Raiford said.

"My priority is to communicate with communities, build civic participation and engage them on issues that matter to us, so that when outcomes happen people are part of the planning process," she said.

Raiford had a rough childhood growing up in northeast Portland. She and her siblings were in and out of often abusive foster and group homes until they were adopted by her grandmother, she said.

As an adult, she worked in low level jobs at Nordstrom's but moved to Dallas to get away from domestic violence, she said, and later found she had skills that were in demand at a major bank.

"I was in sales support, generating calls, and in six months I was the department manager," she said. "When they came in with a new banking system, I picked it up fast and moved on up into deregulated energy in business services."

After her unit was dissolved and she was laid off, Raiford went into business for herself.

"I started my own company called Genesis Mobile Tax, because I figured all this stuff they were teaching me I could use to help



PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Teresa Raiford, founder of Don't Shoot Portland and candidate for mayor of Portland, says she got involved as an activist candidate to bring change to Portland government, "We're criminalizing poverty, we're criminalizing brown people, we're criminalizing mentally ill and disable people and not doing anything about it," she said.

other people," she said.

Raiford said her entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills would serve Portland well if she is elected.

"I love Portland and I love all our children and want to give them opportunities," she said. "We haven't given everybody those opportunities and I want to be the leader that makes that happen."

The city is moving too fast creating "a globalized city of technology people," Raiford said. "But if we're building that city on top of our vulnerable community members, then we're creating a crisis that we're

living in right now and it's only going to get worse."

Her concerns were expressed during an interview with the Portland Observer early last month before the devastating losses of employment, the closing of schools, and public health crisis brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

The city needs to do more to create jobs that lead to stable incomes and stable housing, Raiford said, and, if elected, she wants to do a complete survey of city services early on in her term.

"In the first 100 days, I want to bring in

a team to audit the work that our bureaus are doing through the mayor's office so we can see where those efficiency models can be supported and where we're lacking in effective bridging or distribution of resources, how we can compromise to do better and what partners do we need to let go," she said.

Raiford said the city is doing too many demolitions; that parks need more funding; preschools should be better supported; and the foster care system needs to be over-

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Campus Love, Support during COVID-19

Cascade Connections

by Dr. Karin Edwards



There's an African proverb that says, "A mind, once stretched, never returns to its original state." I would like to suggest a corollary for the COVID-19 era: A society, stretched by a pandemic, cannot return to its original state.

Our collective response to the novel coronavirus outbreak resembles the character of the American nation itself -- which is to say, it has brought to the fore both the best and worst aspects of the human spirit. We have seen selfless acts of generosity, kindness, and self-sacrifice; and we have seen foolish displays of bravado, risk-taking and willful ignorance.

And we have seen, as we always do in times of crisis, the worst consequences of the pandemic fall upon members of marginalized communities.

Amid the chaotic landscape of life during a pandemic, one undisputed fact stands out: No one is beyond the reach of COVID-19. The novel coronavirus kills rich, poor, black, white, brown, straight, queer, conservative, and liberal people alike, with elegant precision. It respects neither boundaries nor borders, neither status nor privilege. The virus has come for us all.

Thus it is that, during widespread suffering, we have seen an outburst of goodwill and unity that evokes the best memories of


the period immediately following the September 11 attacks. People are sewing protective masks in their homes. Neighbors are checking up on each other, offering to make shopping trips on behalf of the most vulnerable. Friends and loved ones are reaching out to each other, across the distance, just to offer words of love and encouragement. Every day, we see the outpouring of gratitude and appreciation for the unflagging efforts of front-line health care workers.

At the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College, where I am campus president, the acts and gestures of love and support are enough to bring a tear to my eye. The Cascade Food Pantry -- which distributes thousands of pounds of food per month in the best of times -- after being forced to shut its doors, has arranged to mail grocery store gift cards to needy students in lieu of food. Prior to PCC closing its physical facilities, staff rushed to get laptops and other necessary pieces of technology in the hands of students so that they could continue their studies from their homes. Our Campus Learning Garden staff are bagging and distributing fresh produce to students. Faculty, staff, and students alike have set up networks of support in order to stay connected.

And all of us who are staying home are, to one degree or another, sacrificing mobility, income, and all the social interactions that help define the human experience, all to "flatten the curve" and protect those most vulnerable to COVID-19.

With all this altruism going on, one


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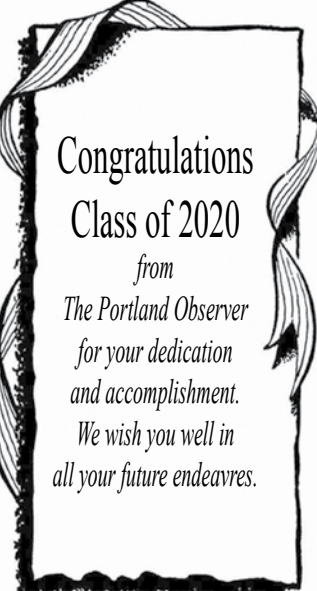
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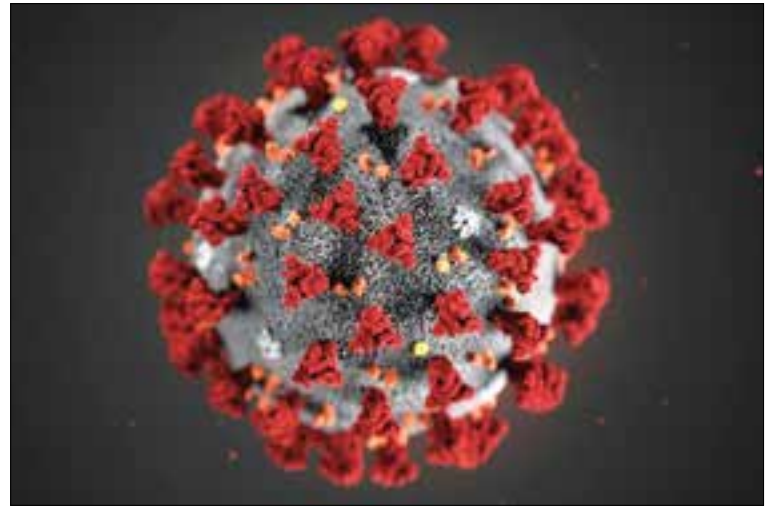
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Action Tips on COVID-19 Prevention

The Oregon Health Authority is coordinating the state's response to the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The agency is providing the most current information on the disease and what recommendations that you, your friends and your family can take to keep everyone safe.

If you need more information about COVID-19 or resources to manage your survival during the public health crisis, call 211. You can also visit OHA's coro-



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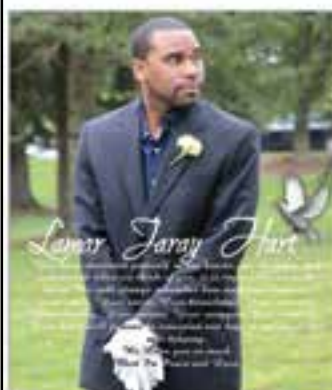
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novirus webpage, govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19 for the latest updates and resources. A search feature is updated regularly as new information becomes available. In addition, there is a COVID-19 healthcare partner resources page.

If you're looking for information about employment and business during the pandemic, check for updates on the governor's COVID-19 response website, govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19#forEmployees.

Finally, the Oregon Health Authority reminds residents to take low-tech and proven action steps to protect yourself from illness: Wash your hands, cover your cough, stay at home to the maximum extent possible, and practice physical/social distancing. According to public health authorities, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed, which means if you must go out, be sure to leave 6 feet between you and any person you come in contact with.

Other ways to help prevent the spread of this illness include using a face-covering or mask when you go out, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and call your doctor if you think you're experiencing symptoms.

You can also visit coronavirus.gov for more information, including a list of possible symptoms, testing, what to do if you're sick, and other frequently asked questions.

The Links, White Rose Honor Scholars

2020 Class scholarships announced

The Portland Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and the White Rose Educational Fund, Incorporated are pleased to announce their 2020 scholarship awards going to 11 students who are in attendance in eight schools in the Portland Metropolitan area and Vancouver, Wash.

The White Rose Educational Fund scholarship recipients are:

- **Oladayo Babatunde** - Clackamas High School (The Tim & Jan Gillespie Scholarship).
- **Amira Tripp Folsom** - LaSalle Catholic College Prep (The Lydia R. Roy Memorial Scholarship).
- **Bereket Getachew** - DeLaSalle North Catholic High School (The Haynes/Moore Scholarship).
- **Taylor Green** - Roosevelt High School (The Friends of Woodlawn School in Honor of Linda J. Harris Scholarship).
- **Mekedes Hilete** - Jefferson High School (The Barbara Leonard Memorial Scholarship).
- **Kalkidan Ketema** - DeLaSalle High School (The Haynes/Moore Scholarship).

The Links scholarship recipients are:

- **Joseph Ayalew** - DeLaSalle High School
- **Zenaye Brown** - Camas High School



The Portland chapter of The Links, Incorporated is led by civic-minded professional women committed to service through friendship in the Portland and Southwest Washington areas since 1957.

- **Taji Chesimet** - DeLaSalle High School
- **Rachel Ngare** - Columbia River High School
- **Sydney Rawls** - Grant High School (The Arts Scholarship).

A virtual scholarship reception will be held on May 9 at 2 p.m. in honor of these students. Visit The Portland Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and The White Rose Educational Fund, Incorporated websites for more program information.

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

DA Supports Warren for Judge

Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill released the following statement to endorse Portland attorney Ernest Warren for Multnomah County Circuit Judge in the upcoming May 19 election:

Ernest Warren, a Portland native, is a well-known criminal defense and civil attorney who has practiced in Multnomah County for more than 30 years. He has been a managing member of the law firm Warren & Sugarman since 1990 and has tried more than

100 civil and criminal cases (both state and federal) in Multnomah County alone. As a new lawyer, he worked for the Metropolitan Public Defender's Office from 1989 to 1990.

"I have known and worked with Ernie Warren for close to 30 years. During that time Ernie has been a model of professionalism, ethics, compassion and competence. Ernie Warren will make a great addition to the Multnomah County Bench. I am proud to support Ernie Warren for Judge."

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Attention Renters

The Housing Authority of Clackamas County (HACC) is opening 4 Waiting Lists on **June 15, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. through June 18, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

To apply, please visit HACC’s website at www.clackamas.us/housingauthority. Additional information on the application process and eligibility can be found on HACC’s website. Applications will be selected and ordered using a random lottery system. The day and time an application is submitted has no impact on whether an application will be selected for the waitlists.

HACC is providing computer access and help applying at the following locations:

The Housing Authority Administrative Office
(Spanish and Russian interpreter On-site)
13930 South Gain St, Oregon City, OR, 97045

Hillside Park Community Center
10203 SE D Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222



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CLACKAMAS COUNTY

Campus Love, Support

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

might be forgiven for thinking that everyone is experiencing the impact of the pandemic equally -- but that’s not the case. In reality, COVID-19 has exposed for all to see the fundamental cracks in our society, and exacerbated the divides that have been part of our culture from the very beginning.

Let’s start with the most glaring, and tragic, iniquity that the virus has revealed. If you are an American of African descent, you are nearly three times as likely to die from COVID-19 than the population at large. Why? Because primary co-morbidities of COVID-19 -- diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease -- those pre-existing conditions which raise mortality rates in conjunction with the virus, are present at higher rates in the African American population. While the virus is hitting black folks harder than any other demo-

graphic group, African Americans are not alone: Latinx Americans and Native Americans are also succumbing to COVID-19 at higher rates than Americans of European descent.

The reasons for the disproportionate mortality rates among people of color have their roots in the systemic inequality and institutional racism that define life for marginalized communities. Intergenerational poverty means decreased access to healthy foods. People of color are more likely to live in densely populated areas, and in multi-generational households, which makes practicing social distancing more difficult. People of color are more likely to work in low-paying jobs that don’t offer health coverage.

If you’re poor, it’s more likely that you need public transit to get to work. If you’re poor, you’re less likely to have a job that can be done from home, and less likely to

possess the technology to do it. If you’re poor, you’re more likely to have a job that requires repeated contact with other people in public places, and doesn’t offer paid sick leave.

We have before us, all of us together, both an opportunity and a decision. We have the opportunity to not let things return to normal, because “normal” isn’t good enough. We have the opportunity to address the systemic inequality and institutional racism that mean -- among a great many other things -- that right now, in 2020, in the midst of widespread suffering, some people are more likely to die than others because of the color of their skin. We have the opportunity, at long last, to demand full humanity for every single person. We have the opportunity to loosen our grip on the past and look toward the future we want to build.

As for the decision? Well, I’m ready to make it. Are you?

Dr. Karin Edwards is president of the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College.

Don’t Shoot Founder Runs for Mayor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

hailed.

“In foster care, we were all abused,” she said. “It was systemic marginalization and it’s going to take systemic dismantling that in order for it to change.”

By the time her grandmother got custody of her when she was 13, she and her siblings had already been through a lot, Raiford said.

“By the time she got us back I had been raped and had a baby, my brother had been molested and was hanging out with gangs, and my sister had her second child by

then,” she said. “It’s very devastating because you are normalized to be sexualized, to be abused, and I don’t want that to be anybody else’s experience.”

Raiford’s activism for Black Lives Matter and her own group’s protests over the killings of young black men by police got her arrested in 2015, when police claimed she was trying to start a riot. They lied, Raiford said, and she was eventually acquitted. Now she wants to see attitudes change.

“We’re criminalizing poverty, we’re criminalizing brown people, we’re criminalizing mentally ill and disable people and not do-

ing anything about it,” she said.

Raiford said her life experiences give her the empathy and understanding that Wheeler does not have.

“Ted’s never been homeless or worried about where his next meal is coming from, or seeing his friends being killed and wondering if he’s going to die, getting kicked out of a home, the things that the majority of us deal with every day,” she said.

Raiford never found out who murdered her nephew. But said the reason she founded Don’t Shoot Portland was to hold the city accountable.

“We called it a community action plan against violence, all kinds of violence — hunger, racism, political violence — we’re anti all of that,” she said.

According to her website, teressaraifordformayor.com, by working with labor movements, nonprofits and other groups, Raiford’s focus will be on providing humane and effective solutions to the houseless crisis, fighting for living wages, doing the most for renters’ rights and creating true racial justice in our city.

The other mayoral candidates for the May 19 Primary vote-by-mail election as listed by Multnomah County Elections are Randy Rapaport, Bruce Broussard, Michael Burleson, Jarred Bep-ristis, Willie Banks, Daniel Hoffman, Lew Humble, Beryl Sylvia McNair, Sharon Joy, Michael Patrick Jenkins, Mark White, Michael O’Callaghan, Ozzie González, Floyd Heinrich La Bar, Piper Crowell, Cash Blanco Carter and Sarah Iannarone.

ENGAGE IN THE CHANGE

Call for Art and Community Art Show - asks YOU to make art to reflect the neighborhoods and city where we live.

Cash Prizes:

- Best 18 and Under: \$100
- People’s Choice: \$100
- Best of Show: \$200

Deadline to make ART is August 15, 2020.

A Community Art Show will be planned after August 15th, location and date TBD.

Guidelines:

- Submit anytime between NOW and deadline
- Post submissions on this FB page or send to jazzyjor@gmail.com w/ Engage Art in subject line
- Can include visual art; written poetry, spoken word, video, or song
- To be considered for prize for “Best 18 and Under,” note in your post if you are 18 and under.
- Please feel free to post photographs of works in progress or updates

To be Considered for Community Art Show:

- Choose one piece of art to share with public
- For visual art, size limits: flat pieces can be no larger than 16 - 20 inches; and for 3-dimensional pieces can be no larger than 12”x12”x12” (if larger, take photograph)
- For visual art, flat pieces must be ready to hang (need D-ring or wire hardware attached); and can be framed or not
- Entries will be dropped off at a date and location TBD and need to include information attached on a piece of paper to the back of the submission: Name, Email Address, Physical Address, Title, Medium
- This art show does not guard works of art against loss, destruction, damage or theft

This project was funded in part by the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC) and is connected to the Concordia Conversations event that happened January 12, 2020.

Warren Campaigns for Judge

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

successful trial lawyer. He has fought for affordable housing, for example, as a long time legal counsel for Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc., the African American-led housing provider in north and northeast Portland.

Warren's history with PCRI goes back to its beginnings in the early 1990s when hundreds of Portland families were left in the lurch by an unscrupulous mortgage company which scammed unsuspecting families out of their homes.

Warren said the late Gretchen Kafoury, then a Portland City Council member, came to him and asked him to represent — for free — a new nonprofit to rescue those properties and help people get their homes back. The mortgage company was eventually exposed in the press and was convicted of racketeering and fraud.

"That was an easy yes," Warren said. Initially, he helped 49 out of 50 displaced people get their homes back, except for one owner who wanted to remain a tenant. He also helped PCRI acquire 300 other properties that had gone to default and rehabilitated them with help from the city through a community block grant.

Warren grew up in Portland, and first attended Jefferson High School before graduating from Sunset High School in Beaverton. He received his bachelor's in economics and a master's in business administration from Willamette University in Salem and finished law school at Arizona State University College of Law in 1988.

He mentions the years of experience representing people who can't afford a lawyer and his help to other disadvantaged people, like those experiencing mental health issues, as examples of why he would be a good judge.

"I think people should vote for me because of what we're trying to do now as a community with respect to affordable housing and getting the homeless off the streets," he said. "I want them to know I really care about people and I would significantly take in every person's individual circumstance into consideration."

Warren said 95 percent of a circuit judge's cases concern criminal law, and having handled more than 1,000 cases in court, including 100 homicide cases, he has plenty of experience as a criminal defense attorney. But he also wants voters to understand he also knows the prosecutor's side of issues.

Warren serves as a member of Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill's citizen budget advisory committee, a position he says helps him promote good public safety policies. Underhill has endorsed him in the election.

"People's safety is my biggest priority," Warren said. "You have to be able to evaluate the person who comes before you. It's one thing to be in possession of a drug needle; it's another to be charged with attempted murder. Are they a danger to the community or are they a flight risk? You've got to really assess that."

Warren has won many awards for his work over the years. He said one that he's most proud was being presented the 2018 Multnomah Bar Diversity Award. But instead of just accepting the honor, Warren gave the entire bar a PowerPoint presentation on why diversity is important — and profitable.

"I had received a study from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where they got \$1 million for researching diversity and found it was really profitable: Organizations that had both men and women working together was 40 percent more profitable than firms that just had homogenous groups of all men or all women," he said.

Warren cited another study



Ernie Warren Jr., a candidate for Oregon Circuit Court Judge for Multnomah County and a lifelong advocate for justice issues, proudly displays the 2018 diversity award he received from the Multnomah Bar, the group representing all lawyers in Multnomah County.

that looked at the diversity backgrounds of the 100 most profitable of Fortune 500 companies.

"Again, the most profitable corporations are the corporations that are most diverse," he said. "God doesn't make any mistakes, so that was my argument — diversity is profitable and morally correct."

The five other candidates for Circuit Court Judge, 4th District, Position 12, are Assistant U.S. Attorney Adrian L. Brown, Multnomah County Pro Tem Judge Monica Herranz, and attorneys Sonia Montalbano, John E. Schlosser and Rima Ghandour.

Important Election Looms

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Ballots were mailed out from the Multnomah County Elections office last week and must be returned to county election officials by 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19 in order to be counted. And for the first time, return postage will be paid thanks to a new state law by the Oregon Legislature. If ballots can't be in the mail by May 14 in order to arrive in time they should be dropped off at an official county elections drop boxes, according to elections officials.

In Portland, Mayor Ted Wheeler is running for a second term in a contest that drew 18 other candidates, including Teresa Raiford, a political activist from the African American community who started Don't Shoot PDX to demand accountability for senseless gun deaths and has joined other Black Lives Matter activists to demand police reforms.

Mingus Mapps, a public policy consultant with deep roots in the black community is running against his former boss, City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly. The race has eight other candidates, including former Mayor Sam Adams, the first openly gay office holder in Portland whose term was

embroiled by a sex scandal with an 18-year-old intern. In another open position, nine candidates are running to replace retiring City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, including Isham "Ike" Harris, a black pastor and school bus driver and Carmon Rubio, the executive director of the Latino Network.

Loretta Smith, the former Multnomah Commissioner and long time member of Portland's black community who worked for years in Sen. Ron Wyden's office, once again seeks a seat in Portland city government, this time to complete the term of Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish who recently died in office. The special election comes two years after Smith finished second in a historic contest in which Jo Ann Hardesty was elected the first African American female on the Portland City Council.

Ernest "Ernie" Warren of Portland's African American community is running for a rare open position on the Oregon Circuit Court for Multnomah County. Warren has 31 years of experience as a criminal defense attorney in Portland. He's been endorsed by Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill who is retiring at the end of his term.

For a position as Metro Coun-

cilor, black activist and former executive director of the Qcenter, Carmon Whitten, is running in a contested contest with four other candidates.

In most of these local races, if no candidate receives the more than 50 percent of the vote necessary to win outright, the top two finishers will face off in the November General Election. In the special election to fill the term of the late Commissioner Fish, if no candidate receives a majority, a special runoff election will be held on Aug. 11.

In a partisan contest for U.S. Congress representing the Portland area, Earl Blumenauer faces a challenge for the Democratic Party nomination from Albert Lee, a member of Portland's black community and a former college dean.

State Rep. Tawna Sanchez, a member of Portland's Native American community and director of Family Services at the NAYA Family Center in northeast Portland is running unopposed for re-election in the Democratic Primary. There is no Republican in the race.

Multnomah County Commissioners Sharon Meiran, Jessica Vega Pederson and Lori Stegmann are also all running for re-election unopposed.

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A Message from Greg A. Adams to Kaiser Permanente's Nurses

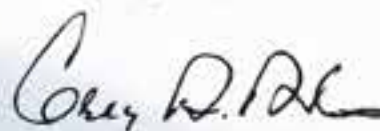
This month as the nation celebrates you, I want to express my personal gratitude and appreciation for the 63,000 nurses across Kaiser Permanente. Throughout our 75-year history, nurses have played a critical role in Kaiser Permanente's mission — to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve.

2020 marks the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth. It is through Florence's work on the front lines of a crisis, caring for injured soldiers during the Crimean War, that modern nursing was solidified as a profession. In the early 1900s, it was nurse Lavinia Dock who served at the front lines of the public health movement, devoting her life to improving the health of the poor, women's rights, and the profession of nursing. And today, nurses are once again standing and leading at the front line as we face one of the largest health care crises in the world.

Against the current backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, your pledge to serve is unwavering as you care for among the sickest patients and protect the health of many others with caring knowledge, skill, and wisdom. As caregivers, scientists, and researchers, your experience, expertise, and innovation will continue to play an important role as we lead through this crisis.

Know that Kaiser Permanente celebrates you every day, every month, all year long.

Sincerely,



Greg A. Adams
Chairman and CEO,
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