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RTIN LUTHER

Committed to Cultural Diversity

Edition

Top Stories In

43 Years of MLK Tributes

Documentary 'Keep Alive the Dream' ready for debut

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'We have progressed, but so has racism'

Vancouver NAACP president advances fight for justice

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Activist Remembers **King's Lessons** Aim is to save kids from gun violence

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'We have progressed, but so has racism'

Vancouver NAACP president advances fight for justice

By Beverly Corbell THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

One year in as president of the Vancouver NAACP, Jasmine Tolbert, has taken the battle to eliminate racial injustice to new heights.

When the local civil rights group joined the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington in November to file a lawsuit urging the U.S. Department of Justice to open investigations into "excessive force and discriminatory policing" in the Vancouver Police Department, the Clark County Sheriff's Office and a joint city-county drug task force, Tolbert was front and center.

"The problem is that systemic racism is alive and well in Vancouver and Clark County, Tolbert said.

In an interview with the Portland Observer for its annual Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday special edition, she described



In her first year as president of the Vancouver NAACP, Jasmine Tolbert has taken the fight against racial injustice to a new level. The civil rights group recently joined in a lawsuit to reign in excessive force and discriminatory policing in Vancouver and Clark County.

the current need for reparative ac- ing place now, allowed racism tions to advance racial equality.

gressed, so has racism," Tolbert those systemic policies." said, "I think the tactics, the same

to continue evolving, and while "I think that as we have pro- we've made progress, so have

Tolbert grew up in Clark Counway overt racists laid the ground- ty and clearly remembers reading work for the systemic racism tak- books on King and civil rights

leaders Malcolm X and Harriett Tubman that were in her home growing up. She also recalls lessons about civil rights and racism she received from her mother.

"I remember those books explicitly, Dr. King's message and my mom's home history lessons, things you didn't get in school," she said.

But Dr. King's message has been watered down, she said, including what's being taught in schools.

"I wish it was a more holistic picture being painted of the work he did rather than for certain members of society to dictate the way our actions should look," she said.

In the lawsuit targeting local law enforcement, the NAACP and ACLU point to four officer-involved deaths in Clark County and Vancouver in recent years that included a 16-year-old Pacific Islander high school student; a 28-year-old Pacific Islander man; three white homeless men, one in a mental health crisis; and three Black men, 43-year-old Carlos Hunter, Kevin Peterson, 21, and Jenoah D. Donald, 30.

The civil rights organizations say Hunter, falsely accused of being part of the drug trade, was pulled over and shot 16 times while still fastened in his seatbelt. Peterson was caught in a drug

sting and ran away in fright when two unmarked law enforcement cars boxed him in. He was shot, in the back, 34 times. Donald, who was unarmed, was stopped for a broken taillight, punched in the face and shot twice at close range.

Tolbert said the deaths are examples of how Vancouver and Clark County law enforcement has engaged in discriminatory policing for years against people of color, residents experiencing homelessness, and those with a mental health disability, while showing favor to known white supremacist extremist groups.

"This disparate policing causes lasting harm for residents and undermines public safety for the community at large," she said.

Calling out highly publicized police actions that erode the already strained relationships between the community and local law enforcement, Tolbert said all residents of Vancouver and Clark County deserve equal and professional treatment by police officers.

'When someone is stopped by the police it should not have to end with them dying. No matter what the person's background is, no matter what the reason is for the stop. There should be and there

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
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Supporting eaor COPING WITH PROBLEM GAMBLING

A Time of Reflection

As we put another year behind us, it's only natural to take some time to reflect on the months just past. It's a great time to catalog the accomplishments and joys that the passing year brought, as well as take an honest look at behaviors we might want to change in the year ahead—perhaps that we need to change in the year ahead.

Gambling might be one of those behaviors. What may have started out as a fun distraction can, for some, progress into something much harder to control. And with that loss of control can come financial struggles and lost relationships. But the new year is a new opportunity to regain control.

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Luckily, here in Oregon, help is available. Through the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR), gamblers and those who love them can get support from trained addiction counselors, often right from home. Treatment is effective. People are ready and

waiting to provide mechanisms to cope and to heal. And, best of all, it's free.

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For more information, visit 🦊



Martin Luther King Jr. 2022 Special Edition

E LOCAL NEWS More Schools Impacted

Surge in COVID brings back distant learning

A growing number of schools in Portland and Vancouver returned to distance learning this week because of COVID-related staffing issues impacting the number of teachers available for classroom instruction. Officials say more schools may temporarily move to online instruction as the surge tied to the Omicron variant of the coronavirus continues.

Officials said absences and the lack of substitutes continues to cause shortages of teachers, staff, administrators and bus drivers.

In the Portland Public School District, Roosevelt, McDaniel and Cleveland high schools, serving north, northeast and southeast Portland started the week in distance learning. Ockley Green Middle School in north Portland and Faubion PK-8 School in northeast Portland also closed on Tuesday to prepare for online instruction for at least the rest of the week.

The Parkrose School District COVID-19 cases were identified said temporary distance learn- over the weekend.



A nurse cares for a critically ill patient in the Intensive Care Unit at Oregon Health and Science University. The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 increased to 692 statewide this week, but hospitalizations were still about 40% below their peak during a summer surge.

The state has a positive test rate of just over 22% as the highly contagious omicron variant spreads. The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 increased to 692, but hospitalizations were still about 40% below their peak during the summer surge of the delta variant.

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Eighteen new deaths were announced Monday.

With breakthrough infections spreading, healthcare officials said vaccinated Oregonians can flatten the curve by masking and refraining from indoor gatherings.

Biketown Expands Bicycle Sharing

ing would begin for all students

on Wednesday. Parkrose High,

Parkrose Middle, plus Prescott,

Russell, Sacramento and Shaver

elementary schools were impact-

ed. Late Monday afternoon, the

Vancouver School District also

announced some of their schools

would include remote learning

four days a week for the next

reported Monday that 18,538

new confirmed or presumptive

Oregon health authorities

three weeks.

Larger service area means more people will be served

Designed to be affordable and accessible, Biketown has expanded its bicycling sharing service area to now include St. Johns in north Portland and far parts of east Portland, growing operations by nine square miles or by 25 percent.

Known for its ubiquitous orange bikes, Monday's expansion came as Biketown continues to embark on a goal of expanding into areas with a high percentage of communities of color that have been underserved by transportation, said officials with Lyft, the operator of the service and the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

Biketown's service area now includes portions or all of Hazelwood, Mill Park, Parkrose and Parkrose Heights. In North Portland, the expanded service area brings in the University of Portland and downtown St. Johns. It also includes all or large sections of



Portland Transportation Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty announces the expansion of the Biketown bicycle sharing service area at a news conference at Knott Park.

the Arbor Lodge, Cathedral Park, Kenton, Portsmouth, and University Park neighborhoods, providing a much-needed sustainable transportation option for residents, students and visitors. Interventional content of the set of Portland takes for granted. I'm so glad to see PBOT prior-

Transportation Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty announced the expansion at a news conference Monday at Knott Park, an east Portland gathering space in the Parkrose Heights neighborhood that is now part of the Biketown service area.

"This is an exciting milestone in our efforts to ensure everyone has safe, convenient access to biking in Portland," Hardesty said. "For too long, our East Portland and North Portland neighborhoods have been lacking the city services and convenient transportation access that the rest of Portland takes for granted. I'm so glad to see PBOT prioritizing racial equity in expanding access to our bike share system. With the collaboration with private sector partners like Nike and Lyft, we can continue our efforts to reduce our carbon emissions and make sure everyone has an opportunity to enjoy sustainable transportation options."

For more information, visit biketownpdx.com.

OPINION The Portland Observer

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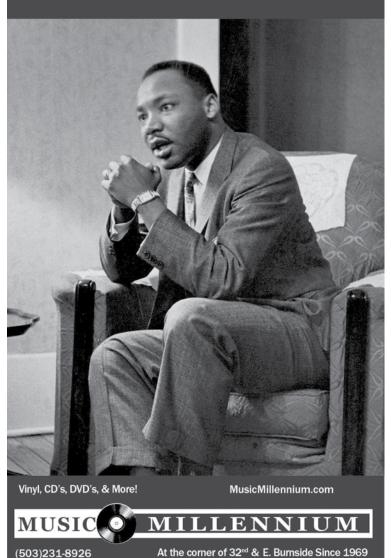
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Helping Make College Affordable PCC Foundation sive campaign, "The Campaign for Opportunity," which raised more than \$46 million for student success.

recently introduced as the new executive director for the Portland Community College Foundation where she will work closely with the panel's board of directors to grow financial

Kline has been at the foundation since 2016 and previously served as assistant foundation director and donor engagement manager. In those roles, she supported PCC's first-ever comprehen-

Kline has 15 years of experience in Christina Kline of Beaverton was the nonprofit sector and with institutions of higher education. She has worked at Boys & Girls Aid, Linfield University, Arizona State University Foundation and Make-A-Wish America.

The PCC Foundation mobilizes prisupport for students and academic vate donations for student scholarships and educational programs so that all students in the region have access to an excellent education at PCC and the support needed to succeed, regardless of their ability to pay. To find out more, call 971-722-4382 or visit pcc.edu/foundation.

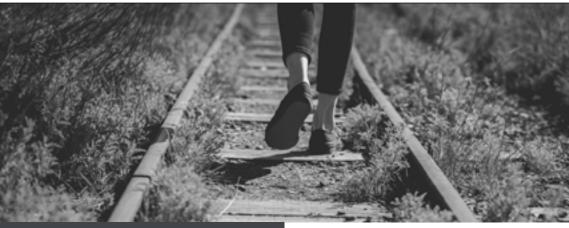
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43 Years of MLK Tributes

Keep Alive the Dream documentary ready for debut

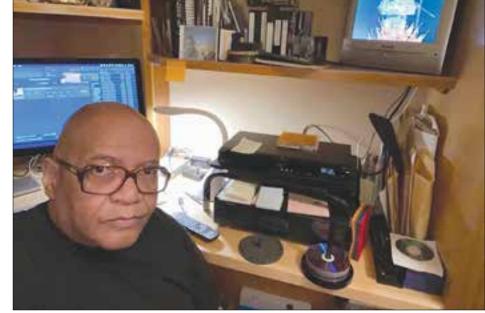
By Beverly Corbell The Portland Observer

To say that the World Arts Foundation's new documentary, "Keep Alive the Dream," is a labor of love, is an understatement. The film is a work of passion. Passion for the past and passion for the future, to keep the teachings of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King alive now and for future generations.

The documentary, to premier on this year's Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday, highlights great moments from the more than 40 years of community celebrations the World Arts Foundation has held annually to commemorate the late civil rights leader's birthday.

Berry, in an interview with the Portland Observer, described the importance of celebrating King's civil rights legacy over the years, from the first World Arts Foundation event in 1978 to today, bringing the community together annually with other educators, speakers and performing artists.

"This was our outlet to understand what it means to be Black in the state of Oregon. This was before there was fed-



Retired Portland educator and World Arts Foundation co-founder Ken Berry at the controls of video editing equipment used to produce Keep Alive the Dream, a new historic film documenting 43 years of annual MLK tributes and showcasing the lives of African Americans in Oregon.

eral holiday to honor Dr. King. But we couldn't wait. We needed our children to understand the world they were about to inherit," Berry said.

Every minute of each MLK celebration over the years was recorded, but in many different formats, Berry said. Now, after many months of hard work, those recordings have been condensed into a one-hour documentary in digital form. It is an amazing accomplishment that provides glimpses into many past celebrations along with many historic photos and videos.

The documentary's first showing will be at 3 p.m., Monday, Jan. 17 at the Hollywood Theater, 4122 N.E. Sandy Blvd. Admission is free but tickets should be reserved at hollywoodtheatre.org/events/ keep-alive-the-dream.

At 6 p.m. the same day, Berry said, Open Signal Cable will showcase interviews to build around the film, and at 8 p.m. the documentary will be shown on Oregon Public Broadcasting, Channel 10. The film will eventually be available on the Internet, he added.

Condensing the years and hours of celebrations was due to the editing by award-winning filmmaker Elijah Hasan, Berry said, and digitizing everything from 16mm film to three-quarter-inch videotape recordings was spearheaded and overseen by archivist Bobby Smith.

"He's the one that came to my house and he's the one that made me say, 'Okay," Berry said describing the moment he agreed to join in to make the documentary. "I knew where everything was, and although I had moved six or seven times, I always kept all these materials in a cool place, thank goodness. Because otherwise, they would have been dissolved. They're a little bit scratchy here and there, and we still have more to do."

The result gives a fabulous look at the MLK celebrations over time. Watching the local performances and speakers from years past, brings the joy and love of each year's celebration to life.

"Keep Alive the Dream," opens with orator Herb Cawthorne delivering a portion of King's "I Have a Dream" speech, while historic photographs are shown in the background.

Other highlights show a panel discussion from 1989 which included Dr. Joy DeGruy who talked about "planting a seed" for the future, and the late Harold Williams who

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'We have progressed'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

needs to be a better way to handle these interactions," she said.

Last year, Tolbert served as vice president of the Vancouver NAACP when listening sessions were held before the Clark County Council to outline racial equality concerns. Systemic racism is a longstanding problem in Clark County and can be traced back to a tight connection between the Ku Klux Klan and county leadership in the 1920s and 1930s, she said.

The NAACP outcry drew opposition from one council member at the time, Quiring O'Brien, who declared that she does not systemic racism.

O'Brien resisted calls by the NAACP and other civil rights advocates to resign after her statement, but the Council took action against her remarks by passing a resolution declaring "systemic racism in Clark County is a public health crisis."

il rights leaders have been part of public demonstrations and marches for racial justice over the past two years, but some of these actions have been marred by violent demonstrators, that "have not amplified Dr. King's message," Tolbert said.

But Tolbert also points out how many people have forgotten how tough it was for King and his followers back when they led protests in the 1950s and 60s.

"It's a complicated topic because the way that society has whitewashed Dr. King and his message and used his phenomenal and impactful words, makes it hard to bring him up to condemn current violent activists," she said. "We see the activism and the rebel intent that he displayed during his time, but the folks who condemn the way we protest are the same folks that pretend they didn't see the dogs and the hoses used in those 'peaceful' protests...I love the framework Dr. King used, but believe Clark County has any it's disheartening to see how that is weaponized against us."

Census records show there are more than 12,000 Black residents in Clark County and more than 4,000 of them live in the city of Vancouver. Going forward, Tolbert said her goal is to serve that community.

"This year we will be figur-The NAACP and other civ- ing out how we can continue expanding while also starting to rebuild relationships within our community," she said. "We've been apart for so long because of the pandemic and we want to be sure that our community feels nurtured and cared for after so much separation."

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WITH US YOU CAN

Activist Remembers King's Lessons

Her aim is to save kids from gun violence

By Beverly Corbell THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Laurie Palmer, a Black community activist who started a local organization to address the root causes of gang violence, remembers how much the message of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. affected her life and how she tries to carry his work for racial progress forward.

founder of the Go Get Your Child Community Violence Prevention Coalition, Palmer's vision is "to have a community that collaborates together to create safer options to violence."

Gang violence is rampant in Portland, she said, and Palmer's en, we can heal this community," own son Jasmine was shot four times in 1995. He survived, but died of a heart attack five years later. Fighting against gang violence is something she has never stepped down from, even actively confronting young gang members, including her son.

"I used to go get my child

through all his gangbanging and all this foolishness... I was in the street with his little homies at night when they were running around, chasing them down, putting blessing oil on all their heads and telling them the blood of Jesus is against you," she said. "They knew me and some of them are cutting my grandson's hair now. I feel like I saved some lives."

But she hasn't slowed down and is constantly coming up with new strategies to help victims of violence and enable mothers to have the ability to get their child out of gangs.

With the help of grants and oth-A motivational speaker and er activists, Palmer's latest efforts include reaching out to at least seven women who have lost a child to gang violence, to help them become stable, and have them in turn help other mothers. To learn more, go to gogetyourchild.org.

> "If we start healing the womshe said.

> Palmer had a tough childhood, and remembers being inspired by King.

> "Every house that I went in, from my mom's to my grandmother's to my great-grand-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



Black community activist Laurie Palmer, a motivational speaker and founder of the Go Get Your Child Community Violence Prevention Coalition, attends an event commemorating the lives lost to gun violence.

The world through his eyes.



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Family Mourns Brother Killed



FAMILY PHOTO COURTESY OF PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU Michel Johnson, 53, the man found shot and killed on Dec. 23 inside a tent at a homeless camp next to Farragut Park in north Portland.

Police ask for public's help in investigation

Portland Police are asking for the public's help with their investigation into the death of Michael Johnson, a 53-year-old Black son had lived in the camp for landoregon.gov or 503-823-0395.

north Portland.

on Dec. 23 after a 911 caller re- same time period. ported someone had been shot. Police believe the shooter fled in at a car after the murder.

about 18 months after becoming homeless four years ago. Anthony Johnson told a reporter for the Oregonian that he tried to get his brother off the streets.

"You can turn this around Mike, that was the last conversation I had with him, trying to convince him that we could make his life better," Anthony Johnson told the newspaper. "We don't know why someone would do this to him. He was going through a lot of challenges in his life, but Michael was a good dude."

He described his brother, who leaves behind a sonw, as someone who didn't carry a weapon or mention any problems with those living in the encampment, adding that he was the type of person to make sure everyone in the unhoused community had something to eat.

Police would like anyone who was in Farragut Park near the time of the shooting, on Thursday, Dec. 23, 2021, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. to contact them. Detectives are also man who was found shot and asking for contact from anyone killed inside a tent at a homeless who believes they captured video, camp next to Farragut Park in through technology such as their ring doorbell, of the park or its im-Police were called to the area mediate surroundings during that

Contact Detective Ryan Foote Ryan.Foote@portlandoregon.

gov or 503-823-0781 or Detective A family member said John- Travis Law at Travis.Law@port-



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resources as appropriate. The O&M Manager's team consists of approximately 25 managers, supervisors, professional, and building trades staff in total.

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Martin Luther King Jr. 2022 Special Edition

'Now is Still the Time'

Annual Drum Major Celebration will be broadcast

Portland's historic Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church and its vibrant community will host a live broadcast of its annual Drum Major Celebration in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., once again avoiding an in-person event because of public health considerations during the coronavirus pandemic.

Due to Covid-19 spread and the more recent concern about the contagiousness of the Covid Omicron variant, the church decided against having a full, open door to the public event for fear of creating a "super spreader" event.

Church Pastor Rev. Dr. Matt Hennessee announced that this year's Sunday, Jan. 16 MLK celebration, scheduled for 2 p.m., will be broadcast live on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vafbc starting at 1:55 p.m. The church's annual MLK "Salute to Greatness," event, normally held a day prior,



The annual Drum Major Celebration at Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church honors the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Given the public health considerations during the coronavirus pandemic, this year's celebration will be held via a live Facebook broadcast on Sunday, Jan. 16 at 2 p.m.

because of the health concerns.

vaded Black and brown communi- time to be in-person again," ties disproportionately and this is Hennessee said. why the decision was made to have

a virtual event and not an in-person celebration will feature prom- sic will be selected, and rather will again not take place this year event for the second year in a row. inent public officials and faith than a guest speaker this year,

Covid and its variants have in- be in line to make 2023 the first and reflections, however all of the messages will be video-taped in advance. In place of a choir, As in past years, this year's carefully selected YouTube mu-

"Hopefully everything will leaders who will give remarks an airing of the full length of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech will be presented.

The public is encouraged to virtually attend the service.

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WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET VACCINATED.

COVID fatigue is the biggest threat to keeping Oregon schools open and kids safe this winter. But, getting vaccinated is just one of 11 health and safety measures we can take to protect what's most important. Find out more at Oregon.gov/readyschools.



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PHOTO BY OWEN CAREY/COURTESY OF PORTLAND CENTER STAGE AT THE ARMORY - Portland's Delphon "DJ" Curtis Jr. in Hedwig and the Angry Inch at The Armory.

Bold Take on Hit Musical

Portland Stage presents Hedwig and the Angry Inch

The Tony Award-winning glam rock musical Hedwig and the Angry Inch is making its return to Portland Center Stage after a sell-out run in 2020.

Jr. and Ithica Tell return to and runs through March 6. blow the roof off The Ar- Tickets are on sale now. mory's Ellyn Bye Studio in other member of Portland's Black community.

eron Mitchell, with music and lyrics by Stephen Trask, ily again, and share it with cabaret, and part stand-up Hedwig and the Angry Inch more audiences in Portland, begins with preview perfor- is a real gift," said Miller Local Black powerhouse mances on Saturday, Jan. 22, about directing the remount actors Delphon "DJ" Curtis opens officially on Jan 28, of this production.

"I am so profoundly joythis bold take on the cele- ful about the opportunity to sensation, the play tells the tation won multiple awards brated musical, directed by revisit this story with this story of Hedwig, a German at the Sundance Film Festi-Chip Miller, PCS's associ- incredible group of collab- emigrant, who is out to set val and went on to become a ate artistic director and an- orators. The act of building the record straight about her this production with them in 2019 was absolutely Written by John Cam- life-changing. The chance to be a part of the Hedwig fam-

Brilliantly genre-bending, and fourth- ning run Off-Broadway in wall-smashing life, her loves, and the operation that left her with that "angry inch."

Part rock concert, part vival of a Musical. comedy routine, Hedwig made its debut at the SqueezeBox, a New York City rock 'n' roll drag bar, and

innovative, then opened an award-winmusical 1998. The 2001 film adapcult classic. In 2014, Hedwig finally debuted on Broadway, where it won four Tony Awards, including Best Re-

Hedwig and the Angry Inch is recommended for ages 14 and up because of adult situations, strong language and sexual references



Murder on the Orient Express

Lakewood presents classic mystery

You're invited to kick off the New Year with an adventure that starts as a luxurious journey through Europe and becomes the scene of a murder in the blink of an eye. Feb. 6 and 13. The theatre is located at Lakewood Center for the Arts, 368 S. State St. in Lake Oswego. Ticket prices are \$36/ adults and \$34/seniors. Oth-

Lakewood Theater Company presents Agatha Christie's students and groups. For add Murder on the Orient Express, directed by David Sikking, a clever and quick-witted Agatha Christie adaptation by line at lakewood-center.org.

TAIN OF DESPAIR

Ken Ludwig that will keep you asking, "Whodunit?"

The play begins Jan. 7 and continues through Feb. 13, playing Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m., one Wednesday performance, Jan. 26 at 7:30 p.m., a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. on Feb. 5, and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. on Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30 and Feb. 6 and 13.

The theatre is located at Lakewood Center for the Arts, 368 S. State St. in Lake Oswego. Ticket prices are \$36/ adults and \$34/seniors. Other discounts are available for students and groups. For additional information and tickets, call the Lakewood Box Office at 503-635-3901 or order online at lakewood-center.org.



PHOTO COURTESY LAKEWOOD THEATRE COMPANY Mark Schwahn stars in Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express, playing Jan. 7 through Feb. 13 at Lakewood Theatre Company in Lake Oswego

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Martin Luther King Jr.



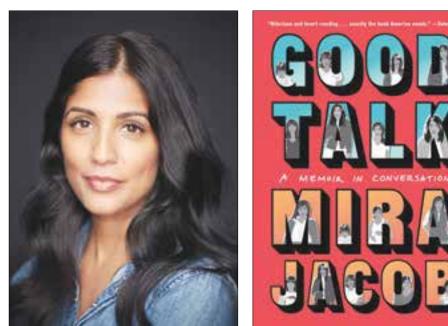


Free Copies for Everybody Reads

Library distributes books for community program

Multnomah County Library invites the community to participate in Everybody Reads 2022 celebrating the graphic memoir Good Talk: A memoir in conversations by author and illustrator Mira Jacob. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the library's signature communitywide reading program.

Free copies of Good Talk are available to pick up at all library locations without a library card (while supplies last) or download



Everybody Reads author Mira Jacob and the cover of her new book Good Talk: A Memoir in conversation.

the e-book or audiobook from the library catalog. The library encourages readers to discuss the book with friends, coworkers and neighbors. The library will host a series of free online events and activities this month and through March 10, including a drawing

workshop with Jacob, interactive discussions, explorations of bias, exclusion and belonging, discussions and two dance-centered events.

Everybody Reads will culminate in an in-person author lecture with acob, presented by Literary Arts, on Thursday, March 10. Tickets are available from Literary Arts.

Mira Jacob is a novelist, memoirist, illustrator, and cultural critic. Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations was shortlisted for the National Book Critics Circle Award, and named a New York Times Notable Book.

Her novel The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing was named one of the best books of 2014 by Kirkus Reviews, and Goodreads, among others.



Together we can make his dream a reality.

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, on January 17th, U.S. Bank is volunteering in our communities. Join us on this National Day of Service by taking action in your local area to volunteer in support of your favorite organization or charity.

Together we can make a difference in driving positive change.



Acet Oregon's for the lear of the lear of

Ethelyn Tumalad

knows what it means to feel like an outsider in the American education system. When she immigrated with her family at the age of five from the Philippines, she found herself immersed in a school system that didn't reflect her or her experiences.

She didn't see other Asian Americans centered in lessons.

• Or the struggles of those who come to our country and must suddenly cope with the complexities of English.

Or the issues of assimilation and culture that impact virtually every minority student.

Now a teacher herself, Ethelyn realizes that the challenges she faced as a student are far from unique. She sees many students struggling with these same issues. Her teaching centers these students, in fact every student, who comes through her classroom door.

Giving Students What They're Hungry For

Proudly Filipina, she likens her room to a dining table. "Not only do Filipinos love to feed you," she says, "but we're very generous; we've been through a lot. We have

child what they need to learn. "There should always be a seat at the table. Whatever my student is hungry for, that's what they will get."

Ethelyn teachers English Language Arts at Clackamas High School. Her skills in the classroom, as well as her student-centered philosophy, set her apart as Oregon's 2022 Teacher of the Year. She'll travel during the coming year to represent Oregon as a leader and example of excellence in education. And her students will continue to benefit, if Ethelyn has anything to say about it, by always having a seat at the table.

Nominations are now open for Oregon's next Teacher of the Year. If you know a teacher who, like Ethelyn, is making a difference for their students, nominate them today!

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Black Artists Matter



Amirah Chatman's Heaven's Probably in Phoenix (2020) is among the works from 20 artists featured in a Black Lives Matter exhibit opening Jan. 18 at Portland State University.

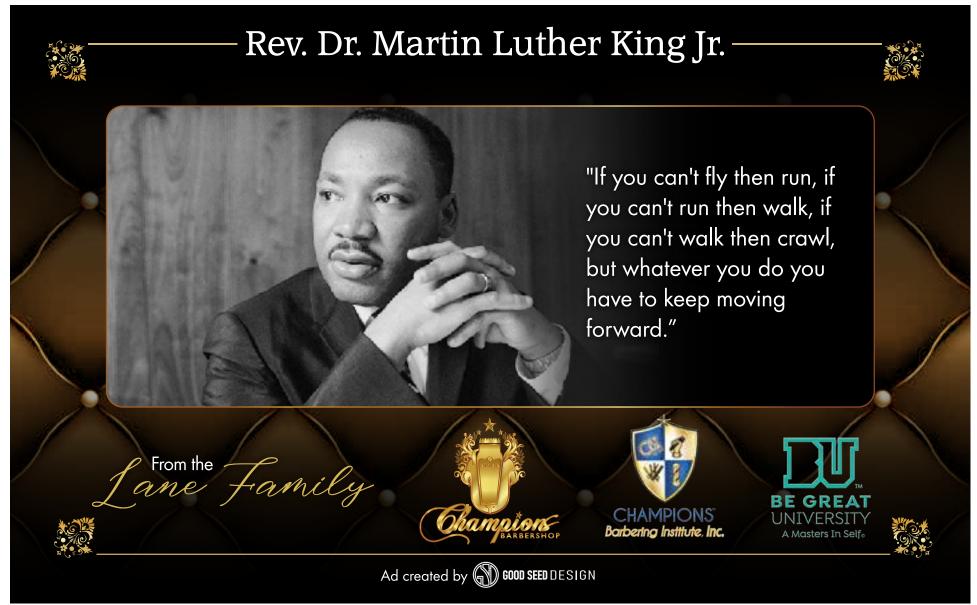
Art born of social justice perspectives

um of Art at Portland State Uniists whose practices demonstrate which require multiple shifts in and aesthetic approaches.

The Jordan Schnitzer Muse- a commitment to social justice. The artists selected for the versity, 1855 S.W. Broadway, Black Lives Matter Artist Grant tography, video, painting, perpresents an exhibit on Black Exhibition stretch the notion of formance, textiles, sculpture, lives that has been made possible 'socially engaged artwork' be- poetry, and printmaking, this exby the support for 60 emerging, youd its cursory definition, re- hibition is a microcosm of allied mid-career and established art- sulting in a collection of objects and conflicting political, social, 18 and is scheduled to continue

perspective, officials said.

The Black Lives Matter Artist Through installation, pho- Grant Program was established by Jordan Schnitzer in partnership with the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at PSU. The exhibit opens on Tuesday, Jan. through April 30.



Governor Appoints Healthcare Leader

Dense Gideon named to Clark College Board

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee has appointed a healthcare leader from Vancouver' Black community to the Clark College Board of Trustees.

Denise Gideon is a seasoned healthcare professional with an extensive record of service to communities. She is currently the system vice president of operations and program integration at Peace-Health, where she also serves as the executive sponsor for the Black and Allies Network Group.

"I have an affinity for community colleges and would not be where I am today if it hadn't been for getting my first degree Oakland, Calif., including UCSF Patten University in Oakland. She from Berkeley City College," said Gideon.

Gideon has a long record of giving back to her community. She serves on the board of Educational Opportunities for of Directors of St. Martin De Por- addition to the Clark College Children & Families of Southwest Washington; is an officer in faith communities wherever she Chair of the Board of Trustees. of the Joyce Finley Foundation; lives and works. a member of the NAACP; and a volunteer coordinator for Re- Practical Nurse in the U.S. Army force, as well as her background build Together Portland.



Denise Gideon promotes education in new role.

Benioff Children's Hospital and the Children's Hospital & Research Center, as well as at the Alameda Alliance for Health. She Kennedy University in California. is the former co-chair of the Board res Catholic School and is active Board," said Rekah Strong,

Previously, her professional her undergraduate degree in Orcareer spanned leadership roles in ganizational Management from our board."

subsequently received an M.B.A. in Business Administration, emphasizing strategy, from John F.

"Denise is an exceptional "Her executive experience of Gideon served as a Licensed mergers, acquisitions, and workduring Desert Storm and received in the medical field, will bring a much-needed form of acumen to



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MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. 2022 Special Edition

SPORTS

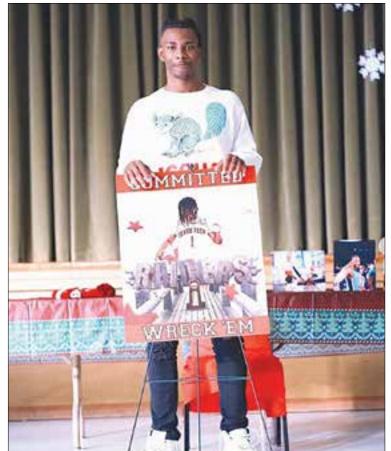
Talented Senior Picks Texas Tech

Former Jefferson star announces college choice

Lamar Washington, a former Jefferson High School basketball standout and Oregon High School Basketball Player of the Year, has decided on Texas Tech as his future college destination where he will play basketball.

The six-foot-four guard is listed as a four star recruit by ESPN. He currently is a senior at AZ Compass Prep in Arizona, and previously at Jefferson was the 2020-2021 Oregon Boys Basketball Gatorade Player of the Year and Portland Interscholastic League Player of the Year where he averaged a double-double with 31.2 points, 10.3 rebounds and 5.1 assists per game as a junior.

In November, Washington listed his top five schools in which he was considering playing basketball, which included Auburn, Oregon State, Texas, Texas Tech and Washington State.



Lamar Washington announces his decision to play basketball at Texas Tech University. The former Jefferson High School and Oregon High School Basketball Player of the Year is currently a senior at AZ Compass Prep in Arizona.



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Martin Luther King Jr. 2022 Special Edition

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.

10 Steps to Address Gun Violence

Working together for communitybased peace

By Dr. J. W. MATT HENNESSEE

After a year marking the highest ever number of gun-related deaths in Portland as well as an historic response by local stakeholder groups, it's clear that the work of the Portland Peace Initiative is very much needed. Portland is not unique among American communities suffering from violence and a lack of understanding of the issues faced this past year. What may be unique is how community members have banded together, pooled resources, tapped private funding sources, and launched initiatives in a vacuum of City-led responses to gun violence.

In September, the first community listening sessions of the Portland Peace Initiative were held online. Designed to be small and intimate, each session was attended by approximately eight (8) community members. Similar sessions have been held each month and will continue throughout 2022.

In November, 'The Table' event was held for the first time. More than 120 representatives of the community, local nonprofits, government, foundations, business leaders and the press deepened their commitment to peace in Portland during the virtual event presented by the Portland Peace Initiative and convened by IPAC (Interfaith Peace & Action Collaborative). Since that time, a second, similarly successful 'The Table' event was held December 17th.

Out of all of these efforts are expected to be greater visibility and success of community-led, grassroots, local nonprofits who, through their innovative approaches, are solving unique aspects of the cycle of gun violence in Portland.

But before that can happen, here are 10 steps to immediately address gun violence



Dr. J. W. Matt Hennessee

already identified out of these efforts:

Have the City Council declare that intervening to stop the violence is their number one priority and that they will set aside their differences until the crisis of gun violence has been addressed with active measures.

Convene a City Council working session to hear from California Partnership for Safe Communities and/or similar experts on reducing gun violence to brief the Council on what strategies they recommend to intervene to stop the violence in Portland.

Use an evidenced-based approach to intervening in gun violence that employs strategies proven to be effective, such as engaging California Partnership for Safe Communities with which the City already has a contract.

Have the active engagement of all city bureaus in life-saving initiatives such as the community listening sessions and 'The Table' offered by the Portland Peace Initiative.

Convene a recurring 'Table' event of city, county, state and Federal law enforcement leaders, as well as city council, and county council staff and media with the charge to meet weekly to identify and continuously recommend immediate action steps to end violence in Portland and adjoining communities, facilitated by a representative from the Portland Peace Initiative.

Have City Council members reach out to the US DOJ for program support and ask to become a part of the Public Safety Partnership program which coordinates Federal agencies for cities experiencing high violence.

Similar to the Office of Violence Prevention's video, launch a separate website that memorializes all gun violence victim deaths and shootings detailing when, where who if known.

Convene a 'Table' event of business and community groups to recommend immediate actions to end gun violence.

Identify the cities in the U.S. today that have been successful in reducing murder and violent crime to understand what they did that worked.

After these initial responses are in place, City Council members can spend more time working on long term strategies to end gun violence—but right now, the focus must remain on stopping the bloodshed on the streets of Portland.

The events of the past year have shaken our city and our souls, according to former Oregon State Sen. Avel Gordly, a long time Black activist and community organizer who is part of the new effort to find solutions because there is clearly no time to waste.

"We're thrilled to have these initiatives come together, and have the guidance of trained professionals to help us achieve the vision we all share. There is hope when we do the work," she said.

The future of Portland depends on all of us coming together.

We thank each and every community member, business leader, elected representative, and appointed official who joined with us in this crucial effort. Now more than ever, this Portland Peace Initiative is how we create a more peaceful

Portland.

Next steps for 'The Table' include a third event to be held virtually on Thursday, Jan. 27 at 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a third report to be published on Feb.14.

Conceived after over a year of well-documented community violence and high-profile police response in Portland, the Portland Peace Initiative is a series of community-wide listening sessions moderated by professional, trained moderators for the purpose of developing a practical, lasting framework for inclusive community engagement that reimagines public safety in Portland, paying particular attention to communities of color and other historically underrepresented groups.

The mission is to tap into the wisdom in the community to find out what kind of community we want to have, to discover what the community wants in terms of public safety and to elevate the response to reducing gun violence. The results of these sessions will be delivered as a report into the hands of the City and Police Bureau. Outcomes will be measured on an ongoing basis with the hope of measurable improvements in community members' sense of public safety and feeling that the City is responsive to, respectful of, and interested in their needs.

Portland Peace Initiative is the creation of recognized problem-solvers from all backgrounds who seek to unite and elevate as many local efforts of individuals, groups, and organizations that want to participate in building bridges of understanding and healing in Portland. Leading the initiative are Pastor Matt Hennessee, Robert King, Kevin Modica, Deniel Banks, Jan Elfers, and Lisa Broderick of Police-2Peace. The Portland Peace Initiative is a multi-organization coalition led by IPAC (Interfaith Peace & Action Collaborative) and supported by Police2Peace. Learn more at https://portland-peace.org/

Rev. Dr. J. W. Matt Hennessee, pastor of Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, is a co-founder and leader of the Interfaith Peace & Action Collaborative.



'Still the Time **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11**

"In times like these, it is imperative that we gather as community to work together, celebrate together, and collaborate together to ensure a vibrant, inclusive, and constructive future. The spirit and legacy of Dr. King, Mrs. King, Mrs. Parks, Ms. Yolanda D. King, President Mandela, Malcolm X and so many who came before us is what gives us encouragement and hope that we will overcome the difficulties, stresses, and strains of now and continue to build the 'Beloved Community," Hennessee said.

Vancouver Avenue is one of Portland's historic African American venues and the only church in Oregon where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addressed the "Beloved Community" in November 1961 as part of a tour advancing civil rights in the Pacific Northwest.

The church's MLK celebration is also a fund-raising event. Since its inception, the Drum Major Scholarship Fund has supported activities and provided scholarships for over 300 youth and young adults in the Portland area.

All donations are welcome. For more information, contact the church at 503-282-9496 or make a donation at the "Give" tab on www.vafbc.org or by email at vafbchurch1@aol.com.

Advancing Diversity and Inclusion Nonprofit leader hired at Oregon Community Foundation

The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) recently announced the appointment of Marcy Bradley as its Vice President of Equity and Culture.

Bradley has been a successful nonprofit leader committed to improving educational outcomes for Oregon's most vulnerable children for more than 25 years, previously leading Elevate Oregon, and as executive director of Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI).

"She is a compassionate and vocal champion for the under-served and a coalition builder, in support of OCF's mission. I have every confidence that Marcy will excel in her new role," said Max Williams, the Oregon Community Foundation's president and chief executive officer.

In her new role, Bradley will be responsible for deepening the Foundation's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and strengthening these values across the organization, alongside colleagues on the OCF Executive Team, Williams said.

Prior to her appointment, Bradley served as the program officer for Black Student Success, an Oregon Community



Marcy Bradley, a longtime education and nonprofit leader, will lead equity and culture for the Oregon Community Foundation.

Foundation initiative that evolved from a small pilot to a national model for improving the educational experience of Black students.

In 2018, at the behest of a committed group of Black leaders and advocates. OCF launches the initiative with a \$600,000 investment. One year later, philanthropic partners added \$525,000 in community grants to expand the student success network to 20 nonprofit organizations working to improve educational outcomes for Black students in Oregon.

By 2020, the program gained the support of 24 Black-led organizations around the state committed to bring grassroots educational leaders together to provide direction to funders on the best practices that will advance Black children toward success from early childhood through post-secondary education.

In the current year, OCF has dedicated \$5 million to the Black Student Success Initiative.

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Martin Luther King Jr. 2022 Special Edition

How Racist Rage Animated Jan. 6 riot



Cori Bush, D-Mo. speaks out on how racist rage animated the Jan. 6, 2021 riot at the U.S. Capitol.

Congresswoman recalls hatred in protestors eyes

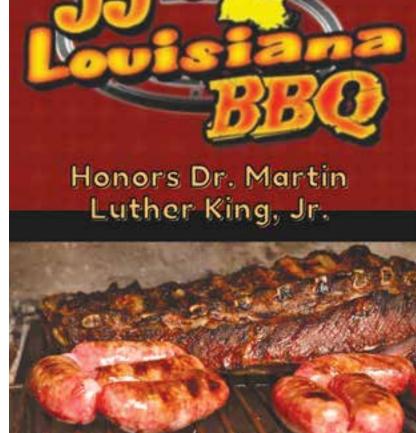
strength of her activism.

But as the Missouri Demo- The Associated Press. crat looked out the window of

be no peaceful protest. The Confederate flags in the crowd, and the makeshift noose and gallows er inside the Capitol. "But it's erected on the Capitol grounds, spoke to a more sinister reality.

"I've been to hundreds of pro-(AP) — Rep. Cori Bush is no tests and have organized so many stranger to protests. She spent protests, I can't count. I know years marching the streets of St. what a protest is: This is not a very negative and oftentimes Louis and Ferguson, Missou- that," Bush, who is Black, said, ri, rising to public office on the reflecting on the one year since the attack in an interview with cape the Capitol and barricade

The insurrection by prothe Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 — Trump supporters and members officers faced down the violent only her third day as a member of far-right groups shattered the mob in hours of frantic hand-toof Congress — she knew what sense of security that many had hand combat. More than 100 offiwas about to take place would long felt at the Capitol as riot- cers were injured, some severely.



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ers forcibly delayed the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's election victory.

But for people of color, including many in Congress, the attack was more than a violent challenge to a free and fair election — it was an eerily familiar display of white supremacist violence, this time at the very seat of American democracy.

"First of all, as a Black woman, that is already just tough on a level that's different from what a white person would experience," Bush said of the imagery and rhetoric surrounding the attack, especially the Confederate flag that was carried by a riotespecially different for Black people because of our history. The history of this country has been that type of language and imagery is directed right at us in violent way."

While Bush managed to eswith her staff in her office in a nearby building, dozens of police

Black Veteran Dies at 112



World War II veteran Lawrence Brooks sports a lipstick kiss on his cheek, planted by a member of the singing group Victory Belles, in this birthday photo from 2019. Brooks died Jan. 5 at the age of 112.

a Black man from Louisiana who was the oldest World War II veteran in the U.S. - and believed to be the oldest man in the country - died Jan. 5 at the age of 112.

Born on Sept. 12, 1909, Brooks was known for his good-natured sense of humor, positivity and kindness. When asked for his secret to a long life, he often said, "serving God and being nice to people."

On sunny days, Brooks was known for sitting on the front porch of the double shotgun house he shared with daughter Vanessa Brooks in the Central City neighborhood of New Orleans. Neigh- ment stationed in Australia.

(AP) — Lawrence N. Brooks, bors would call out to the local celebrity, wave and bring him soda and snacks.

Brooks was passionate about the New Orleans Saints football team and never missed a game, his daughter said. His church, St. Luke's Episcopal, was also close to his heart and he never missed a Sunday service until the coronavirus pandemic hit.

Brooks was working at a sawmill when he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1940. After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, he was assigned to the mostly Black 91st Engineer General Service Regi-

Prosper Portland's commitment to equity is inspired by the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We acknowledge our past as we move forward to create economic opportunity and prosperity for all communities.

We make racial equity the foundation of our community and economic development work.

We hold ourselves accountable to Portland's communities of color and others our work has negatively impacted.

While racial equity is the primary lens to focus our efforts, we understand the connection between racism and other forms of bias that lead to oppression.

Within our workplace and working with our partners, we embrace values of authentic inclusion, transparency, and collaboration.

We work toward nothing less than an anti-racist Portland that welcomes and serves all communities and perspectives. We encourage our partners to do the same.



Building an Equitable Economy

prosperportland.us/equity

King's Lessons

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

mother's house, they all had that velvet picture of Martin Luther King. He was like a king to us," she said. "So I looked at him, not like a god, but a god of the movement and the people and the one that was a voice on our behalf."

A couple of months ago, Palmer was in Washington, D.C. and was determined to see the Martin Luther King Memorial. She said being able to give tribute to the civil rights leader by placing t-shirts from the many nonprofits she works with at the base on his statue for a photo, making a connection to her own activism, can go astray. was inspiring.

she said.

2022," she said.

Through the difficulty of her raise my kids." own childhood, Palmer said she felt King's message, and she understands how some kids



Laurie Palmer is a community activist who addresses the root causes of gang violence.

But King's dream of equali- home, got into drugs, and in ty for all has yet to be fulfilled, 1991 went to prison," she said. "In 1992 I got saved and in 1993 "He said that he had a vision I got out in October and had custhat one day we will all play tody of my kids by the following together and be free, and we January," she said. "Then I got a still ain't, and we're going into proposal from Keith Palmer. We got married and he helped me

> Palmer is also involved in a campaign where signs that read Do Not Murder are placed at var

ious deadly shooting locations around the city. She says more work is needed to address violence, and authorities should pay more attention and listen to those who have been impacted directly.

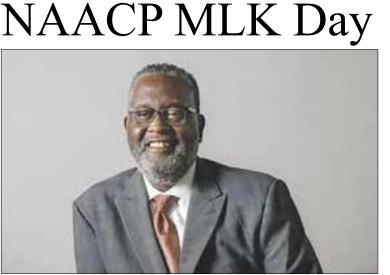
Her work in the community also involves working with many other nonprofits, including Love is Stronger and Black Men in Training, and she also seeks advice from Vincent Jones-Dixon, Gresham's first Black city councilman, who lost a brother to gun violence.

Saving children from gun violence is her main goal, Palmer said.

"I'm gonna fight for these kids, because if I can save one child -"I grew up in an abusive don't care what color he is - from killing somebody, then that's my mission," she said.

> It hasn't been easy, she said, and she's received pushback for her activism, even from her own family.

"I have this saying that I'm going to be like Martin Luther King in my community. It only takes one, and when God told me he wanted me to start, I had to," she said ..



Salem-Keizer NAACP president Dr. Reginald Richardson.

national holiday on Monday,

Jan. 17 with a special broadcast

that will air on public cable ac-

The program will be intro-

duced by Dr. Reginald Richard-

son, president of Salem-Keizer

NAACP and feature Dr. Irvin

Brown, Education Committee

Chair for the local civil rights

The theme of this year's broad-

group, as keynote speaker.

cess channels.

Salem-Keizer

The Salem-Keizer Branch of cast is the Urgency of Creating the NAACP invites the commu- the Beloved Community. nity to join them in celebrating MLK Jr. first introduced the

the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. concept during his 1957 Birth of a Nation speech. The beloved community is a community in which everyone is cared for absent of poverty, hunger, and hate.

The Salem-Keiser NAACP MLK broadcast airs on public access cable channels 22 and 23, beginning Monday, Jan. 17 at 7:30 a.m. and 8 a.m. respectfully, and repeats throughout the day on multiple days and times through Feb. 27 on both channels.



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Expanding Voter Access

MLK speaker an expert on political engagement

tion on Monday, Jan. 17.

ly recognized work to advance civil rights and enfranchise communities could not be more keynote address, an opportunity relevant or necessary within our current national context," said Scott Vignos, interim vice president and chief diversity officer at Oregon State.

Brown is the co-founder of Brown and Black Voters Mat- at the Memorial Union.

ter Capacity Building Institute working to boost Black voter registration and turnout, as well as increase power in marginalized, predominantly Black communities.

Her keynote address is at 11 a.m. at the LaSells Stewart Center at OSU's Corvallis campus. LaTosha Brown, a leader in It will also be livestreamed. national efforts to build Black The keynote will be preceded political engagement and ex- by a peace breakfast at 9 a.m. at pand voter access, will be the the CH2M Hill Alumni Center. keynote speaker at Oregon State It celebrates the life and legacy University's 40th Annual Dr. of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebra- honors members of the Oregon State community who carry on "LaTosha Brown's national- the themes of his messages and work.

A peace march will follow the for community members to join in solidarity and reflect on King's legacy of creating transformative change through non-violence. The march will begin at 12:30 p.m. from the front patio of the the Black Voters Matter Fund LaSells Stewart Center and end



Black Voters Matter Fund co-founder LaTosha Brown to give the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday keynote at Oregon State University.

OSU STAR BECOMES OSU GRAD DNL NE

Jacquizz Rodgers never met a barrier he couldn't maneuver around or burst through. His career as a Beavers running back and in the NFL was an endless highlight reel of perpetual motion — with some jaw-dropping zigs and zags — in the face of pressure. He applied the same approach toward completing his degree online with Oregon State Ecampus, all while playing on the biggest stage and raising a family. Chipping away, bit by bit, with his signature toughness and proving that hard work is undefeated.

Read his story: ecampus.oregonstate.edu/jacquizz

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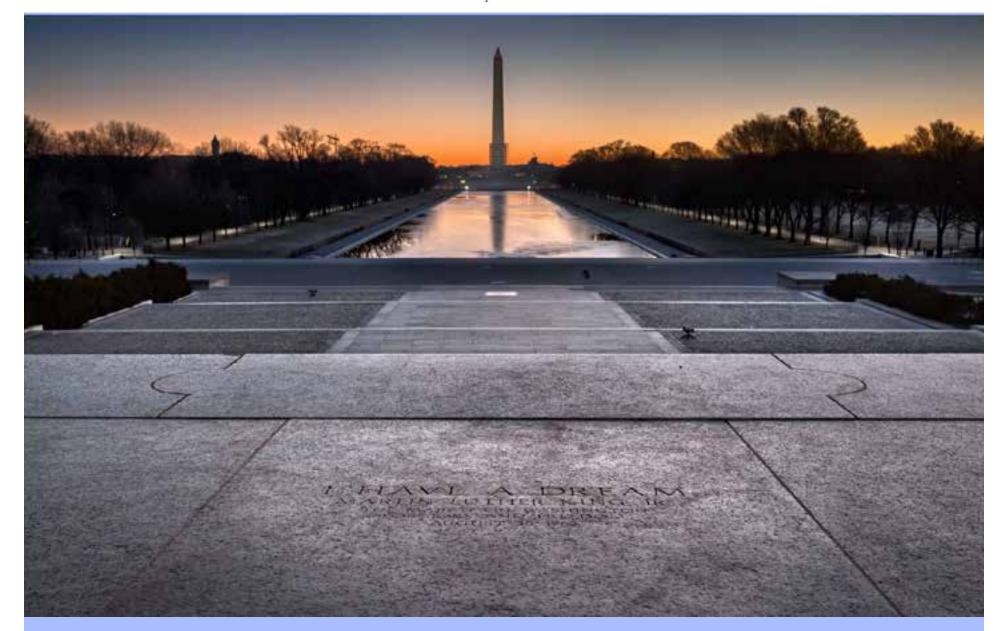
Jacquizz Rodgers, '21 B.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences

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Andrew Young

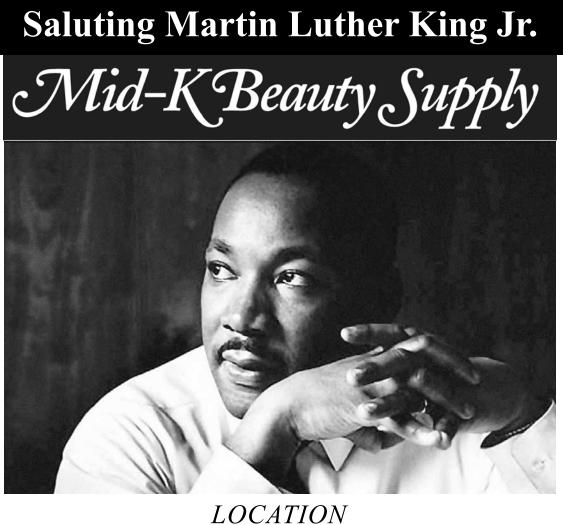
MLK Breakfast with Andrew Young

iUrban Teen, a nonprofit iUrban Teen. geared to helping historically tinuing the Legacy" and will Pierot said. feature the civil rights icon, diplomat, and activist, Ambas- ban Teen Scholarship Fund sador Andrew Young as the which has supported over 40 event keynote.

sity strategist and founder of eventbrite.com.

"We are not only celebrating excluded youth succeed in ed- the 93rd birthday of Dr. King ucation and life goals, hosts its Jr., we are also celebrating the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther work of Ambassador Young King Jr. Breakfast on Monday, and I'm honored to be able to Jan. 17 at 8 a.m. at the Vancoubring this civil rights icon to ver Hilton. The theme is "Con- the Vancouver community"

Proceeds help fund the iUryouth since its inception. To The community event is cu- attend the breakfast, register rated by Deena Pierott, diver- by visiting mlkvancouver2022.



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"Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability but comes through continuous struggle."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

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43 Years of MLK Tributes



Keep Alive the Dream archivist Bobby Smith.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

said, "Every parent wonders what the future will hold for their children, and it is our responsibility to see they have dreams."

On the same panel, Ken Berry's son, Cedric, reminisced about how when he was seven months old, his dad held him on stage while singing "The Greatest Love of All." The documentary then shows that footage where Cedric is a laughing baby, grabbing at the microphone while his father sings.

Traci Harris-Woods also recalled her experience as a member of the Youth Sound Ensemble, which she said was an "awesome experience," followed by a video of the choir in 1982, where as a teenager she was lead singer on "Be Grateful."

"We put together the Youth Sound choir to demonstrate just how important the arts and education are for our youth," Berry said. "Each year we brought hundreds of children together for a performance, after hundreds of hours of rehearsals."

Then there's the late Grace Collins, namesake of the Grace Collins Memorial Center, leading a group of children singing "We Love Thee Lord Jesus," and a performances of the New Hope Baptist Church Choir, the Youth Sounder Choir, the Wilder Ward Singers and the Billy Larken Trio. Other groups include the Thara Memory Youth Sound Ensemble in 1984 and the Alonzo Chadwick SEI Youth Choir in 2005.

The documentary also features video footage and commentary on the history of Black experience in Portland and the state of Oregon, from the 1859 "exclusionary clause" to keep Blacks from moving here when Oregon became a state, to the Vanport flood in 1948, to the gentrification of Portland neighborhoods in more recent years.

Past interviews with esteemed Black Portlanders are included, like with musician and teacher Janis Scroggins when she was a young woman. Scroggins died in 2014, and in 2016 the celebration included a musical tribute to her.

A 2020 video of the Sebe Kan Youth Dancers performing African dances, and the Kappa Alpha Psi Junior Dancers in 2003, are also featured, with dancer Michael Dean talking about what a great experience it was to "step out on that stage and see the whole of Black Portland."

Another speaker featured is former state Sen. Margaret Carter, Oregon's first Black woman legislator, who talked about King's "economic dream."

"We've got to put the fire back under corporations in terms of their negligence of not bringing young people on and giving them job opportunities," she said. "Sacrifice needs to be made and if they don't, we need to take to the streets against corporations. And yes, I'm saying get in the streets. That's where the economic answer lies."

In footage from 1988, entertainer Art Alexander talked about how for too many Black residents, life was like being "pushed into a nightmare."

In 2015, another esteemed speaker was Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, famous for his philosophy of nonviolence that led India out of colonialist oppression.

Gandhi said King and his grandfather, who was assassinated in 1948, never met, but after the Montgomery boycott in 1959, the Indian government invited King and his family to visit as its guest to meet with people who were in Gandhi's circle to learn about his philosophy.

"And he came with the whole family and spent more than a month and learned that nonviolence is not just a strategy of convenience; nonviolence is a way of life," Gandhi said. "We have to become nonviolent ourselves. We have to become the change that we wish to see in the world."

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