



**STATE OF
BLACK
OREGON
2015**

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First Published in the United States of America in 2015
by the Urban League of Portland
10 North Russell Street
Portland, OR 97227
Phone: (503) 280-2600
www.ulpdx.org

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Digital edition published in 2015

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FOREWORD

The State of Black Oregon 2015 provides a clear, urgent call and path forward for a Black Oregon policy agenda. The report captures dreams that have been lost and deferred. It tells us what we must do to make dreams real and inclusive for thousands of Black Oregonians. Who can make change happen? All of us, working together. The Oregon Legislature, our cities, counties and regional governments, as shapers and drivers of policy affecting the quality of life for all Oregonians, must own this report, be key participants and take responsibility for implementing the policy recommendations. We must continue to reach, embrace and engage a new generation of voters and leaders. We must hasten the training and development of Black leaders, teachers and mentors. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave us a “prescription for a healthy society”—The Beloved Community described by the King Center as “...a global vision in which

all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In The Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of bigotry and prejudice will be replaced with an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood.”

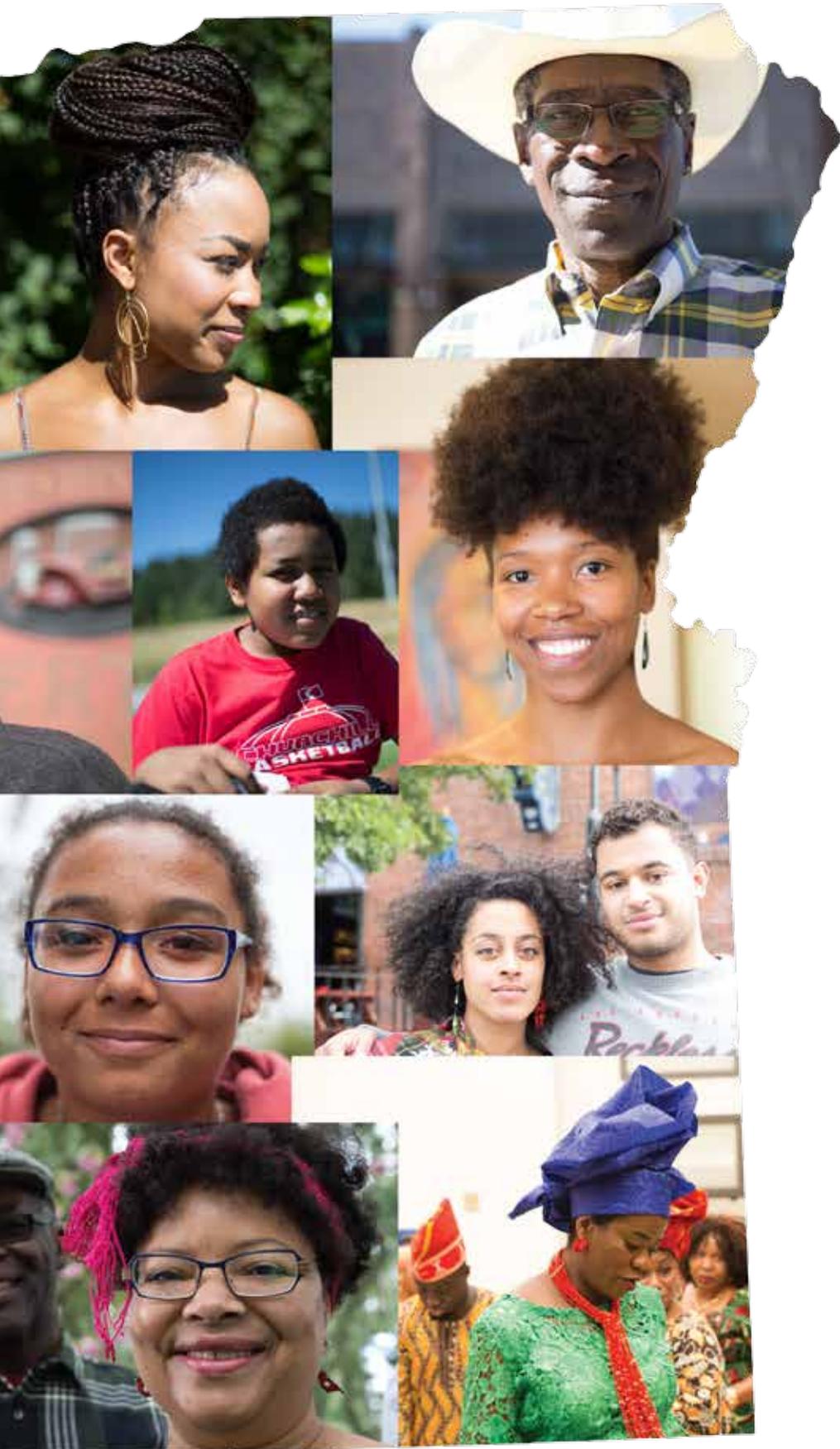
Let Oregon lead the way in our rapidly evolving Nation—lead the way in claiming, proclaiming and demonstrating to the world that we are a Beloved Community.

As we read the State of Black Oregon report—each of us is in search of our role to advance social and racial justice. As we task ourselves, let us remember the words left to us by a great American Black and gay writer, Langston Hughes. He asked whether a dream deferred dries up like a raisin in the sun—or just explodes?

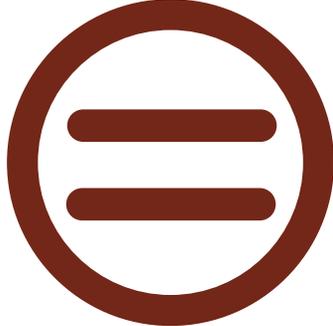
AVEL LOUISE GORDLY

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The Life of an Oregon Activist, Legislator
and Community Leader





**WE ARE
BLACK
OREGON**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the many contributors to this project. It would not have been possible without the continued support of our partners, colleagues and donors. We want to express our deepest appreciation to those who donated time and services.

We want to especially thank Moda for donating the printing of the report.

Sponsors

Print Support:

Kaiser Permanente Community Fund of the Northwest Health Foundation
The Collins Foundation
The Northwest Area Foundation
United Way Catalyst Fund
Portland Public Schools
Portland State University
Legacy Health
Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
County Commissioner Loretta Smith and the Board of County Commissioners
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiative, Inc.

Video Support:

M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust
NW Natural
The Collins Foundation

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Brink Communications, Meyer Creative

Additional Support

Thanks and appreciation for the support of our additional contributors, editors and advisors:

Special thank you to: Lindsay Bryant, Lisa Vogel, Bruce Poinsette and David Whitfield. Thank you also to: Kaleema Kerbs, Julia Delgado, Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc., Portland Community College—Cascade Campus, Portland State University's—Capstone Students, Christian Kaylor, Ann Curry-Stevens, Shannon Wight, Janet Byrd, Deborah Cochrane, Patrick Green, Travis Stovall, Cat Goughnour, Stephen Simms, Kate Allen, Rukaiyah Adams, Raahi Reddy, Mark Johnson, Mark Harris, Matthew Reynolds, Gina DuQuenne, Katrina Hedberg, Renee Boyd, Angela Long, Peter Tromba, Carole Scholl, Suzanne Porter, Mark Edwards, Kelly Officer, Susan Degen, Sean Schafer, Peter Wagner, Beth Poteet, Becky Seel, Brian Reeder, Heidi Dupius, Barbara McCullough-Jones, Neola Young, Shanda Miller, Debra Lindsay, Blanca Torres de Hawkins, Jilma Meneses, Joyce DeMonnin, Dorian Caal, David Whitfield, Jeremy Wolff, Dante James, Stacey Triplett, TJ Sheehy, StrategyWorks NW, Mara Gross, Lucy Baker, Stephaine Taylor, Steve Simms, Mindy Clark.

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INTRODUCTION

STATE OF BLACK OREGON 2015

Let us imagine the reality we wish to see for Black Oregon—an environment where our children are engaged in the classroom; where the economy is bolstered by a well-equipped and sought-after Black workforce; where a strong community made up of generations of Black families can remain connected and stable in their homes and surroundings. This is not what we see today, but we can accept nothing less. The State of Black Oregon 2015 seeks to bridge that gap, addressing challenges in a way that will benefit all Oregonians.

From our vantage point in 2015, the political landscape in Oregon is shifting. It is being moved by the demographic changes of growing communities of color and the accompanying need for innovation to build an equitable and inclusive economy for the 21st century. As Oregon works to build a healthy and prosperous state, we risk failing to fulfill our potential and our promise if we do not dismantle the

legacy of inequity and institutional neglect of communities of color.

Across our state, as is the case across the nation, public and private systems still operate in ways that perpetuate income and racial inequality. This sad truth is confirmed by the findings of our State of Black Oregon 2015. Dramatic evidence of the historic effects of racism and its consequences has unfolded from Ferguson to Portland and far too many communities in between to mention. We are reminded that the evolution and history of racism is complex. Consequently, our solutions must also be complex. They must be rooted in a shared understanding by communities of color and communities of conscience of our history and what is required of all of us if we are to shift our social fabric toward equity.

The action we take today will determine our tomorrow. Since the last State of Black Oregon

2009, we acknowledge that we have made some progress. We have welcomed the steady increase in advocacy and activism by Oregon's emerging communities of color to raise voices and awareness for advancing issues of social justice. There has been a shared commitment to change by many policymakers. We have demonstrated what can be achieved by purposeful interventions and worked with many partners to ensure that we all bring our voices to issues and places where they must be heard.

The first State of Black Oregon documented the need and responsibility for policymakers to use the data to eliminate the disparities they revealed. The challenge before policymakers and practitioners from the release of the State of Black Oregon 2015 is nothing short of dismantling the remaining systems that perpetuate inequity.

The State of Black Oregon 2015 tells the story

of the many Black communities that are a part of Oregon across the state; one that is often untold. We share the stories through the lens of childhood and adulthood and through our community's aspiration for health and well-being. We celebrate the diversity of our community by lifting up the voices of our elders, Black LGBTQ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer), Black immigrants and refugees and rural Black Oregonians. The data in our report will already be familiar.

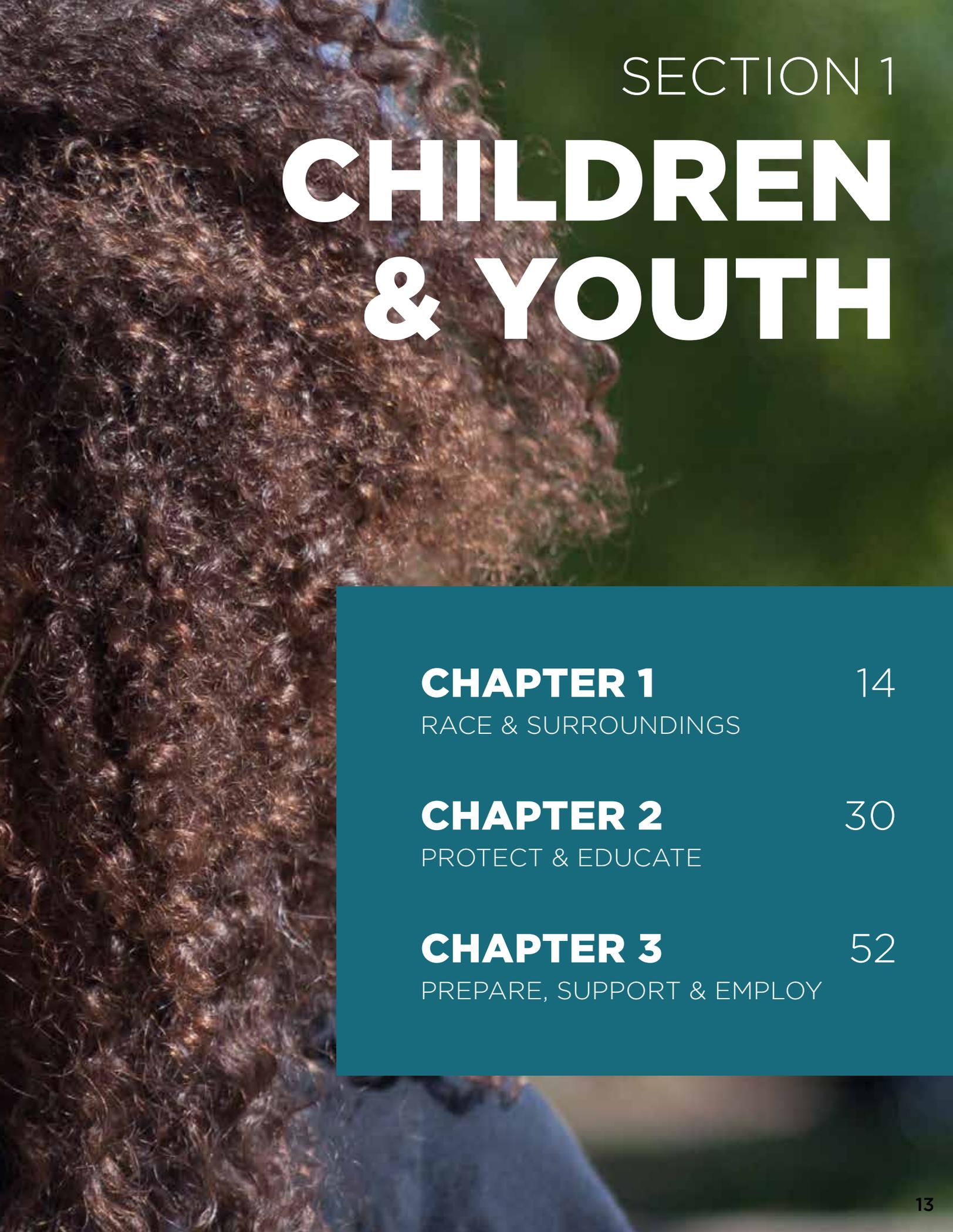
Our intention is to convey the continued urgency for social and racial justice required for our community to thrive. Our purpose is to put forward a strategy for action for all policymakers, and a strategy for political empowerment for our community.

The time for change was yesterday, but the opportunity before us today is to come forward with intentionality and purpose.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

President and Chief Executive Officer
Urban League of Portland





SECTION 1

CHILDREN & YOUTH

CHAPTER 1

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PROTECT & EDUCATE

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CHAPTER 3

PREPARE, SUPPORT & EMPLOY

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CHAPTER 1

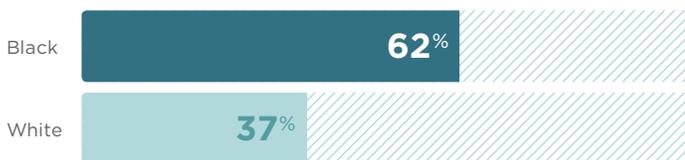
RACE AND SURROUNDINGS

Our surroundings mold our development, significantly impacting our physical and mental health and shaping our life's path from a very early age. The neighborhood where a mother lives while she's pregnant; the home a child sees when he wakes up; a parent's presence or absence; good nutrition; and social and economic support—these are all factors in a child's health, well-being and eventual achievement.

The images children see outside their windows, and how that outside world perceives and treats them, can generate either fear and poor self-esteem or confidence, security and pride. We know that the environment of many Black children is significantly different from the world of their White counterparts. This fact is not new; what we need are new solutions. To lift up Black children, these solutions must be bold and direct; both new and proven strategies. They must begin before a child is conceived. Since a mother is the microenvironment in which her child grows and develops, it makes sense to ensure her physical and emotional health and well-being.

Children Living at 200% Poverty or Below

(2014)



Low Birth Weight

(2013)



Infant Mortality

(Deaths per 1,000 live births, 2008)



Food Insecurity

(2010–2011)





ACTION VISION

The best way to strengthen the health of Black women, children and families is to start early. We must boost prenatal health care for families and provide support through the crucial first 1,000 days of life—preconception up to age 2. We must also implement policies that prioritize reproductive planning and choice, economic security, stable housing and healthy surroundings.



ESSAY 1

HOW SOCIAL JUSTICE CAN LIFT UP BLACK HEALTH

Latricia Tillman, MPH, Director of Public Health,
Multnomah County Health Department

Lawrence Wallack, DrPH, Director,
Center for Public Health Studies, Portland State University

At the core of public health is an upstream-downstream problem: we're often so busy pulling drowning people out of the river downstream that we don't have time to go upstream, see what's causing them to initially fall in, and do something about it. For any community to improve its health, it's necessary to make a difference upstream.

It's not news that poverty and racism are stressful and killing us, and that collectively, African Americans have less access than others to political and economic power. It may be less well known that crucial to our health as a community is the health of our mothers—even before they become mothers—and the health of their babies, even pre-conception through the first 1,000 days to roughly 2 years of age.

Important new findings in biological and social sciences have linked key environmental factors with the very early development of chronic diseases, such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. This research further links some of the same factors to a range of problems related to brain development, school success and mental health. Our community, family history and current environment may shape our health more than our genes do. A recent Robert Wood Johnson Foundation national commission concluded that our zip code may be more important than our genetic code in determining our health.

PROTECTING THE FIRST 1,000 DAYS

The risk of deadly and disabling health problems is established much earlier than previously understood. We now know that the most critical developmental period is pre-conception up to about age 2—the first 1,000 days.

The two main risk factors involve nutrition and stress. Biological changes in the developing baby are related to the nutritional flow from the mother to the fetus. Just as the mother is the environment of the developing fetus, the community is the environment of the mother. These biological changes also reflect the intense “toxic” stress on the mother brought on by environmental conditions like racism, inadequate housing, unemployment and lack of options and opportunity.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN OREGON?

We understand what community means to our senses. It's the sound of our music and of neighbors greeting each other from across the street. It smells like barbecue. It's a fierce and friendly game of spades at a block party or a smile as you walk into church. It makes you feel familiar, welcome and known.



FAMILY-BASED CARE AND SUPPORT

All families members can play a role in protecting the first 1,000 days. One community member we talked to, Shanice (picture unavailable), is pregnant with her second child. Like her mother, Shanice relies heavily on family-based care. Her sister was by her side as her doula during her first pregnancy. She accompanied her on doctors' visits; advocated on her behalf; and provided nutritional advice and homemade remedies. In many ways, her sister covered the blind spots doctors were missing, often due to a lack of cultural understanding.

While she was in labor with her first daughter, the only health issue that arose was high blood pressure, which returned to normal after delivery. Shanice's daughter was born perfectly healthy, and eight months into her current pregnancy, the issue hasn't resurfaced.

She credits the positive health outcomes to family-based care and support. Shanice's sister, mother and other family members take care of her daughter while she's at work. Such help has been crucial during the all-important "first 1,000 days."

But our Black community has been eroded over the past 20 years. In the name of urban renewal, the Black community has been displaced so that our zip codes no longer connect us. The implications are powerful. If, as the research suggests, nutritional and stress risk factors reflect our community environment, we can and must improve these conditions through changes in public policy and innovative public health programming.

For the sake of our future generations, we need to focus on the well-being of our young Black women today, particularly those whose families are lower-income. We need to tackle health problems that limit educational, economic and social opportunity for individuals and communities.

As a first step, we need to build efforts in culturally affirming prevention, maternal and child health, early childhood education, housing and economic development into a larger social/health equity movement. We have to think bigger, bolder and more comprehensively.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR LEADERS

Our city, county, regional and state governments must demolish the silos that limit their effectiveness. Our elected officials, business executives, faith leaders, educators and health professionals need a common understanding of the cross-cutting factors that increase risks for a lifetime of health and social problems.

Because we know that social factors like racism contribute in a significant and tragic way to disability and early death, social change needs to be at the center of health promotion. Sustainable funding is critical for the culturally specific faith and community organizations that strengthen connected, empowered and involved community networks.

These organizations must be at the heart of our collective healing—not just for the people of color who've experienced racism, but for

the members of the dominant culture whose thinking has perpetuated it. This is not the cross-burning of not so long ago; it has evolved into subtle, subconscious thinking that denies or minimizes people of color in leadership and dismisses indigenous ways of knowing, gathering, addressing problems and healing. Those who ignore or downplay, for example, how gentrification and unemployment have deep health and mental health impacts, diminish the humanity of themselves as well as others.

Our leaders cannot be neutral, sitting by as the chronic stress of racism takes years off of our lives. They cannot be afraid to empathize with impacted communities and to feel the depth of damage and loss.

Solutions must be tailored to the communities experiencing the greatest need and funded to facilitate effectiveness. In developing them, leaders must include those who've been privileged and those who've been oppressed.

To achieve equity, everyone must commit to chart (and fund) a new course for the institutions and systems that exist to promote health. And we must share a more humane focus on our collective future that recognizes the pivotal role of our mothers and daughters, who may one day become mothers themselves, in our community's health.

***Just as the mother is
the environment of the
developing fetus, the
community is the
environment of the mother.***



CRITICAL SUPPORT FOR BLACK MOTHERS

Public assistance programs are a critical anti-poverty strategy for protecting child and maternal health outcomes. Reducing the economic and financial stress on a Black mother through job programs and financial support significantly improves her health and that of her children.



49.2%

of Black female households (single) live below the poverty level



27.8%

of White female households (single) live below the poverty level¹



Black women represent **5%** of the WIC program



White women represent **88%** of the WIC program²



ESSAY 2

POVERTY, TRAUMA & THE MENTAL HEALTH OF BLACK YOUTH

Alisha Moreland-Capuia, MD

Executive Director, Oregon Health & Science University
Avel Gordly Center for Healing

You see a profound visceral reaction in the Black community when you mention the name Trayvon Martin. This case affirmed for many that people of color will always carry the burden of others' suspicion—a heavy burden to bear. Even more recent are the cases of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, unarmed Black men who still could not save their own lives. Recalling these examples incites fear. The unconscious message is: I am not safe even when I am in a position of complete surrender; and further: *I am a target by the very nature of an immutable characteristic—the color of my skin.*

Poverty in the Black community is equally visceral. Children whose parents live in poverty, or who have experienced severe economic losses, are more likely to have higher rates of depression, anxiety and antisocial behaviors. This fear is equally real for young women who face the trauma of domestic violence or who lack access to reproductive services.³

Poverty and the persistent presence of fear and anxiety are traumatic. Trauma is caused by exposure to events that shatter one's sense of security and make one feel helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world—experiences like poverty, police brutality, bullying and domestic violence. Black, Native American

and Hispanic youth have disproportionately more negative interactions with the police, which heighten fear, create mistrust and have a profound impact on the psyche of youth of color.⁴ Understanding the effect of trauma on individuals and communities can shape policies and practice for educators, law enforcement and healthcare and service providers. Being trauma-informed lets us look at what's happened to people instead of what's wrong with them. It builds empathy.

For health, human service systems, schools, foster care and juvenile justice to become trauma-informed means that every part of the organization, management and service delivery is assessed and modified to include a basic understanding of how trauma impacts the lives of individuals. It recognizes that traditional approaches may exacerbate trauma. Being trauma-informed means being compassionate and culturally responsive, seeing one as human, not just a color or socioeconomic status.

SOLUTIONS

The social service systems that serve boys, young men and their families are fragmented, exist in silos, do not share a common knowledge base or language, compete for diminishing resources and are chronically stressed. When boys and men of color

interface with these stressed systems, their problems are often compounded. The promising Sanctuary Model creates an organizational culture that emphasizes healing from psychological and social trauma, throughout physical and mental healthcare, schools, community-based and social services organizations.

*Being trauma-informed
lets us look at what's
happened to people instead
of what's wrong with them.
It builds empathy.*

EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

EXPAND TRAUMA-INFORMED SERVICES:

- Support and expand community-based efforts that are consistent with a trauma-informed approach. Focus on cultural frameworks that promote healing and positive male development and identity to address the effects of trauma, improve health and decrease disparities.

WIDEN TRAINING:

- Promote trauma-informed training of judges, law enforcement, healthcare providers, teachers, social service and others who encounter Black men, youth and families.

SCHOOLS:

- Promote school-based activities (violence prevention, health, parenting support, education and mentoring), beginning in the early years, that are responsive to adverse social and family conditions within at-risk communities.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES:

- Infuse health and human service systems with trauma-informed practices to promote healing from trauma and adversity at the individual, family and community levels. Ensure behavioral healthcare that provides trauma-informed treatment.

CHILD WELFARE:

- Expand foster care and child welfare practices that engage the whole family (both foster family and family of origin) and that include trauma histories and assessments in providing care.

JUVENILE JUSTICE:

- Use rehabilitative options within the juvenile justice system that focus on addressing trauma to divert youth from detention or incarceration.

LYDIA SERVES HER COMMUNITY WITH A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

As a **Community Health Worker (CHW)**, Lydia Gray Holifield relies on cultural competency and personal experience to serve her community. Her work includes home visits and helping socialize children twice a month. She also helps pregnant women by serving as a doula. They ask her to accompany them to doctors' appointments because they fear going alone. Since she began doing this, Lydia says her clients now ask their doctors more questions and investigate medicines on their own.

By acting as an advocate for patients, Lydia eases the distrust many in the Black community have of the healthcare system. "We're not letting doctors use our patients any more as guinea pigs," she says. "They always want to give our sisters a C-section because it gets them in and out the door faster. I don't like that."

Despite such underlying tensions, Lydia says the response from medical staff has been positive. "You just have to let them know we're here," she says. "You don't get to do that to our people any more. You don't just get to give them a drug you're basically testing on us to see if it's going to work."

In addition to working with pregnant mothers, Lydia also helps a number of clients who are domestic violence survivors—a situation she knows all too well. "When you get out, you're scared to death," she says. "You don't understand. You don't know where to go.

Many times in the African American community, these stories of domestic violence remain family secrets, passed down from one generation to the next generation.

Lydia has made a decision that she wants the "family curse" to stop. She uses her experience to empower other women to seek support.

Lydia says, "The difference between the two is that physical abuse is something that happens instantly. Mental abuse is something that happens every day, over and over again."

Domestic violence is something people don't always talk about in the Black community. Lydia's situation began improving when she found support through an advocate at Healing Roots, a culturally specific domestic violence program for Blacks. The program helped her to recognize various forms of abuse and gave her the tools to rebuild her self-esteem. "Every day I work the program," she says. "I remember that I'm beautiful. That I'm worthy. My self-worth is important. I remember that I don't have to sacrifice who I am because of someone else's mistakes or someone else's issues."

In addition to being in a room with other Black women and being able to have honest, straightforward discussions, Lydia says having trauma-informed support was crucial to improving her condition. Today, Lydia is thriving in her role as a community education advocate.





CASE STUDY 2

AFRICAN & AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS HEALING OURSELVES & OUR COMMUNITIES

In 2012, history was made by healthcare reform legislation at both the state and national level. Communities of color and public health allies advocated for including culturally proficient, evidence-based practice. As a result, the legislation highlighted the important role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in reducing health disparities and driving down the cost of healthcare.

For centuries, CHWs have worked around the world to identify and solve pressing health issues in their own communities. This model needed to expand in Oregon's Black community, within both clinical and community settings. Culturally specific solutions are now bearing fruit in effectively addressing the higher rates of infant mortality, diabetes, unemployment and incarceration that exist in Black communities, some of which are even higher in the Black LGBTQ community.

In 2012, the Urban League of Portland, the Community Capacitation Center of the Multnomah County Health Department (CCC) and North by Northeast Community Health Center came together and began to adapt the CCC's empowerment-based curriculum for CHWs in Black communities. The partners envisioned that the CHWs who graduated from this training would establish a health equity movement deeply rooted in Black culture and experience.

CHW education uses a culturally-centered curriculum built on the World Health Organization's broad definition of health as "a state of complete mental, physical and social well-being and not just the absence of disease or infirmity." For that reason, CHWs use approaches that focus on the "social determinants of health" for whole communities, such as employment, environment, poverty and racism.

Contribution by: Arika M. Bridgeman, Sonya Brookins, Angela Green and Noelle Wiggins

Since the launch of the We Are Health Movement (WAHM), more than 50 WAHM CHWs have been trained. Many have become involved in policy work affecting CHWs and their communities, as well as launching many projects in the field of public health. As these CHWs join cohorts from other cultural groups, they are working together to create solutions rooted in multi-cultural power.



Choreographer and visual artist, Bobby Foucher, leads elders in movement at PreSERVE Coalition's Aging & Memory Conference at Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland.

HOUSING AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF PARENTAL INCARCERATION



Parental incarceration heightens risk factors for an already vulnerable population.

89% of mothers and **67%** of fathers who lived with their children just prior to their arrest/incarceration reported providing financial support for their family.⁵ The loss of this support can impact stability. Even when the absence of the parent improves the child's overall situation, it is still a major disruption that can be difficult for children.

Parental incarceration widens the gaps between White and Black children's housing and education outcomes⁶:

46%
Increase in racial gap for behavioral problems

24%
Increase in aggressive behavior

65%
Increase in racial gap in homelessness

x2
Doubles the risk of homelessness for Black children⁷





DISPLACEMENT, POVERTY AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS ALL AFFECT EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Gentrification negatively impacts Black families' access to schools and quality public education. Parallel to their neighborhoods, historically Black schools experience a similar cycle of disinvestment (funding and resources), school closures and redirected investments when new residents move in.



In Oregon, children from low-income families on SNAP who live in a metropolitan county moved at least once and moved across a school boundary.⁸

HIGH MOBILITY RATES

LOWER ACHIEVEMENT SCORES



Additionally, research shows that high mobility and poverty result in learning disability, behavioral or developmental issues and lower achievement scores.

When schools close, academic gains, standardized test scores, graduation rates and parent engagement all decrease for displaced families.⁹



POLICY ACTIONS

The best way to strengthen the health of Black women, children and families is to start early. We must boost prenatal health care for families and provide support through the crucial first 1,000 days—preconception up to age 2. We must also implement policies that prioritize reproductive planning and choice, economic security, stable housing and healthy surroundings.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

1

Implement a prenatal and first 1,000 days agenda that includes:

- Setting a food and nutrition goal for women of reproductive age and children in Black communities
- Investing in reducing health disparities, especially those related to low birth weight, infant mortality, obesity and mental health

2

Create housing stability for Black Oregon by ensuring:

- Stable and sufficient income
- Affordability of rent/mortgage, utilities, property taxes and healthcare
- Ability to maintain a home's condition
- Feeling of safety
- Satisfaction with children's education
- Connection with neighbors

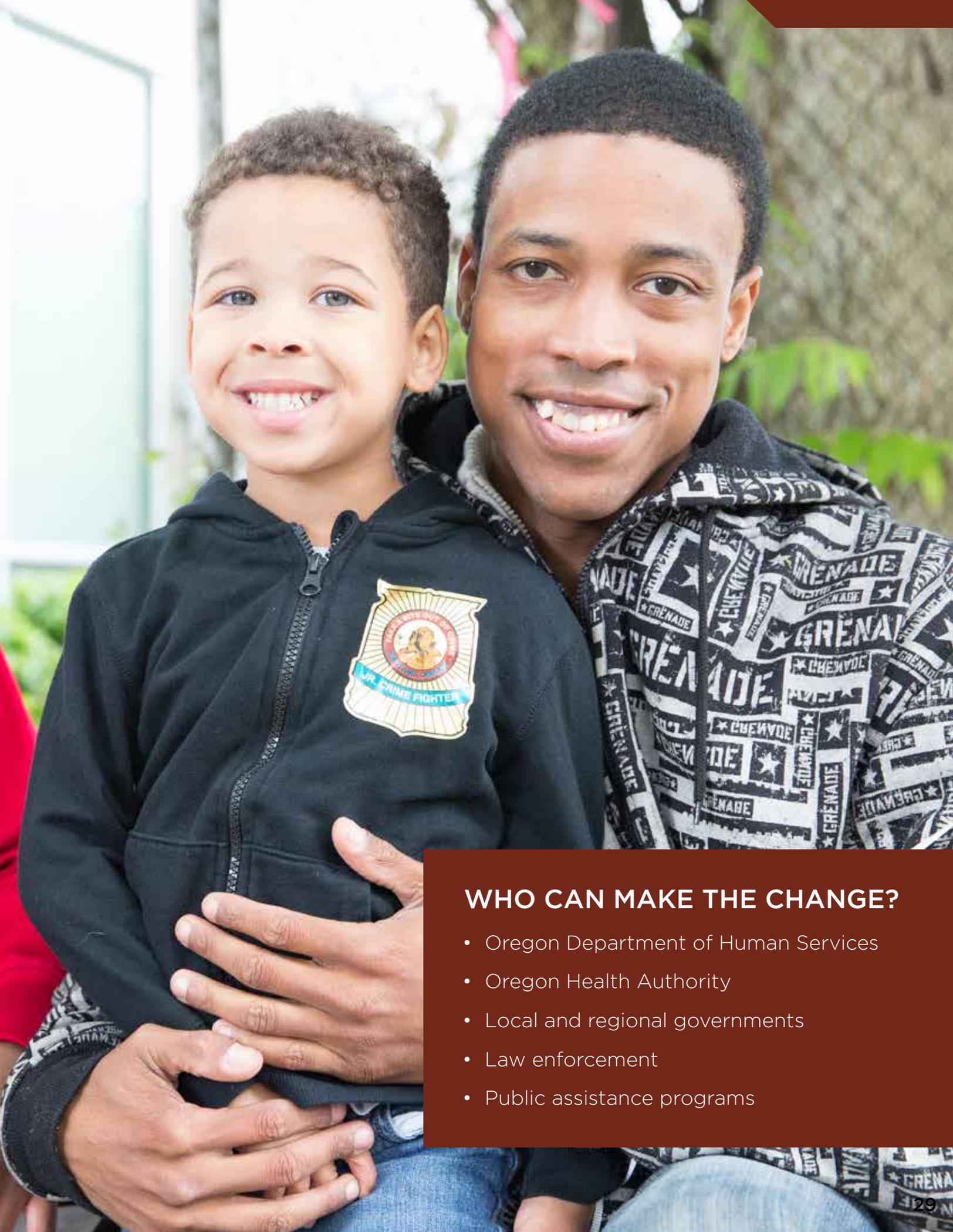
3

Take advantage of public and private economic development and community involvement plans to reduce poverty in Oregon's Black community.

4

Encourage the Oregon Department of Human Services, local health departments and law enforcement agencies to partner together to support the physical/mental health of Black youth.

- Integrate trauma-informed practice into service delivery
- Retrain all police officers in trauma-informed approaches
- Invest in strategies that reflect best practices for violence reduction and wrap-around services for Black youth



WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Oregon Health Authority
- Local and regional governments
- Law enforcement
- Public assistance programs

CHAPTER 2

PROTECT & EDUCATE

For Black youth to succeed in school, they need the basics of good physical and mental health, a strong cultural identity, sufficient hours spent learning and positive teacher perception and expectation.

The most persistent barriers for Oregon's Black youth remain: unfair discipline practices; too few teachers of color; feeling isolated; and a lack of mentorship opportunities and culturally specific programming. Solutions to the educational achievement gap need to begin by targeting funding for these.

Disproportionate Discipline Rates

(2012-2013)

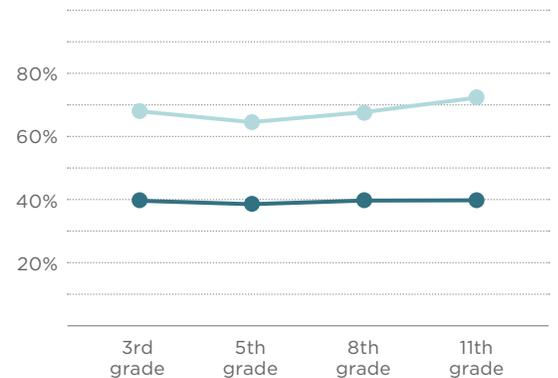
Black Expelled Suspended
White Expelled Suspended



Math State Benchmarks

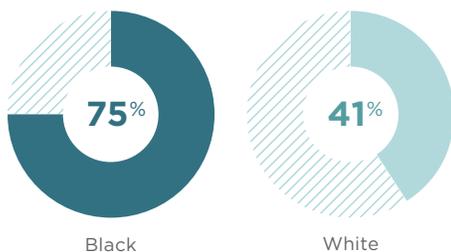
(2012-2013)

Black
White



Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch

(2013-2014)

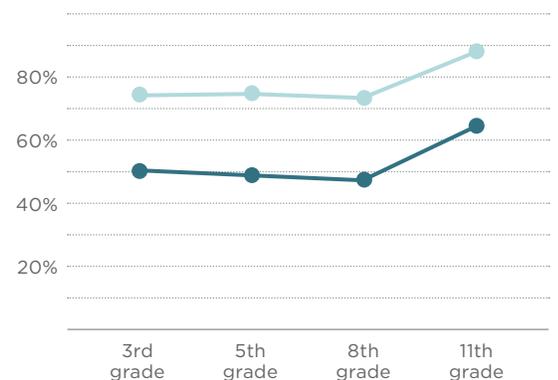


Eliminating poverty before a student enters school is one of the best ways to improve graduation rates.

Reading State Benchmarks

(2012-2013)

Black
White





ACTION VISION

Every child should be able to attain an education and fulfill their dreams. We must focus on strategies to lift Black youth out of poverty, end school exclusion and foster respect for cultural identity.



ESSAY 3

THE POWER OF IMAGE

Kali Thorne Ladd

Executive Director, KairosPDX

At the age of 4, Jesse was suspended and eventually kicked out of his pre-school classroom. At the age of 5, he doesn't know whether he's ready for kindergarten or not. Neither do his parents; they just know that he's "bad."

And so begins the familiar narrative, one that says Black boys are more likely to get suspended or expelled from school for subjective offenses, such as insubordination, disobedience, disruption. The same narrative shows their kindergarten suspension rates as high as 10 percent. For Black boys, this narrative includes the reality that less than 1 percent of teachers in Oregon look like them and only 40 percent of students who look like them are meeting benchmarks in math at third grade.

TIME FOR A NEW NARRATIVE

There's no such thing as a "bad" child. As you read this, digest it; let it sink in. Children are inherently brilliant, capable and creative beings. Harvard research tells us that 700-1,000 neural connections are made per second in the first year of a child's life.¹ The brain grows at a rapid clip. A newborn's brain is about 25 percent of its approximate adult weight. Our job, as adults, is to retain the image of our children as thinkers, change-makers and entrepreneurs. The discouraging statistics on school performance are the result of a failing system, not a failing child.

Education leader Loris Malaguzzi tells us: "There are hundreds of different images of the child.

Each one of you has inside yourself an image of the child that directs you as you begin to relate to a child. This theory within you pushes you to behave in certain ways; it orients you as you talk to the child, listen to the child, observe the child. It is very difficult for you to act contrary to this internal image."

IT'S TIME TO EMBRACE A NEW IMAGE THAT INCLUDES:

- Understanding that statistics don't define the child.
- Recognizing the cultural richness that children bring with them to school, seeing that richness as an asset and reflecting that richness back to them in meaningful ways.
- Seeing that we exist in a dominant narrative that is not the only narrative possible.
- Realizing that the constant reference to Black children as "poor minorities" is detrimental to the child's image.
- Changing language from children who are "at risk" to communities that are "at risk" of losing their greatest hope for the future.

Image change includes recognizing that the achievement gap is in fact a symptom of structural and systemic barriers that need to be fixed, not children who need to be fixed. This can't be done by maintaining the status quo. It takes radical change in how schools and classrooms are envisioned and organized.



Early childhood education and a rigorous, engaging K-5 academic experience are ways to open up the world of opportunity for all children, especially those who are historically underserved. Having healthy educational experiences earlier in life, not just later, increases an individual's ability to build and sustain quality of life. It helps a person grow as an individual and contribute to the community.

KairosPDX was founded in the context of this reality, with a mission to improve outcomes

and eradicate achievement gaps for children of color PreK-5. However, it's not the only group with such goals. From Albina Headstart to Self-Enhancement Inc. to the Rosemary Anderson School, these organizations, founded and led by Blacks, have worked hard for decades to change the narrative for Black children and other historically underserved communities. Collectively, they call on policymakers, business, education and civic leaders to partner and invest with them to continue building a new image for Black Oregon children.



ESSAY 4

REBUILDING STRONG SUPPORTS FOR OUR YOUTH

Dalton Miller-Jones, PhD, Professor Emeritus
Developmental Psychology, Portland State University

The disturbing portrait painted by this report has not changed significantly from the Urban League's State of Black Oregon 2009 report.² What conditions and dynamics lead to these persistent patterns of inequities between Blacks and other Oregonians? For us, the historical roots of the present situation continue to influence what we experience today.

For Blacks, the more than 300 years (or over 10 generations), of brutal slavery and the subsequent terrorism of "Jim Crow" segregation and discrimination have been represented in daily culture. The Tuskegee Institute documented the lynching of 3,446 Blacks between 1882 and 1968.³

Black communities continue to experience overt aggression and threats of violence every day, including from law enforcement. "Young Black males in recent years were at a far greater risk of being shot dead by police than their White counterparts—21 times greater, according to a ProPublica analysis of federally collected data on fatal police shootings" (drawn from reports filed from 2010 to 2012).⁴

The Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown incidents have been widely publicized. In another outrageous incident in New Iberia, Louisiana, Victor White III, a Black man, was shot to death while in a police cruiser. The coroner claimed,

and the court found, that he shot himself to death while being handcuffed with his hands behind his back.

Similar incidents involving deadly use of force have happened here in Portland, most notably Kendra James and Aaron Campbell. This continued criminalization of being Black and the militarization of law enforcement are deeply felt in the Black community.

MICROAGGRESSIONS

Black youth experience daily assaults on their integrity by people in positions of authority, such as teachers and police. These microaggressions become internalized consciously and unconsciously. Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary's book "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome" equates these stresses with those experienced by former combat soldiers. Black males can respond to these assaults with fear and antagonism toward the police and school. When Black male students are constantly accused of misbehavior, their personal integrity is offended. Although some research suggests that Black students are not actually more disruptive in class than White students, they are suspended and expelled at rates double that for Whites.⁵

It doesn't start out this way. Most young Black 3- and 4-year-olds arrive at school eager to please their teachers and may aspire to be police or firemen. But after many encounters where they



are criticized, corrected and accused of bad behavior, and are the first to be suspected of transgressions, this takes its toll on the Black psyche.⁶ To restore their sense of Black male personhood, they seek out peer-based support systems: either positive, like sport teams; or potentially negative ones, like gangs.

POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

Many constructive efforts are under way to counter Black youth alienation:

- Programs like Our Gang Impacted Families Team (GIFT) and Street Level Gang Outreach Program provide intense case management for families of gang members.
- Programs like Self Enhancement Inc. and R.E.A.P provide alternative pathways to more constructive Black, Latino and Asian identity.
- Community Health Workers, who come from the community, have direct experience with the conditions affecting our youth.

But much more is needed.

REBUILDING STRONG, STABLE COMMUNITIES

Black communities have traditionally provided secure havens and positive social and cultural influences. But our neighborhoods are being destabilized by the linked dynamics of urban renewal, gentrification and Black middle-class out-migration.

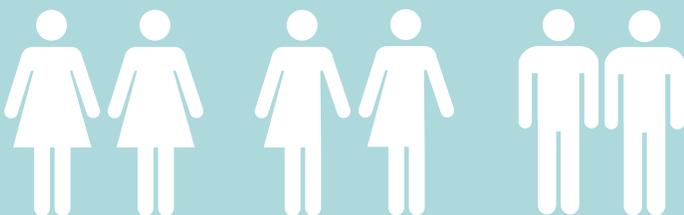
Our neighborhoods are critically important buffers to the microassaults, microinsults and microinvalidations we receive from White American society. Former Oregon State Senator Avel Gordly, in her personal memoir, recalls the protective support of neighborhood women, church members, Black business owners, and guidance from elders and family members.⁷

As a young male, my behavior was monitored and corrected by adults whose cultural obligation was to see that my behavior matched standards set by our parents and what might be called the Black Collective. My dentist, doctor, lawyer, teachers, realtor, etc. were all Black.

As urban renewal brought on Black Removal, our communities experienced an increase in gangs, crime, drugs and incarceration. How can we improve neighborhood cohesion? One solution would be to meet the needs for low-income housing to ensure that Black homeowners can remain in their neighborhoods. Another one is to support existing and emerging Black-owned business. In Oregon, only 1.2 percent of businesses are Black-owned firms.⁸

In addition, R.E.A.P., Albina Headstart and Self-Enhancement Inc. are excellent examples of Afrocentric programs that support a sense of Black identity. Programs like these promote the goal of Black community revitalization.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER AND QUEER EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL



“Whether they’re too visible or invisible, LGBT youth too often find themselves swept down a pipeline that typically begins with conflict in the home, continues at school with bullying, leads to suspension and expulsion and eventually the juvenile justice system.”⁹

REROUTING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE TOWARD SUCCESS

For many Black students in Oregon, tough disciplinary actions like suspension or expulsion lead to poor academic outcomes:

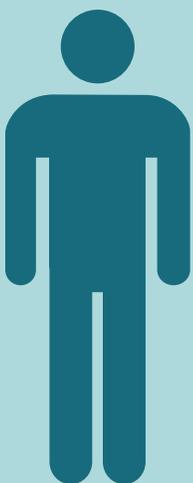


Suspended or expelled students repeated their grade at least once.



Those disciplined 11 times or more had a 40 percent graduation rate.

These tough disciplinary policies can then lead to juvenile justice involvement:



Black youth

are only **3%** of the youth population in Oregon, but they comprise more than **11%** of those held in close custody in Oregon facilities. White peers represent **71%** of the youth population compared with **53%** of those in close custody.¹⁰

“Policies to Eliminate Racial Disparities in Education: A Literature Review,” released by PSU’s Center to Advance Racial Equity, is a robust compilation of research examining a set of system changes that will keep students of color engaged in the classroom.¹¹

Recent strides have been made to advance this work. Portland’s Parkrose and Centennial School districts have set target goals to reduce school exclusionary practices, using culturally specific strategies and interventions.

WHAT WE CAN DO:

- **Uphold state mandate:** Oregon’s legislature repealed “zero tolerance” policies in 2013, a first step toward eliminating poor and unfair discipline practices in schools. The goal was to increase education outcomes for all students, especially students of color. The Oregon Department of Education is responsible to uphold this mandate and ensure that school districts are taking concrete steps toward compliance.
- **School districts and boards of directors** must provide public leadership, funding and resources that directly meet the needs of students of color. Policy change can shift school culture by naming negative teacher perceptions, and unconscious or conscious bias, as the instigator of school exclusion.¹² Mandating racial equity strategies will best support teachers, school administrators, parents and students. This includes improving the hiring and retention of teachers of color.
- **Superintendents are responsible for** creating and overseeing multi-level change strategies that specifically outline effective pedagogy and training. Culturally Responsible Positive Behavioral Supports (CRPBIS) and Restorative Justice are two approaches proven to keep students in the classroom and improve achievement outcomes.



TACKLING INEQUITY HEAD-ON

Keva M. Miller, PhD, LCSW, Associate Dean and Associate Professor
Portland State University School of Social Work

Across the country, it's acknowledged that racial disparity exists within America's institutions. We see this especially in the number of Black children in the child welfare system and the sea of Black individuals in the correctional systems. For example, in Oregon, Black people make up nearly 10 percent of the prison population despite being only 2 percent of the overall population. Black children are removed from their families by child welfare agencies at seven times the rate of White children.¹³ Yet, according to many, Oregon is a "progressive" state. Or are we truly progressive when it comes to race?

In larger urban areas, people speak with pride about the community's progressive stance on social issues, including racial equity. In rural communities, we are quick to point out that few, if any, people of color reside in smaller communities and are clearly not visible within these communities' systems. Some call this value "color blindness." I call it theoretical progressiveness; it is easy to believe in theory that we are open to all individuals, yet we rarely engage with or expose ourselves to people with different identities. As a result, there is no sense of urgency to address racial disparity faced by people of color across the state. Depending on the political climate, the commitment to change waxes and wanes.

Oregon's Black community can no longer afford such a state of denial or apathy. A truly progressive Oregon must embrace the fact that communities of color, including Black

Oregonians, are growing in number and increasingly essential to our state's success. Current practices that disproportionately marginalize and institutionalize Black families are unsustainable; costly for the taxpayers, and a stress on human resources. Racial inequity must be addressed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Critical steps that can be implemented within systems to address racial disproportionality and disparity:

- Implementing accurate data systems
- Partnering with leadership in stakeholder communities to change policies and practices, not just engagement
- Shifting work environments to support a culturally competent workforce by creating checks and balances to eliminate personal and structural bias in organizational values and culture
- Re-examining policies and practices that contribute to disproportionality and redesigning them
- Understanding that families need multiple supports. Cross-systems collaboration to help break down silos and foster interagency communication, coordination and shared accountability
- Bringing family and community resources into the process, as cultural experts in court proceedings, caseworker training and advisory meetings



*“We have a powerful potential in our youth,
and we must have the courage to change old
ideas and practices so that we may direct
their power toward good ends.”*

— Mary McLeod Bethune

FIGHTING FOR HER CHILDREN'S EDUCATION & REDEFINING RESPECT

Donelda Weiss spends 35 percent of her time navigating the school system. She's been doing it so much, she puts everything in writing, literally.

It's a Thursday; and she's already been to her children's schools four times, all to ask why her kids keep getting suspended from the school bus and sent out of class. They're not the ones fighting and throwing stuff, she says. Instead, they're getting suspended from the bus for months at a time for such infractions as "talking too loud"—hardly an anomaly for elementary and middle school students.

They're not alone. Donelda says Black students in her school district are being disproportionately and unfairly disciplined compared with their White counterparts. Furthermore, many parents either don't know or feel too discouraged by the school system to take action.

Donelda says tapes of the district's school buses show similar behaviors between White and Black children. But White kids rarely get kicked off the bus. The students paying to use the city bus and walking to school are primarily low-income and children of color.

"More than any other kid, these kids need school not only for education but for food, for mentoring, for inspiring and empowering.

By the school taking the buses away from them and then walking back and forth from school—they're only going to walk so many times."

When Donelda gets a call from the school, it's most often about her children being "disrespectful." That word in particular is used to degrade children of color and parents alike, says Donelda, referencing an incident where a teacher claimed she "demanded" an incident report.

"It's all in the writing. When they write these reports, they write them so the report looks negative." Donelda has also learned that documenting everything is a must. This attention to detail helped her when she decided that the stress of riding the school bus was no longer a good option for her boys. With the help of an Urban League advocate, she successfully negotiated with the school district to pay for public transportation to school for her children, citing a series of incidents she thought were unfair and biased.

"This was definitely a win and I felt good about it. The school wants me to problem solve and to figure out issues, which I'm more than happy to and I do. But I also think the school needs to solve their issues as well, instead of me having to do it. They're educators. They're teachers. They're trained. They need to know how to communicate with the kids."





CASE STUDY 4

TRAILBLAZING A PATHWAY TO DIVERSITY & EDUCATION

As a child growing up in Houston, Donald Easton-Brooks strove to change his community. He was surrounded by crime and violence, but his mother showed him a different path. Donald says, “To be a Black woman in the ’60s in Texas and get a college degree was pretty huge.”

Donald is now the dean of Eastern Oregon University’s College of Business and Education. He used a football scholarship to get a doctorate and become a professor. Over the course of his career, he’s worked in places like Connecticut, Rhode Island, Seattle, Minnesota and his native Texas.

This is his first year in Oregon. In Houston, almost all of his teachers were Black. According to the 2014 Oregon Minority Teacher Act Status Report, a third of Oregon students are ethnic minorities, while 91.7 percent of the teachers are White.

Donald notes that many minority teachers go into the field specifically to change their communities. However, they’re leaving the profession at higher rates than Whites. “We have Blacks or other minorities going into education for one reason and Whites going into it for a different one. So when they come together and try to educate a group of people, they’re not on the same page. If there are five against one, it’s

easy to feel beaten down so much you feel like you can’t do this. You just move on.”

However, Donald says that Oregon provides more opportunities for Blacks to gain wealth than many other states, so education is even more important here. He’s exploring ways to increase the numbers of Black teachers in Oregon. While recognizing that the Black population is relatively small, he says that it’s a matter of continuing to be a significant part of the political, educational and economic landscape.

Recently, he instituted a diversity scorecard to track how well school systems recruit and retain minority teachers. The data will be public knowledge. He hopes it will encourage schools that have institutionally shut out minority teachers to change their ways.

Teaching also has to compete with other industries that are looking to diversify their workforce. Part of Donald’s effort to address this is the Oregon Teacher Pathway program. It reaches out to students, starting in 11th grade, with opportunities to get college credits and interact with the profession.

“Here in Oregon, we have to make education more attractive. We have to help people understand the value of the teaching profession—what that means and what that’s all about.”



AFRICAN AMERICAN RITES OF PASSAGE PROGRAM BUILDS PRIDE IN LANE COUNTY

It's no secret that the Eugene/Springfield area has a sparse Black population. That hasn't stopped Greg Evans from running a successful rites of passage program. "Being in the minority does not mean you're weak," he says. "We have power that we don't necessarily use because we've been conditioned to be seen as someone who is always in need of help. I want these students to be conditioned to have

the power not to be susceptible and subservient to other people."

Greg, a Eugene city councilor and the director of African American Student Programs at Lane Community College, started the African American Rites of Passage Summer Academy (AAROP) in 1996. The three-week program is held at Lane and serves seventh- through 12th-





graders, mostly from Lane County. AAROP's presence in the local school districts lets it both recruit students during the school year and advocate for them.

Originally from Cleveland, Evans modeled AAROP on the Upward Bound and now-defunct Talented Tenth programs. A typical day in the program consists of tai chi, history class, literature and music lessons and female and male empowerment sessions. At the end of the three weeks, the students hold a community performance called Capstone.

Greg says that one of the program's goals is to build social structure. He notes that for many of the students, AAROP is the first time they've had a Black instructor and been in a class where they were the majority.

Even though many of the students don't know each other going into AAROP, they tend to build relationships within the first few days. Ashley Cleary, who participated in the program for seven years and now serves as a peer mentor,

says that she was reluctant initially. "I was shy the first day. By the third day, you have all your friends here. You're not going to want to go back to sleeping in until noon and chilling on the couch, watching TV, when you can be hanging out with friends and learning new stuff."

One reason these students embrace education is that they have freedom within the structure of the program. This is most evident with Capstone. They get to choose their project based on what they've learned. In the past, they've incorporated poetry, dance, theater and other forms of expression. Last year, they produced a film. Jordan Krush, an instructor whose twins are in the program, says that her son was shy, but by the end of the session, he was not just on screen, but also writing and producing.

The success of AAROP all comes back to Greg's personality. "The message sounds like, 'You can't do this.' Your response is, 'I will and I can.' This is how you create the next Oprah Winfrey, the next federal judge, the next top-notch lawyers, doctors, journeyman mechanics and plumbers."



CULTURAL IDENTITY HELPS BI-RACIAL YOUTH NAVIGATE RURAL OREGON

If you only see “progressive” Oregon on

TV, you wouldn’t think there are still schools where Black students hear the n-word every day. Yet this bigotry exists throughout the state and youth are the prime targets. Shauna, 16, barely leaves her house in Knappa unless it’s to go to nearby Astoria. She says, “We just go home to eat, sleep, get up and come here.”

Bi-racial Shauna and her twin brother attend a high school, where there is only one other Black student. They transferred from a rural school district after the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Students were passing them death threats on the bus and they received little help.

At their school, some Whites still use the n-word often but Shauna ignores it. The twins rely on each other to cope with racism and isolation.

Down in southern Oregon, Teresa, who identifies as mixed race, attends a southern Oregon high school. She moved to Oregon from Wisconsin in 2012. Her friends there never used to make jokes about her race. Now she feels isolated.

“I first knew about race when my friends made comments—jokes—about my hair,” she says. “It’s naturally curly. Sometimes I felt kind of bad about myself because my friends—people I care about—were saying that to me. It was hurtful.”

Teresa wishes there were more people of color

at school. She hears the n-word every day and teachers are never around when it happens. Even if they were, Teresa doesn’t believe that would make it stop.

Her friend Julia who is also bi-racial, puts some of the onus on herself. “Part of it is our fault,” Julia says. “We don’t say anything about it. How do we expect teachers to know if we don’t say anything? We brush it off. I kind of block it out.”

In addition to relying on thick skin, Julia deals with bigotry by embracing her culture. In seventh grade, she decided to grow out her natural hair. “There was like a rebirth. Eating healthier, being happier, embracing my true self—it made me become someone else. I’ve just grown out of my shell since I let my hair grow naturally.”

Miles up the road, like Teresa, Shauna yearns for more Black people in her life. With few Black resources, she connects to her culture through the Internet, her two Black peers and an annual Black gathering in McMinnville.

Until recently, she attended a boarding school in Auburn, Washington. There, Blacks were the majority. “I could cope better. I was just more comfortable around them.”

Although she moved back to be closer to her brother, she hopes one day she can regain that feeling of community.

** Names have been changed to protect privacy.*



BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY

The City of Portland was selected as one of 11 cities to be part of a National League of Cities project called the Black Male Achievement Initiative (BMA), which aims to improve outcomes for Black men and boys. BMA is designed to address four specific focus areas: education, employment, family stability and criminal justice.¹⁴

Housed in the Office of Equity and Human Rights, within the mayor's portfolio, BMA relies on hard data. It highlights disparities and holds leaders accountable for ensuring that Black men and boys have sufficient access to the factors that lead to health, safety and success.

A CORE ELEMENT OF THIS WORK IS TO:

1 Encourage mayors to build relationships with youth organizations and youth leaders and to be directly involved in local efforts.

2 Take action through policies and promising programs that build safe, vibrant and caring communities to reduce violent deaths among Black men and boys.

3 Engage young Black males as key partners.



MORE DIVERSE EDUCATORS IMPROVE OUTCOMES

Studies show that Black students who had at least one Black teacher before fifth grade scored higher on reading and math tests. Stressing cultural identity in schools with educators of color improves student engagement and achievement.¹⁵

The percentage of Black teachers is decreasing, while the achievement gap between Black and White students is growing.

The number of diverse, culturally responsive K-12 educators can be increased by helping teacher education programs to

diversify their faculty ranks. At the same time, we must provide authentic, culturally relevant pedagogy to all future teachers. More support is also needed to expand and replicate efforts like the Portland Teachers Program (a partnership among Portland Public Schools, Portland State University, Portland Community College and Beaverton School District), which has been producing teachers of color for over 25 years. These teachers work in their communities and have formed a strong alumni association that contributes to the recruitment and retention of teachers of color.¹⁶



Between **2003** and **2013**, students of color increased

12%

in public schools.

In **2011** and **2012**,

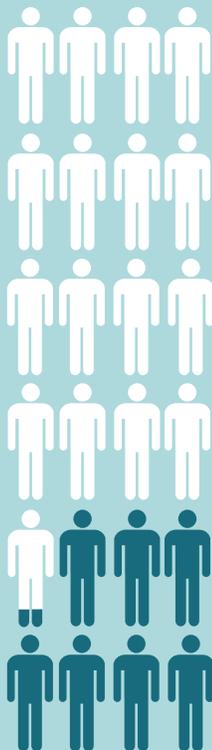
26%

of Oregon's public high school graduates were students of color.

In the **2015-2016** school year,

31%

of Oregon public school graduates will be students of color.



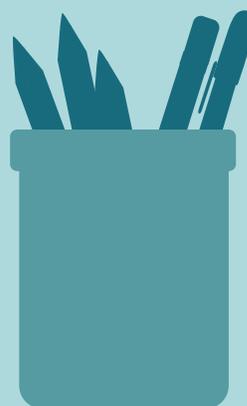
During the **2015-2016** school year,

91.7%

of teachers were White, while Whites made up

64.7%

of the students.



Black teachers made up

0.6%

of all teachers, while Black students made up

2.5%

of all students.



POLICY ACTIONS

Every child should be able to attain an education and fulfill their dreams. We must focus on strategies to lift Black youth out of poverty, end school exclusion and foster respect for cultural identity.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- 1** Factor food, housing and parental employment into school-readiness standards for Black youth.
- 2** Train and develop Black leaders, mentors and teachers and implement Black leadership and mentorship programs for Black students in predominantly non-Black schools and other public institutions, including the foster care system.
- 3** Set strong targets for hiring teachers of color.
- 4** End “zero-tolerance” discipline policies and create a classroom atmosphere where Black students are engaged and encouraged to participate.
- 5** Develop education models that reflect the lives and experiences of Black youth and train educators and other school staff in culturally-responsive practices.
- 6** Update criminal sentencing guidelines for Black youth to emphasize accountability, education, and employment training, not incarceration. End mandatory minimum sentencing.

“Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: the potential for greatness lives within each of us.”

— Wilma Rudolph



WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Legislature
- Oregon Employment Department
- Public assistance programs
- Oregon Department of Education
- School districts and school boards State and district school superintendents
- Law enforcement
- Oregon Youth Authority

CHAPTER 3

PREPARE, SUPPORT & EMPLOY

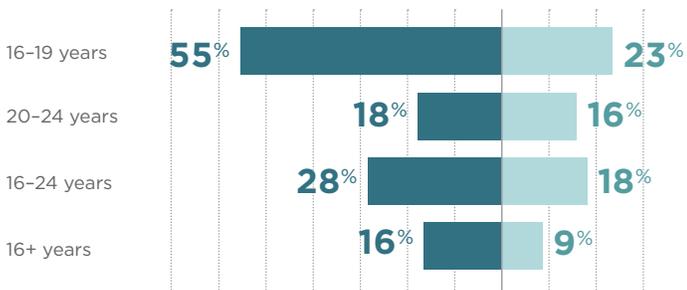
The greatest predictor of Oregon's future prosperity is the status of its youth. Communities of color continue to grow, including Black Oregonians. Our state's economy will increasingly rely on their skills, expertise, innovation and creativity to remain competitive. Black youth need to be prepared for emerging economic opportunities and given the foundations to build wealth within their communities. This preparation will guarantee that the next 10 years look significantly better for Black Oregonians, and therefore our entire state.

Leading strategies for prosperity are job preparation, career pathways and training, work-based learning, financial literacy and higher education opportunities. Preparing the next generation for success will require policymakers to end profiling practices that channel Black youth into the criminal justice system.

Unemployment Rate by Age

(2013)

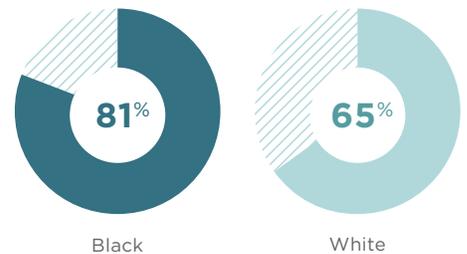
● Black
● White



College Debt

(National)

STUDENTS WHO BORROW MONEY



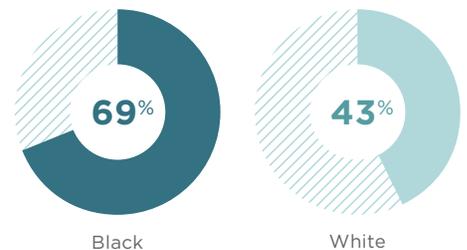
Mandatory Minimum Sentencing

(Measure 11 Indictments)

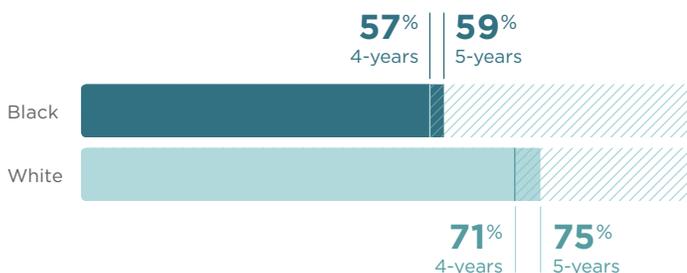
● Black
● White



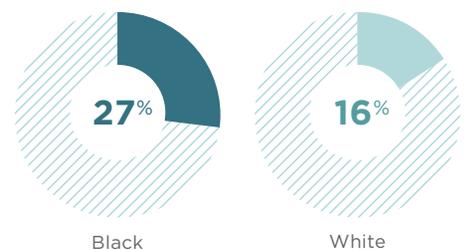
DO NOT FINISH COLLEGE DUE TO DEBT



Graduation Rates



FINISH WITH OVER \$30,500 OR MORE DEBT





ACTION VISION

Gaining skills and expertise for employment is critical to the financial health of youth of color. Investment in these programs is essential to the success of Black families.



ESSAY 6

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES IN SCHOOLS & HIGHER EDUCATION

Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh

Vice President, Equity & Inclusion, University of Oregon

Kwadwo S. Alex Assensoh, Writer

There are too many Black youth in Oregon's prisons and not enough on college and university campuses. The first challenge for Oregon educators is interrupting school-to-prison pipelines so that more Black youth enter colleges and universities. The second challenge is ensuring that they graduate.

WHAT WORKS

- Relevant curricula that prepare students for success in college-level courses, including honors and advanced placement
- Pipeline programs that evaluate youth and support them as they enter college life—such as the Oregon Young Scholars Program (OYSP) and Summer Academy to Inspire Learning (SAIL)
- Family, adult and peer networks that reinforce a college-going culture
- Mentoring programs and other community services that help students and families complete pre-college processes like admissions and financial aid applications.¹

Black youth enrolled in unfamiliar predominantly White colleges and universities need retention resources. These can include:

- Programs that foster social involvement with cultural peers
- First-year programs that orient freshmen to university life
- The opportunity to participate in faculty-led research projects—experiences that underlie academic success

Other strategies include early warning systems that retain students likely to leave college without a degree. The University of Oregon's Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence (CMAE) has such warning systems, triggered through GPA, advising and peer-mentoring reviews. The academic success of Black males depends heavily on their emotional well-being. Female Black students often more easily create their own supportive networks. However, retention strategies for Black men need to focus on creating a similar space for engagement, dialogue and support.

Mentoring programs that provide new social and professional networks make it easier for youth exiting the juvenile justice system to succeed. Programs like the Next Door Project help remove barriers to employment and licensure by helping released prisoners demonstrate evidence of rehabilitation.

The educational status of Black youth cannot be improved without confronting America's historical and contemporary race issues. It's like putting a band-aid on a wound that requires invasive surgery. It's crucial to see education as a social good that benefits everyone. We must also learn to judge each person by the content of their character, not by the color of their skin. This true healing must begin if we are to provide the equitable education that Black children deserve.



CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS: STUDENT DEBT AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Black college degree earners are disproportionately saddled with debt, thereby reducing their ability to build assets over their lifetimes.

27% of Black bachelor's degree recipients had more than **\$30,500** of debt, compared with just 16 percent of White students.²



Households with college debt have

63% less net worth

40% less home equity

52% lower retirement savings than those with no outstanding student debt.³

Properly designed Children's Savings Accounts, a promising poverty reduction tool, can encourage economic and social development of youth—and, over time, their communities. In addition to increasing financial assets, they can also spur a positive outlook on the future, long-term planning and more civic and political engagement in one's community.⁴



PREPARING BLACK YOUTH FOR THE WORKFORCE

Heather Ficht

Director of Youth Workforce Services, Worksystems, Inc.

The best workforce training program is a job. Unfortunately for young people today, it's harder than ever before to find one. Nationally, youth employment has plummeted from 46 percent to 27 percent over the past 10 years. This means that only about one in four youth aged 16-19 has a job. Tragically, for young people of color, the employment rate is even lower. *Only about one in 10 young Black males has a job.*⁵

Youth who work during their high school years experience increased lifetime earnings, and their probability of being employed in subsequent years is greater. Intervening in this disproportionately high unemployment rate of Black youth is critical to reduce disparities in the economic prosperity of Black households. In addition, youth employment positively impacts educational outcomes. Youth who work graduate from high school at higher rates and have higher rates of college entry.⁶

Summer is the ideal time for school-aged youth to work, as it can reduce summer learning loss and bridge classroom learning and real-world experiences. Ideal summer employment programs target youth of color and low-income youth and offer many types of entry-level employment. A good example is Worksystems' SummerWorks program, a public-private partnership that relies on community-based programs, schools and faith communities to reach young people of color. Since the program's inception in 2009, an

average of more than 76 percent of the youth served in SummerWorks identify as youth of color. In addition, the successful completion rate, defined as completing at least 80 percent of their planned hours and a positive supervisor evaluation, is nearly 91 percent.

In the Portland area, county and city governments have stepped up in significant ways, collectively funding hundreds of jobs. The recently released Oregon budget also involved funding for summer employment programs. The private sector needs to play a more significant role in summer employment for youth, especially in industries that lack diversity and/or anticipate significant worker shortages.

Summer interventions are also needed to prepare younger youth for the world of work and help them explore career options. For example, Reaching and Empowering All People (REAP) holds the weeklong Challenge: Academy of Leadership Innovation, targeting Black teens for career exploration.

“There is in this world no such force as the force of a person determined to rise. The human soul cannot be permanently chained.”

— W.E.B. Dubois



GIVING BLACK YOUTH THE TOOLS THEY NEED

Culturally specific programs in Portland and Eugene have been shown to be good methods for reducing Black youth unemployment. They aim to give Black youth the tools they need to enter the workforce with knowledge, confidence and established networks.

Before entering the Urban League of Portland's Youth Employment Summer Program, Sabrina Clark was a motivated and hard-working student. However, she struggled with time management and organization, and she didn't have a career path in mind.

Sabrina says, "The Urban League Youth Program definitely helped me take school more seriously. Before the program, I knew I wanted to go to college, but I didn't have

as much determination. I didn't have much motivation to look for my college options until I got into the program. Then I started to see; I saw my options. I figured out a path that I wanted to take, and I pursued that path."

100% of 2014
Young Adult Employment
Summer Program graduates
gained employment either during the
program or within weeks of completing it.

Sabrina is starting her first year at Portland Community College, where she plans to study child psychology and education. She recently finished her first job—a summer job at the Trailblazers Boys and Girls Club.

MAKING EDUCATION AFFORDABLE SHOULD BE “COMMON SENSE”

As a freshman at the University of Oregon, Tyree Harris often had to choose between buying books and eating. But he worked hard, rose through the ranks of the student newspaper and eventually became its first Black editor-in-chief. Now, a year after graduation, he works in advertising in Los Angeles and his student loan debt is “manageable.” He says, “I’ll be debt-free in 10 years.”

Tyree notes that he’s an extreme outlier. According to Debt.com, referencing data from the Department of Education, the College Board and The Institute for College Access & Success, the average student debt in Oregon is \$25,577⁷ with a 14.3 percent default rate.⁸

Tyree was one of the lucky ones who found a well-paying job. However, he had to give up living close to his family and pursuing his true passion of journalism. These realities inspired him to deliver a TED Talk and release an album titled “Financial Aid: The Trials and Tribulations of the 21st Century College Student.”

Coming from a low-income, single-parent family, Tyree knows how hard it is for those with similar backgrounds to get into the university system. During his senior year at Parkrose High School, he says his school was more focused on achieving a 70 percent graduation rate than actually preparing anyone for college. He says that Parkrose didn’t provide him with necessary

information on applying for financial aid. This set him up to struggle freshman year of college.

As he watched his peers going through similar struggles, it became clear that rising college costs were protecting the status quo, shutting out many low-income and minority students. He worries that higher education will become an exclusive upper-class privilege. “People can say we have a diverse campus, but in reality, most of these people have a relatively similar background. This cheapens everyone’s college experience because we don’t get to interact with people outside of our own experiences. That’s how we grow and become more robust and versatile people—by being challenged to understand other people’s worlds.”

Tyree says that a college degree is still a worthwhile investment, but instead of producing empowered individuals, college creates valuable human resources. If he hadn’t been in debt, he’d have continued with journalism. Despite his journalistic accolades and experience, Oregon offered few options in his field. So he moved away from his family and pursued advertising, which was far more lucrative from the outset.

One day he hopes to write a piece attacking college debt. “It seems so common sense,” he says. “An educated nation is a strong nation, so make education accessible. We spend a lot of money killing people. We should be able to educate them.”



INFORMAL SUPPORTS HELP ELTON CODY WRITE HIS OWN STORY

Elton Cody has spent his life dealing with challenges. Both of his parents died from AIDS complications before his 11th birthday. He missed full years of school as he moved in and out of foster care, group homes and juvenile hall.

Elton often felt alone in his fights. Through all this, he struggled to embrace his identity as a gay Black male, living in environments where he was surrounded by homophobia and/or racism.

Elton is an emerging rap artist who performs under the stage name Elton Cray. He's also built a reputation as an outspoken voice for the LGBTQ community. While his strong will and his sister's support helped him navigate growing up in Los Angeles, informal supports in Portland led him to come out and take his next step in life.

As he was growing up, elders in Elton's community shamed LGBTQ people. To this day, he still struggles with self-condemning voices in his head. After high school, he moved to Portland to attend Warner Pacific College and run track. The mostly White, often homophobic environment left him with few people to talk to about his sexuality. He then transferred to Portland State University (PSU), where he sought out sexuality counselors. Elton says those candid sessions gave him the tools to move forward. "The conversations we had were very informal. They weren't structured. Everything was organic. We used slang.

I don't really like organizations that are too professional. It's too formal. And these types of problems are informal. You can't simulate them. You can't simulate life—life just happens."

After more soul-searching, Elton came out in June 2013. He was surprised to find racism prevalent in Portland's LGBTQ community. Members of a PSU gay student association didn't welcome Elton unless it was to hit on him. A White man even called him the n-word at a gay nightclub. He says, "In the gay community, there's a big divide between Blacks and Whites that nobody chooses to acknowledge."

He maintains a small support circle and for the most part relies on this diverse group of friends. However, he recently joined PFLAG, Portland Black Chaptor, an organization that serves Portland's Black LGBTQ community. "Essentially, I've created my own category. I'm able to blend in with anybody while still being me."

Elton hopes to help others find peace of mind. He especially takes pride in inspiring young people. One White LGBTQ youth even messaged him, saying Elton's music stopped him from committing suicide.

Elton says, "The first words you hear when you're born aren't 'don't' and 'no.' You don't come into this world with restrictions. You come into this world with abundance. You come into this world being free."





“DON’T FORGET ABOUT CENTRAL OREGON, BECAUSE WE’RE HERE”

With a small Black population, Bend doesn’t have a traditional Black community. Black history and cultural events draw mostly White crowds. Residents struggle to identify Black-owned businesses and elders. In place of traditional supports, some educators play the role of mentors—working to foster community and cultural pride among Black students. “There’s no grandma on the porch in the rocking chair,” says Mosley Wotta, a local musician and educator. “That’s Hollywood. That’s not here.”

Many of the town’s Black youth struggle with feelings of isolation and connecting to their identities. When he moved to Bend in 1992, Mosley, who is bi-racial, was one of them. As a teacher, he’s well known for his spoken word and hip-hop workshops. “Music has always played a vital role in our ability to not only convey a message but also remember it. We weren’t writing things down at first. We were hoping next generations would absorb these songs.”

He says that his goal is to get students to wake up to their own voices. “There’s a lot of stories to share about who you are. There’s a perception of you based on what you look like on the surface. But you’re growing up outside of the media’s norm, so you might not match the stereotype. It’s just not who you grew up to become.”

While Mosley has gotten to know many of Bend’s Black teens, Gordon Price (photo on pg. 93)

has focused his efforts on college students. As the Director of Student Life at Central Oregon Community College (COCC), he’s heavily involved in the African American Heritage Club. According to Gordon, they have about a dozen active members, out of COCC’s total of 40 Black students.

The club provides a space to discuss culture and history and to help students deal with racial incidents on campus. Beyond cultural awareness, he hopes to give members more confidence. “That knowledge of your culture helps you become a more confident, self-assured person. If you know where your roots are, you’ve got somewhere to grow from.”

In addition to meetings, the club goes to movies, hosts potlucks and coordinates cultural events on campus. Gordon admits there are times when Latino and Native American students outnumber Blacks in the club’s meetings. But the club is slowly growing in both participation and impact on campus. One member even galvanized the school to eliminate racial bias from its criminal justice curriculum.

Gordon continues to aim for a critical mass—reaching out to students, staff and Blacks in nearby towns. Ultimately, he hopes to make the Black community’s presence felt. “There are lots of Black folks in Oregon,” he says. “We’re scattered, but we’re still here and we need to be acknowledged. Don’t forget about Central Oregon, because we’re here.”

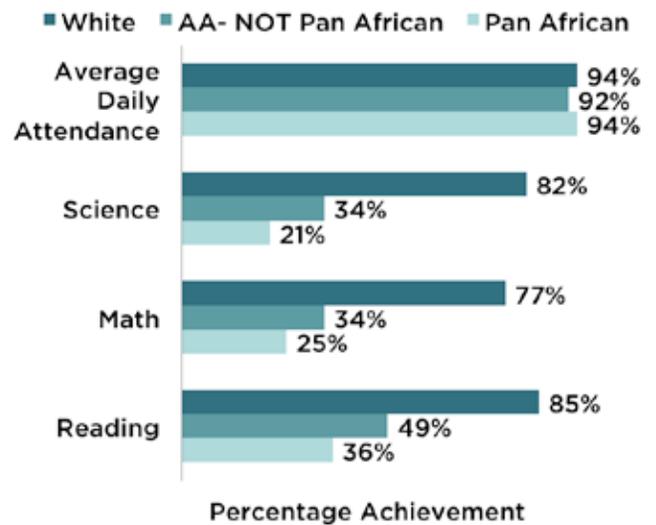


PAN AFRICAN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Portland Public Schools Pan African* students demonstrate roughly the same average daily school attendance as their White counterparts, but experience some of the greatest education disparities in student achievement. Teacher training and preparedness must better equip our educators to address the academic needs of Pan African students, ensuring that time spent in the classroom prepares our youth for graduation, higher education and employment.

*Here, Pan African refers to students who are more likely to be culturally connected to Africa—either born in an African country, or their (or their parent’s) primary language is an African dialect.

Percentage of Portland Students (by race) Meeting or Exceeding State Benchmarks



This table was provided by the Research & Evaluation Department of Portland Public Schools. The data represents students from the 2014-2015 school year, and their most recent OAKS State Assessment test status.





De Marcus Preston, community non-violence advocate, runs Gee's to Gents to serve at-risk youth in Portland. He's with his two sons at Alberta Community Cycling Center's Take Back The Streets event at Columbia Park.

EARLY INTERVENTION REDUCES YOUTH VIOLENCE

Homicide is the #1 cause of death in Black youth aged 10-24. Multiple traumas, interpersonal trauma and chronic stress in the environment can overstimulate the fight/flight/freeze response.

In 2011, 185 men of color aged 10-24 were seen in Legacy Emanuel Hospital's emergency department with a penetrating trauma (shot or stabbed).

Several studies across multiple cities demonstrated the effectiveness of reducing

youth violence by intervening at the hospital level. For example, Healing Hurt People Portland is a community-focused youth violence prevention program that targets young males of color who have suffered a penetrating trauma.

The program makes contact in the emergency department within four hours, in a culturally sensitive, compassionate way. Its wraparound services help the young men and their families for 6-12 months after the incident.⁹



POLICY ACTIONS

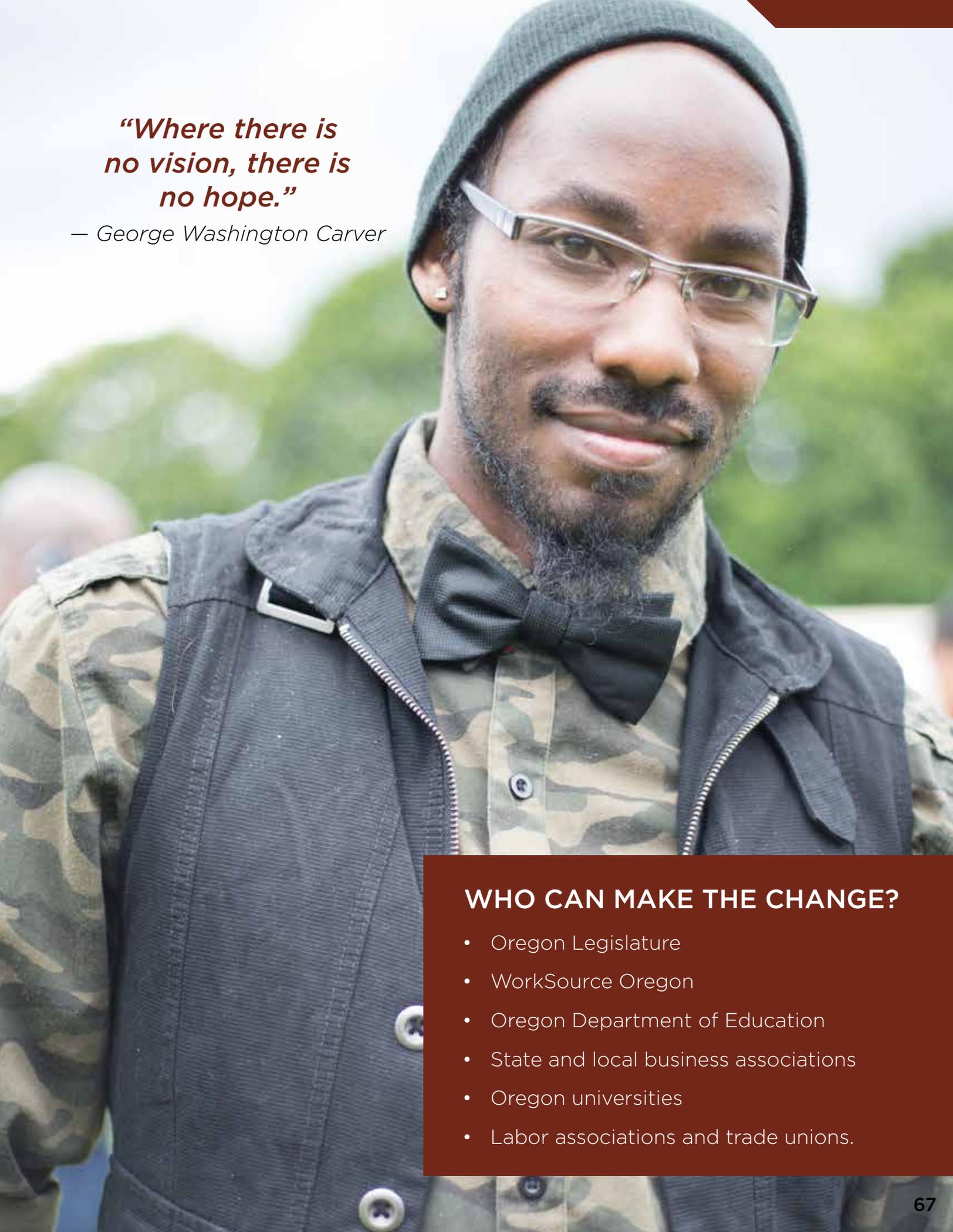
Gaining skills and expertise for employment is critical to the financial health of youth of color. Investment in these programs is essential to the success of Black families.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- 1** Better prepare Black youth for the workforce by:

 - Increasing opportunities for summer and internship programs for Black youth through public/private partnerships
 - Expanding the definition of “success” to include high school completion via the GED (high school equivalency exam) and participation in concurrent GED/community college programs
 - Requiring school districts to offer education to students through age 21 and expanding the “middle college” model
 - Implementing and expanding STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs for Black students
 - Providing direct funding to culturally specific nonprofits for youth development, career readiness, mental health, social supports, mentoring and teacher professional development
 - Making career pathway, advanced training or post-secondary education opportunities accessible for every Black student
- Taking advantage of Oregon’s provision that lets school districts award high school credit for learning opportunities outside the classroom
 - Ensuring pipeline programming for the trades and related fields
- 2** Tie WorkSource Oregon investments to culturally specific post-secondary education and vocational training programs.
- 3** Explore models that include community colleges serving incarcerated youth.
- 4** Lower the cost of higher education by exploring ideas like:

 - Free or subsidized community college
 - Continuation of successful programs that support students, including Portland Community College’s Future Connect Scholarship Program
- 5** Improve financial literacy among Black youth by supporting successful programs like Children’s Savings Accounts that provide the ability to generate savings and wealth.



***“Where there is
no vision, there is
no hope.”***

— George Washington Carver

WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Legislature
- WorkSource Oregon
- Oregon Department of Education
- State and local business associations
- Oregon universities
- Labor associations and trade unions.



ADULTHOOD

CHAPTER 4

SECURITY & WELL-BEING

70

CHAPTER 5

GROWING A WORKFORCE

92

CHAPTER 6

PROSPERITY & OPPORTUNITY

112

CHAPTER 4

SECURITY AND WELL-BEING

Employment and economic opportunity are at the heart of reversing the health crisis of Black Oregonians. Poverty, displacement, policing and criminal justice policies all have a significant impact on the mental and physical health of Black Oregonians. The stress of social isolation, hostile workplace environments and the daily realities of “living while black,” known as “racial microaggressions,” further aggravate health inequities.

Improved access to healthcare is a positive step forward. Prevention and wellness demand an integrated approach, including government, business and social services. As health reform unfolds, culturally specific approaches are needed that take into account all the contributors to poor health outcomes: social and economic, as well as the daily challenges that racism plays in the lives of Black Oregonians.



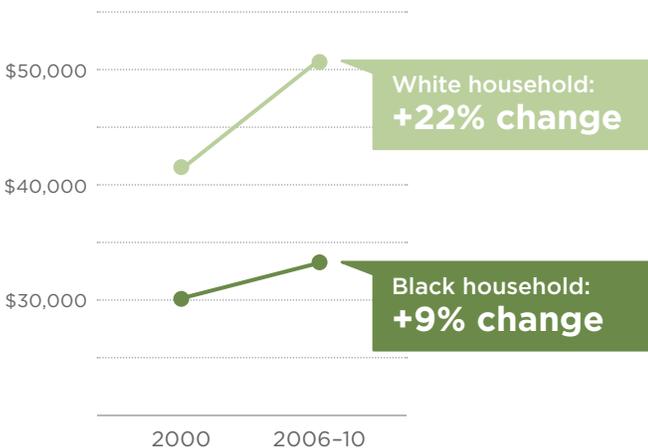
Individuals Below Poverty Level

(2006–2010)



Median Household Income

(2000, 2006–2010)



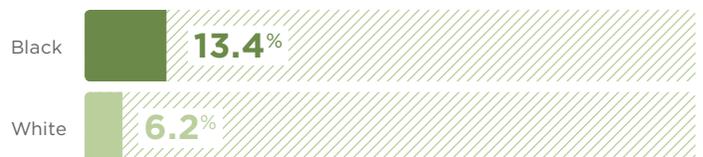
High Blood Pressure

(2012)



Diabetes

(2012)





ACTION VISION

We must strengthen the health of our communities by building a community that makes healthy choices easier for Black families.



ESSAY 8

AN ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOUNDATION TO HEALTH

Rachael Banks,

Director, Healthy Birth Initiatives (HBI)
Healthy Families of Multnomah County

Shavantee, a college-educated mother of five, struggles to “get it right” as a parent. She often feels that she’s swimming upstream against a current of life circumstances outside of her control. These include struggling to make ends meet and policies that make it harder to raise her kids.

Shavantee’s journey has taken her through a challenging childhood, a college degree and motherhood—trying to do all the “right things” society says you should do. When her family members fell ill, she stayed home to care for them. She went to work when she could. When her kin needed help running their businesses, she helped them. Now that her children need her in their most precious years, she’s committed to that.

In order for Shavantee to do what science says is most beneficial and society says is most noble, she suffers as economic pressure and poor housing push in on her and noticeably impact her family’s health.

Shavantee’s pregnancies have shown how economic security, stable housing and a supportive family affect birth outcomes. When these key conditions were met, she delivered healthy babies. She didn’t understand why her

third baby was born too early and too small. She racked her brain trying to figure out what she’d done wrong—why this outcome was different from the others. Then she saw a skit about the social determinants of health, and it all clicked for her.

The poor birth outcome of her third child was not about her individual behavior, but a result of her living conditions. While she was pregnant, she was experiencing discrimination at work, then she lost her job of 11 years—all while she lived in a gentrifying neighborhood and watched her rent rise beyond her reach. Her health outcomes were reflecting her economic reality.

Despite this, Shavantee continues to press on. She’s resilient, strong, smart and dedicated. Public policy has a role in creating systems to support her. Shavantee’s story is one of many that highlight the need for jobs and policies that support healthy, stable, attached families.

Over 100 years ago, Frederick Douglass said, “Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe.”

Today this still rings true and applies directly to the health of Black adults, families and communities in Oregon.

With the Affordable Care Act and Oregon's own healthcare transformation, much focus has been on access to care. It's also imperative to recognize economic instability, racism and environmental conditions as root causes of poor health.¹ True wellness in the Black community will require multi-layered approaches that involve many sectors.

HEALTHCARE IS NECESSARY, BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

In Oregon, Blacks experience disparities for each of the social and economic health indicators. In order to eradicate health inequities, economic inequities must be eliminated as well as the toxic stress that results from poverty and racism.² "High poverty rates and the disparities that accompany them impact the stability and well-being of the entire community."³

Healthcare is a human right and access to care is a social justice issue. Physical, social and economic environments, collectively referred to as the "social determinants of health," have a far greater impact on how long and how well people live than healthcare access does.⁴ No amount of healthcare service wrapped around an individual will be effective without changing the structural and environmental barriers faced by Black people. However, policy-level approaches will. Studies have shown that when

there have been supportive social policies, the health of Black people has improved.

EQUITY-FOCUSED STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH FOR BLACK OREGONIANS

- Effective public health approaches ensure that individuals receive responsive services; support healthy behaviors; remove shared barriers; and create new economic opportunities for Blacks. Decision-makers are informed about the health equity consequences of various policy options—at best, early in the policy development process; and at least, before their implementation.
- Anti-poverty strategies assist working families through family-friendly leave policies, quality affordable childcare, earning supplements and work-supports; implement policies that reduce incarceration; introduce policies and programs that can increase jobs and business ownership for Black people.⁵
- Using a racial and ethnic equity lens allows the opportunity to understand the effect of a policy or practice on people of color and help to achieve equity goals.⁶

Like Shavantee's journey, history shows that Black Oregonians have achieved major successes when system-level barriers have been reduced. We have all the brilliance, passion and dedication needed to make our communities thrive.

RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS ALSO AFFECT HEALTH OUTCOMES

On a daily basis, people of color experience racial microaggressions⁷ that, intentional or not, relay unwelcoming messages and create a hostile living environment. This repeated experience, whether it's in the

workplace, on the streets or in school, increases their stress (the hormone cortisol) levels and over time can wear down their overall health and well-being.



ESSAY 9

HOLISTIC SOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION

john a. powell

Director, Haas Institute for a Fair & Inclusive Society
Professor of Law, African American & Ethnic Studies
University of California at Berkeley

Black Oregonians face challenges that are both unique and universal. Although Oregon has fewer Black people per capita than other states, it's the same nationwide pattern of uneven access to opportunity.

Housing segregation in the '40s, '50s and '60s limited Black Oregonians to certain neighborhoods. Gentrification has dispersed Black communities, but they remain segregated and isolated from mainstream opportunities. I co-developed an Opportunity Scoring and Mapping methodology that tracks geographic areas in terms of education, economic opportunity and quality housing. This mapping shows that Black exclusion from neighborhoods of high opportunity is greater in Oregon than the national average.

Is more integration a solution? While integration may provide greater access to "high-opportunity" neighborhoods, it renders Black Oregonians more susceptible to other structural disadvantages, not least of which is reduced electoral strength. So I believe that three principles must inform any successful intervention.

First, interventions must take into account the particular experience, conditions and needs of Black Oregonians relative to other populations. Universal approaches that treat all groups the same will fail to achieve their intended aims. "Targeted universalism" is a policymaking approach that pursues universal goals—for instance, a 100 percent graduation rate—and also recognizes the need for particular interventions based on the specific social and structural conditions of Black youth to achieve those goals.

The second principle is that any successful intervention must link together individual and community well-being. Affordable housing plans won't succeed if they don't connect residents with job opportunities and educational resources. Similarly, the gentrification that arises from transit and infrastructure development may displace people who can't afford the new housing prices. We need holistic solutions.

Third, Black people must be included in the decision-making process. This can take extra effort in Oregon, with its lower than national representation of Blacks. But we must remember that how the decision is made is as important as the decision itself.



Joy Alise is a founding partner of Portland based Design+Culture Lab and recipient of the PDX Startup Challenge.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL EQUITY STRATEGIES

In 2012, the Partnership for Racial Equity, convened by the Urban League of Portland, released a Racial Equity Strategy Guide for city and bureau leadership. Its aim was to build capacity within the city to achieve equity on an operational basis. By focusing on race, the guide sets out a strategy that would both address Portland's deepest racial inequities and advance whole communities. It's three main goals can be applied to public, private and agency settings.

1. Establish strong leadership, training and technical assistance for citywide racial equity initiatives.

Racial equity starts with a commitment by leaders at all levels to eradicate inequities in public service and improve outcomes for all Portlanders. This is shown through public support, staff training and technical assistance resources.

2. Develop a bureau/department-specific racial equity strategy with measurable targets.

Racial equity belongs at all levels of government. Every bureau serves a unique role in the city's operations and service delivery, and has an opportunity to improve racial equity. Taking the time to develop a strategy will help to set measurable goals for operations and outcomes.

3. Implement strategy, develop tools and track progress.

Through implementation, bureaus/ departments can develop equity tools to intentionally shift how they do their business in a way that has a positive social impact on all Portlanders.



BLACK IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES, COMMUNITY SURVEY

In 2014, the Urban League of Portland conducted a small community survey of 134 Black immigrant and refugee Oregonians in an effort to go beyond the limited data that are available. The survey was limited in scope and illuminated many of the challenges of high-quality data collection. The following is a short snapshot of the survey findings in addition to recommendations for overcoming challenges to survey and data collection within these communities (see Appendix E for more information).

DEMOGRAPHIC & ECONOMIC STATUS



The average number in a household



Reported being **financially strong**.
A majority of respondents were not able to meet basic needs.

Religious Background

44%

Muslim

31%

Christian

Place of Origin

77%

Africa

16%

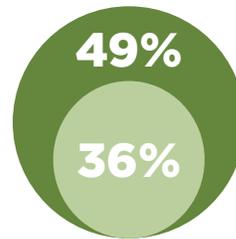
Caribbean



41%

Relocated from refugee camps

EMPLOYMENT



Currently **Employed**

Currently **Unemployed**

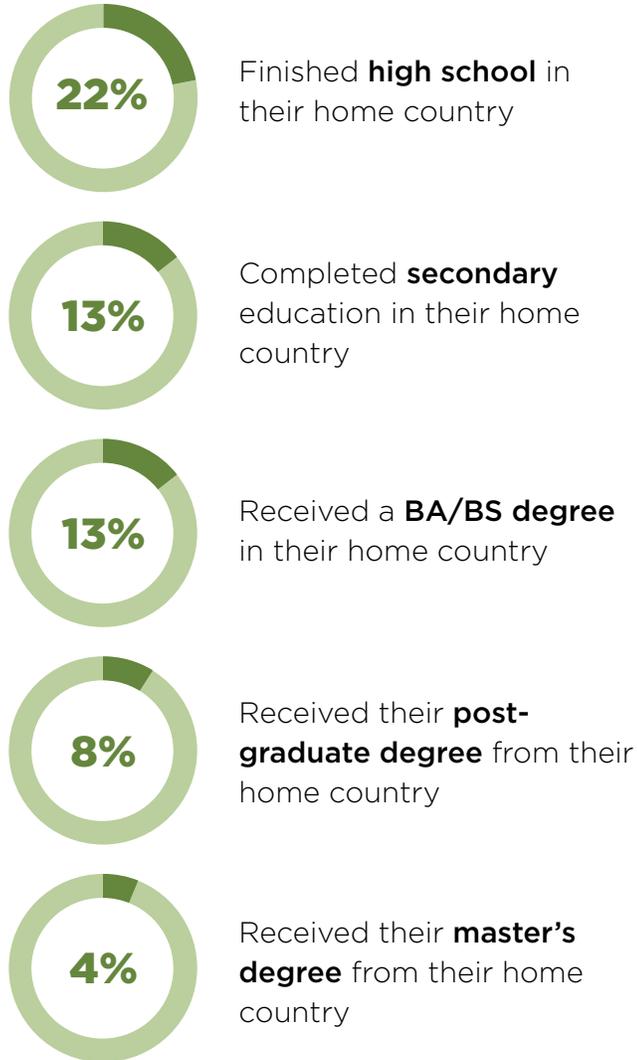


12% Managerial

20% Mid-Level

47% Low-Wage/
Entry-Level

EDUCATION LEVEL



COMMUNITY & HEALTH



The majority of participants had a **strong religious community** around them

36% Go to **direct services** organizations for healthcare or services

33% Go to their respective **community leaders** for healthcare or services

13% Seek advice about healthcare from **other immigrants**



BETTER SURVEY & DATA COLLECTION

This survey had certain limitations due to a lack of sufficient resources and time. First, it was available only in English with the intention of working with community translators—which proved more challenging than anticipated due to lack of funding and community translators. Consequently, the results are biased toward immigrants able to read and write in English.

Future surveys/data collection should be translated into one or more languages spoken by African immigrants. Additionally, translators and/or community members should be recruited to support collection of data from non-English-speakers as well as those with limited reading abilities.

Due to limited access to computers and other technology, it is critical that adequate funding be allocated for survey/data collection. The survey was statewide, but due to our limited abilities to travel, a majority of responses came from the Portland metro region. In order to capture a statewide snapshot of African immigrant and refugee communities, resources should be allocated in additional geographic areas.



CASE STUDY 8

BELINDA JILES IS CONNECTING GENERATIONS, HEALTH & EMPLOYMENT

Belinda Jiles says, “We know that when someone has a decent, healthy relationship, a job and money, things run smoothly. But when you’re missing these things, that can cause a lot of bad stuff to happen.”

As a community health worker, Belinda acts as an advocate and a go-between linking her community with the wider world. On a typical day, she’ll meet with several clients at her church as well as negotiate with people who control the resources her clients need. These people include doctors, nurses, employers, prison officials and staff at the food bank.

Belinda says that she goes into these negotiations as if they are “bad car deals.” The key for her is maintaining a calm head and keeping the lines of communication open. She tries to appeal to people’s hearts and emphasizes that their contributions are an investment in the community.

Belinda sees her work as paying it forward. “We’ve got to get back to the basics of getting my generation involved with this new generation. For me, helping others, I’m leaving a foundation for my child and my grandchildren, so if my son happens to stumble, or fall or come upon hard times years from now, someone will look out for him.”

The next step is using inter-generational dialogue to develop skills and create employment. Belinda sees construction training, increased fitness activities and food vans connected to health-focused grocery stores as possibilities in the near future. She’s talking with her father about putting on a cooking class for boys like her son.

Additionally, she wants Black folks to capitalize on the city’s food cart craze. “People claim they have some of the best cooks in their church. So we should be getting land for food carts to give them jobs.”

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

— Harriet Tubman



TALKING WITH OLDER ADULTS

Black older adults illuminated a number of concerns related to health and well-being in a series of focus groups (see Appendix D).

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Among the concerns relating to healthcare were: limited emergency services in close-in neighborhoods; perceptions that the emergency department serves as a barrier to hospital care; and difficulty understanding hospital and healthcare bills. Having culturally competent care and providers of color was desirable and hard to find. Others reported receiving insensitive care and/or that racism persists in our healthcare system.

THE EFFECTS OF DISPLACEMENT

Relocation to outer city areas (Gresham, Fairview, Tualatin, Vancouver) because of gentrification, for instance, was felt to have decreased social networks and increased isolation among older Black people. Some participants are concerned about mental health as they or their loved ones in outlying areas grow older and have less connection to social outlets. Transportation was an impediment to reaching N/NE social outlets and health and social services. This problem includes the cost (gas and public transit), inadequate public transit net-

works and not knowing how to use services like the TriMet LIFT.

Participants said that the Black dispersion to outlying areas made services less available. And while housing may be less costly in these areas, other costs, such as travel to needed services and healthy food sources, are higher than for those who live in service-rich neighborhoods. Participants believed there is a lack of a concerted effort by the City of Gresham and the City of Fairview to meet their needs.

NEGATIVE RACE-BASED EXPERIENCES

Older Black adults we interviewed felt that upon walking into a business or service, they were spoken to in a confrontational rather than welcoming and professional manner, and got inadequate treatment from those receiving them. Often this was even before they communicated the purpose of their visit. Many agreed with one participant's comment that sophisticated dress or speech sometimes made things worse because they were seen as "out of place." Participants reported that dismissive or inadequate treatment is so frequent, over time they've come to expect it.



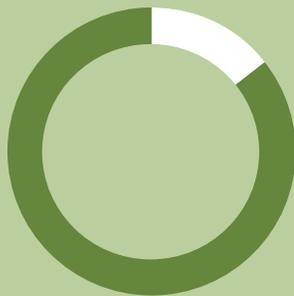


PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In Oregon

13.3%

of people of all ages have a disability.



16% 
of working-age people (ages 21 to 64) with disabilities, were Black.

15.2% 
of working-age people with disabilities, received SSI payments.⁸

WALKING TALL, BLACK & PROUD IN ASHLAND

Robert Goodwin is from Chicago (population: 2.72 million, 33 percent Black). Now he lives and works in Ashland (population: 20,300, 1 percent Black). He says, “Southern Oregon is a foreign environment. You name it, it’s all different: population, speed, access, weather and diversity in people, activity and nightlife. There’s a ton of stars in Ashland and cloudy skies in Chicago.”

Robert got his master’s in finance and a degree in acting at Chicago’s De Paul University—“Go Blue Demons!” In Chicago, he worked in performing arts, documentary film, TV and original theater. This included producing educational programs for young people.

In Ashland, he now produces youth educational programs at the world-famous Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He’s also still an actor.

Robert says, “I chose this opportunity because of the organization’s reputation and the step it could be in my professional development. That focuses me. But it doesn’t mean it’s not challenging. And as a big Black man, six feet tall and 200 pounds plus, I get a lot of looks. People don’t see Black men here of my age and carriage. I move with a gravitas that takes folks aback. I can go into a store anywhere in this area and people will check me out and then look at my license plate. ‘You can’t be from here. We haven’t seen anyone who looks like you.’”

He speaks in deep, resonant tones that carry a natural command, authority and confidence. “There’s a toughness, a thickness of skin that you develop being a Black man. You can assess your surroundings and deal with foreign environments—and this definitely is a foreign environment.”

Even within the confines of the festival campus, he finds that he needs his official badge. Without it, but with the same face, he sees a subtle wariness in others and not so subtle behavioral changes. “Without the badge, am I legitimate or a threat? I have to mitigate the perception of threat. This takes a lot of energy out of my normal existence.”

Ashford, Medford and Central Point have had instances of hate crimes, including cross- burnings. Over time, Robert has developed “agency,” an ability to deal with social challenges. But in the Rogue Valley and beyond, he sees local youth and students of color “under attack, under siege”—sometimes physically, sometimes emotionally. He says, “They feel they can’t be who they are, so they try to blend into the areas where they walk. If you don’t see yourself, it’s hard to know how to be yourself. If you’re under assault, then you learn really quickly how to choose battles and whether you’re going to fight. If you don’t have a model, like a parent who knows how to deal with things to help you develop; if you don’t have rites of passage or a cultural reference

point—you decide to acquiesce. You're literally drowning."

What's needed? "You need to be able to see your own reflection. You have to learn what to do in tough situations. You have to understand that you're still all right in the middle of developmental challenges."

Robert rejects the idea that Southern Oregon towns are substantially different from the rest of the state. "The whole state needs to be treated

with respect and caution. People battle for their way of life, and a lot of that relates to race and class. Oregon is about being restrictive, not inclusive. I make sure I remember that and I carry myself with that understanding."

Robert also makes sure any students of color visiting the Ashland Shakespeare Festival know that a Black man, someone who looks like them, is the manager who had the ability to get them into the festival. They can see their adult selves reflected in him.





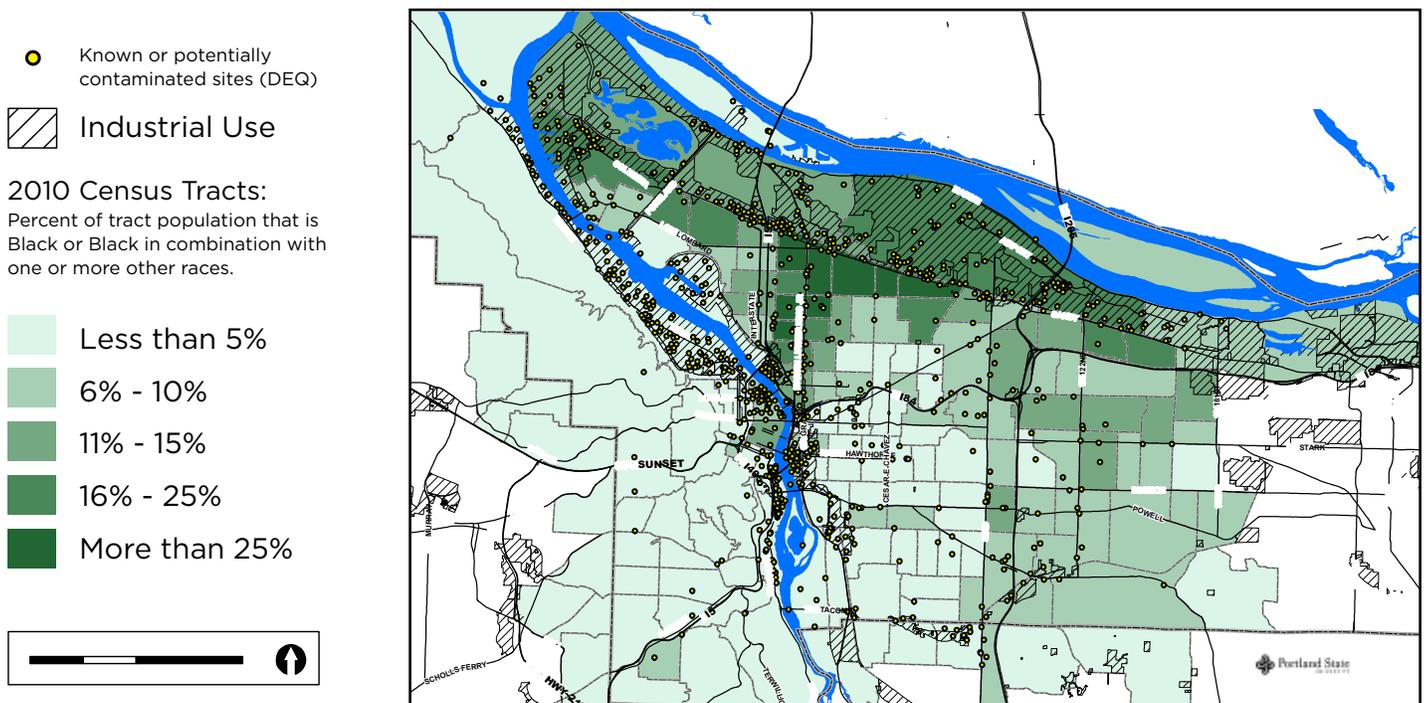
DOCUMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL INEQUITY

Researchers have consistently identified a correlation between the location of minority populations and environmentally contaminated sites. In Portland, this correlation holds. Through an analysis of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and U.S. Census Bureau data, Portland State University's Population Research

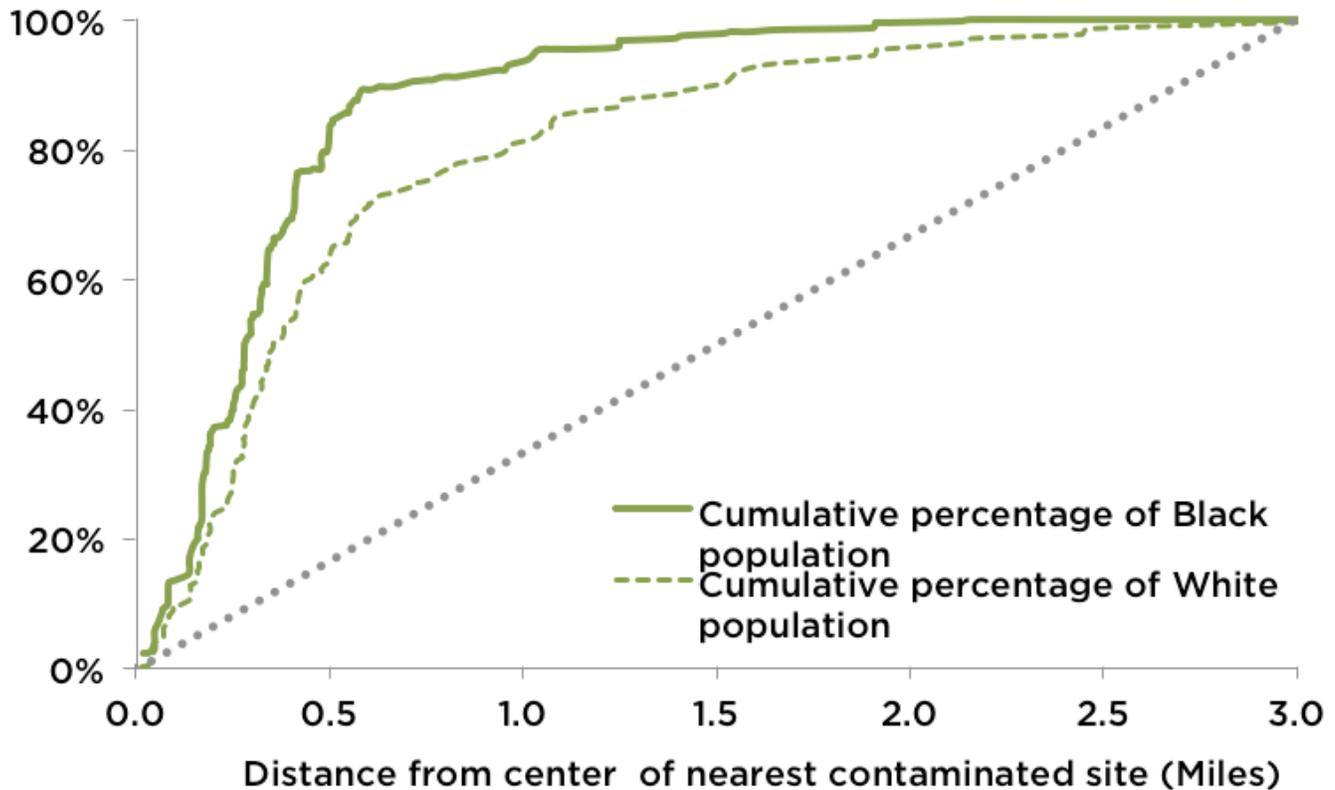
Center (PRC) found a spatial correlation between the location of known or contaminated sites and those census tracts with high percentages of Black Portland residents.

Nearly 84 percent of the Black population lives within three-quarters of a mile of a known or potentially contaminated site (see Chart). In

PROXIMITY OF THE BLACK POPULATION TO KNOWN OR POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED SITES WITHIN THE CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



PERCENT OF POPULATION LIVING WITHIN PARTICULAR DISTANCE BANDS OF KNOWN OR POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED SITES



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010; Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) Data base

contrast, 68 percent of the White, non-Hispanic population lives within three-quarters of a mile of a known or potentially contaminated site. The analysis also found a higher percentage of the Black population lives near a known or potentially contaminated site at every distance across Portland.

The Black population is concentrated in North and Northeast Portland; more specifically the Black population is concentrated along two commercial and industrial corridors, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd and NE Columbia Blvd (see Map).

The known or potentially contaminated sites are also concentrated along commercial and industrial corridors; as shown by the crosshatching.

See Appendix F for methodology and study limitations. The data available for analyzing issues of environmental justice are in many cases incomplete, limited in scope, and are not kept up to date. Due to these limitations, PRC recommends that any future analysis of environmental justice in Portland must rely on a more robust dataset or employ advanced spatial methods.



OREGON SNAPSHOT

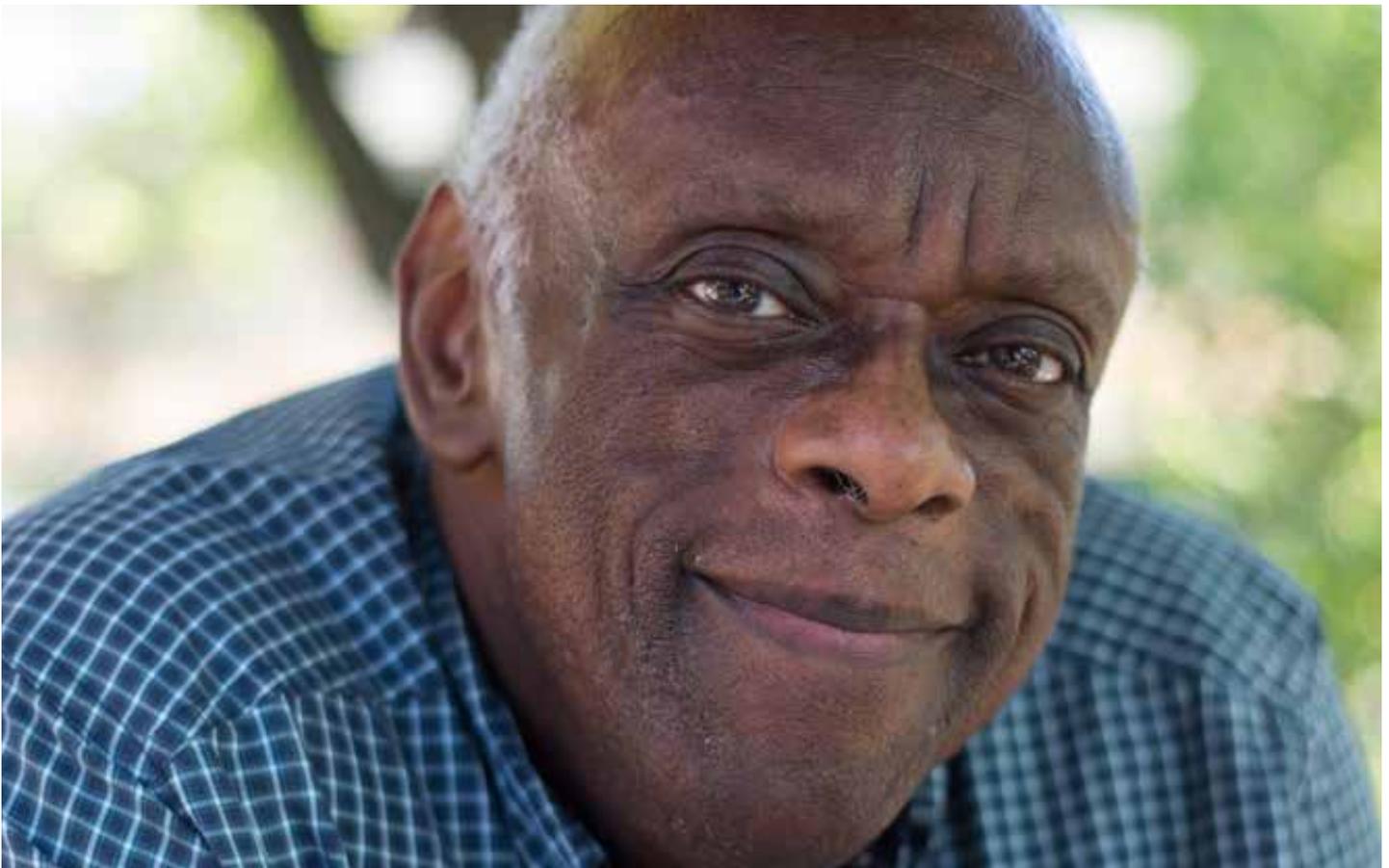
IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION FOR BLACK LGBTQ OREGONIANS

ift Every Voice: The Black LGBTQ

Oregonian Experience 2010 report, released by the Urban League of Portland and Portland's Parents and Friends of Lesbians of Gays Black Chapter (PFLAG-BC), revealed the findings from a community survey of over 200 Black Oregonians. Survey results highlighted the social and economic status of Black Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer communities in Oregon. It also revealed the lack of data on Black LGBTQ people and the need to invest in additional research.

The lack of representative data has been a pervasive obstacle for the LGBTQ community. National social science surveys, like the General Social Survey (GSS), have only collected LGBTQ





data since the 1980s. The data are generally derived from relatively small sample sizes, which makes generating accurate findings problematic.

Many LGBTQ policymakers were particularly optimistic following the decennial 1990 census, when more than 100,000 same-sex (male-male and female-female) households checked the “unmarried and/or married partners” option to describe their household relationship. Since then, scholars and policymakers have relied heavily on census data to count, map and describe the LGBTQ community over the past two decades.

While the availability of census data has undoubtedly improved the visibility of many LGBTQ individuals, it continues to overlook many LGBTQ people, including single individuals, homeless, adults living with children and many others. It also does not account for the factors that contribute to how people identify. For example, the likelihood of identifying as a same-

sex partner is strongly linked to educational attainment, income and geographic residence. This means that the data fail to include the full race/ethnic, socioeconomic class and geographic diversity of the LGBTQ community, and exclude individuals and couples in the “closet.” African Americans for example, account for roughly 7 percent of same-sex couples in 2013, but compose more than 13 percent of the nation’s total population, according to American Community Survey 2013.

These limitations, among others, underscore the shortcomings of these data. Given that many Black LGBTQ Oregonians are excluded from and/or are underrepresented in these data, we avoid reporting it altogether. In order to acknowledge the greater diversity among Black LGBTQ Oregonians, we must invest in solutions that remedy these challenges of data collection. (Research contributed by Jason Jurjevich, Ph.D at Population Research Center, Portland State University).



IN ASTORIA, KEMBOI CHESIMET GETS MOST OF HIS SUPPORT OVER THE PHONE

Running took Kemboi Chesimet from Kenya to the United States, then across Europe, and now to, of all places, Astoria. “Running has kept me alive for many years,” he says. “Running is what keeps me in Astoria. Otherwise I think I would’ve left.”

The son of a pastor and a nurse, Kemboi was born in a western Kenyan city known for having some of the best marathon runners in the world. He grew up running, developed his skills and earned an athletic scholarship to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

In 1991, he began the next phase of his life, in the United States. All he brought on his journey was a small bag and underwear. Kemboi’s older brother, who was already here, met him at the airport in Chicago. From there, he made his way to Louisiana, where his sole support system was the student athlete program.

While the program helped him transition into university sports and academics, Kemboi relied on the solid foundations of his early life to cope with the culture shock. It wasn’t always easy. “You have to be proactive or else things will pass you by,” he says. “Culturally, I don’t think I was truly equipped. There were always those shocks.”

The shocks included driving, American attitudes, the fast-paced nature of life—and even food. “I went from eating simple cornmeal and

vegetables to being addicted to Popeyes. It was a shock to my system.”

But he found success, achieving record times in the Half Mile and going pro for five years after graduation. During his time as a professional runner, Kemboi traveled throughout Europe and earned a number of sponsorships, including a high-profile commercial with Coca-Cola. Being in Europe made it easier for him to visit his family in Kenya.

In 1999, he ended his professional career to focus on his family—a daughter from his first marriage who ran track at Astoria High School and Oregon State University, and two younger children who now live in Portland with his second ex-wife.

As someone who grew up in a small city, Kemboi could never get used to Portland. He found support in a church, but outside of this nucleus, he felt “lost in the numbers.”

Although much smaller, Astoria has its own problems, he says—first and foremost, practicing the liberal values it preaches. “They’re very intellectual when it comes to diversity. They give lip-service to the cause, but in practice, they don’t really know what it is. Paranoia permeates the town, regardless of political affiliation. I don’t think it’s a liberal view or a conservative one. I think fear goes deeper than those two camps. It’s a human view.”

A coach in area high schools for six years, he's paid particular attention to the struggles of Ethiopian and Sudanese students. Even though these students are speaking English, staff members often claim there are language issues when they cannot deal with them.

Kemboi says, "Why can't they take the time to listen? Why don't we slow down our thinking and not see everything from a McDonald's point of view? Diversity is being able to meet people where they are. Sometimes we want people to be what they can't be. Why can't we meet people where they are and accept them?"

Kemboi credits his extensive travels for his ability to communicate across cultures. This sense of perspective lets him put up with the oblivious teachers and other Astoria residents. Just like navigating American culture when he first arrived here, coping with Astoria isn't always easy. To stay connected with his culture, he reads his Swahili Bible and listens to Kenyan radio stations.

When he can, he speaks with family and Kenyan friends on the phone. "I wish the 'pursuit of the mighty dollar' didn't create so much disconnection. Busy people aren't good at providing support. The only support you get this way is a voice. We all need tangible support."





POLICY ACTIONS

We must strengthen the health of our communities by building a community that makes healthy choices easier for Black families.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

1

Build healthy, vibrant and economically viable neighborhoods for Black Oregonians by:

- Improving economic opportunity, access to adequate and affordable transportation, safe and walkable neighborhoods, and healthy food choices
- Targeting funding for programs that improve health outcomes, such as those that seek to tackle high blood pressure and diabetes

2

Establish mechanisms in all healthcare institutions to ensure goals that prioritize improving healthcare access for those most affected by poor health outcomes.

3

Create partnerships between educators, law enforcement, and health care practitioners to improve the mental health of Black Oregonians:

- Apply a race equity lens and culturally competent strategies to police training, trauma intervention services and school mental health services

- Hold law enforcement and health institutions accountable for improving outcomes for the Black community

4

Boost research funding that will identify strategies for mitigating the well-documented short- and long-term health effects of chronic stress and daily racist microaggressions, including:

- Establishing metrics for improving workplace and healthcare environments and strategies for employers to shift workplace culture and improve the well-being of all employees
- Instituting evaluation and outcome-based surveys for healthcare settings to ensure that those accessing services feel safe and receive culturally proficient care
- Building a legal framework to hold employers/employees accountable for workplace microaggressions



“We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Legislature
- Oregon Health Authority
- Local, county, regional and state planning agencies
- Healthcare institutions
- Community development agencies

CHAPTER 5

GROWING A WORKFORCE

Oregon's economy has experienced steady improvement. Yet Black unemployment still remains double that of White Oregonians, and 30 percent of Blacks live in poverty. The income gap between White and Black Oregonians is higher now than it was pre-recession. Over the next 10 years, Oregon will invest millions of public and private sector resources in workforce development and preparation. Unless we address the specific barriers to steady employment facing Black Oregonians and work to close the income gap, these resources we invest in workforce development will simply not reach those most significantly impacted by unemployment and poverty.

Black Oregonians are a ready and willing workforce that can play a critical role in growing Oregon's economy. The Urban League's Jobs Vision for Black Oregon, which applies a race equity lens to Oregon's current job creation efforts, identifies opportunities to overcome barriers created by the justice system, poverty, displacement, racism and poor educational outcomes.

Oregon Unemployment

(2013)



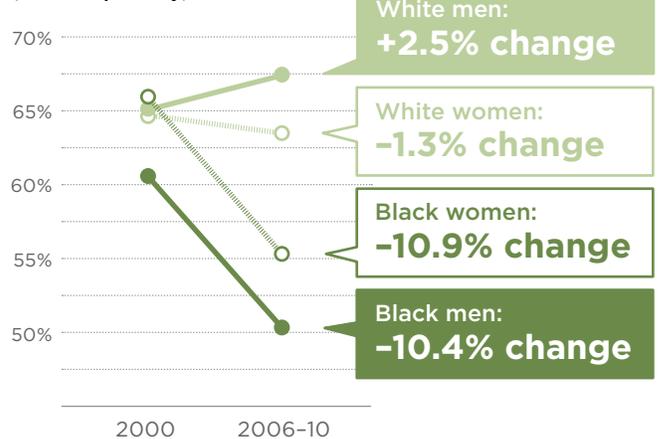
Portland Unemployment

(2013)



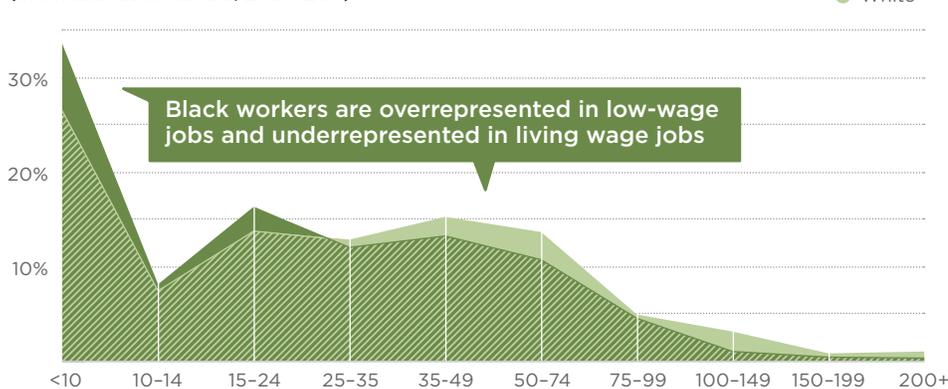
Work Status by Gender

(full-time job only)

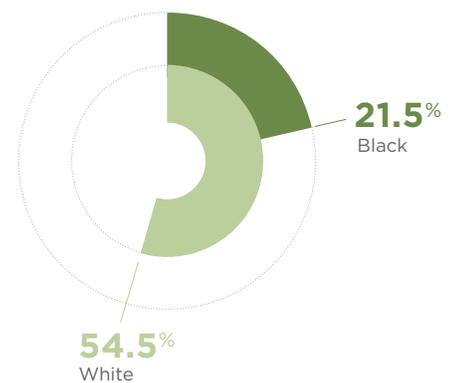


Earnings by Race & Ethnicity

(in thousands of dollars, 2007-2011)



Apprenticeship Completion Rates





ACTION VISION

As the Oregon private sector moves forward to create a 21st century workforce, additional steps are needed to ensure its diversity. Even when Black Oregonians meet the education, training and employment requirements for good jobs, we still encounter an environment that leaves Black workers behind. Oregon businesses should challenge and improve their own hiring practices, and we must do more to ensure they access a talented pool of diverse workers.



ESSAY 10

EQUITY WILL HELP OREGON PROSPER

Angela Glover Blackwell,
Founder and CEO, PolicyLink

Growing numbers of economic leaders—from Nobel prize-winning economist Joe Stiglitz to President Obama to the CEO of Goldman Sachs—believe, as the president put it, that inequality is not only a moral travesty, but also “bad economics.”¹

STRENGTHENING OREGON'S ECONOMY

Their statements are backed by the data: inequality hinders the level and durability of growth, while more equal societies experience stronger and more sustained growth. And the same relationship holds true in regions: a skilled workforce, high levels of racial inclusion and greater income equality correlate strongly and positively with economic growth.² Harvard economist Raj Chetty and others show that less racial and economic segregation and less income inequality correspond with greater regional upward mobility.³

The need for racial and economic inclusion in Oregon is urgent. The state's Black population is being left behind as inequality rises.⁴

Harnessing the economic potential of the Black community by connecting workers to good jobs in growing industries will strengthen Oregon's economy. For these workers, it will boost income and economic security. To accomplish this, there are several promising strategies.

PATHWAYS TO INCLUSION

One pathway is to foster greater racial inclusion in Oregon's rapidly growing tech sector, dubbed the “Silicon Forest.”⁵ Access to these technology sector jobs is essential. Adopting programs like Black Girls Code and Code2040, which provide skills training and access to tech industry jobs for young people of color, can build a more multi-racial next generation of coders and tech leaders.⁶

Green jobs, particularly energy efficiency retrofits of large commercial and government buildings, are growing occupations that can and should be accessible to all workers. A big step forward is the work Portland is doing as part of the Emerald Cities Collaborative. Recently, Portland approved a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for city projects. It improves workforce diversity, increases utilization of disadvantaged businesses and provides high-road wages. The CBA also provides funds for outreach, training, oversight and technical assistance for disadvantaged contractors. Much more can and should be done to extend the use of CBAs in public and private sector projects.

Another pathway to equitable development is through neighborhood-focused inclusive and sustainable growth, like the Living Cully initiative in the Portland area. Local groups established the Living Cully Ecodistrict, putting equitable economic development at the heart of the “Ecodistrict” concept. Living Cully is a long-term,

community-based and collaborative strategy to bring environmental investments and assets into low-income communities of color without displacing community members. Its projects build the capacity of target businesses and train youth in new skills.⁷ Supporting local initiatives like this allows programs to be tailored to community needs.

TAPPING THE POTENTIAL OF BLACK ENTREPRENEURS

Oregon should also do more to encourage the growth of Black-owned businesses. Despite major challenges accessing capital, connections and training, Black-owned businesses have still grown. The state can help turn this Black entrepreneurial drive into new jobs and economic growth by offering small businesses state tax breaks that lower start-up costs. Increasing access to affordable capital, connections to investors, business training, mentorship and government contracts can also foster inclusive business growth.

All of these ideas would also address the loss of wealth in Black communities that is holding back their contributions to the state's economic growth. While the median household income for White Oregonians rose 21.6 percent from 2000-2010, the median household income for Black families only rose 5.7 percent.⁸

Strategies to rebuild wealth and economic stability should increase access to affordable, long-term homeownership and stop abusive lending practices. They should also create other wealth-building opportunities, such as children's savings accounts and secure retirement programs.

While Oregon may have a small Black population, the community has significant economic potential that will help the entire state succeed. With smart, forward-thinking policies and practices that place equity at the heart of any growth, the Black community in Oregon can, and will, thrive.

Cosmetic Chemist and Entrepreneur, Paula Hayes, in her Beaverton lab, Hue Noir.



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TRADES

The construction industry offers the type of long-term, livable wage jobs that, if connected with the Black community, could help address racial inequities in employment and overall household income.

A recent report, published by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, confirmed that we can do more to support our Black apprentices.

Termination during the probationary period

was more likely for all

Black apprentices **30.24%**

compared to

White males **12.42%**



21.51% of **Blacks** completed their apprenticeships, and their termination rate was an astonishing **78.49%**

In comparison, **White** male participants had a completion rate of **54.54%** and a termination rate of just **45.4%**⁹

We can do better. We need to open up more opportunities to quality construction careers and other union jobs and create alliances between community benefits and project labor agreements and hiring targets.





Kimberlin Butler
President, Urban League
of Portland Young
Professionals

BLACK WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

Black women are more likely to be responsible for the financial stability of the household.

Black women are more likely to take on the role of decision-maker in the household. It's different in the workplace.

Black women experience a “double outsider” status:

- Negative stereotypes
- Frequent questioning of their credibility and/or authority
- Lack of institutional support
- Exclusion from informal networks
- Conflicted relationships with White women”



Whereas **74%** of the general household population has a spouse or partner present, only **60%** of Black households do.¹⁰

SOLUTIONS:

- Enforce “Equal Pay for Equal Work” laws in Oregon so that hard-working women and their families are on a level playing field
- Provide tax credits for more equitable workforces
- Ensure paid sick time and family leave for all workers¹¹

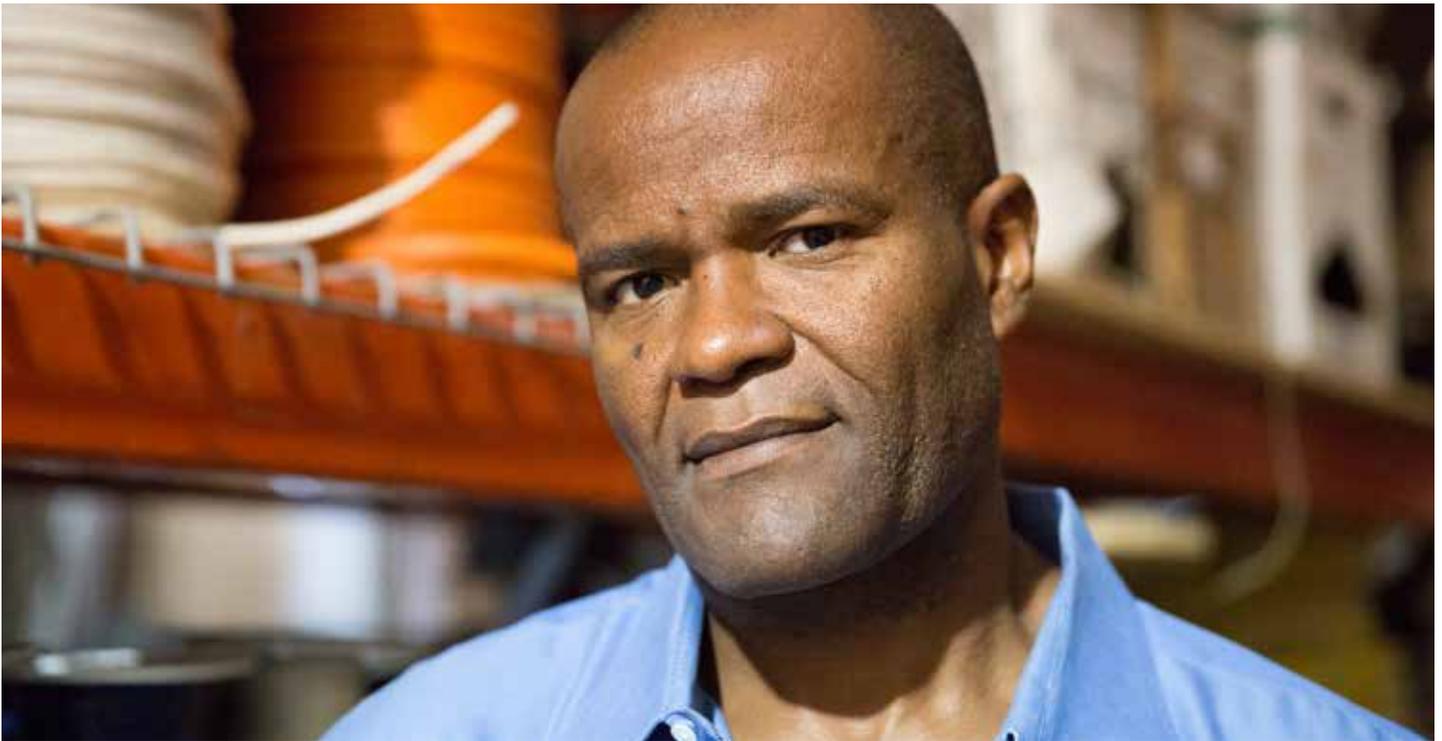
GROWING ALL OF OREGON

Maurice Rahming started out as an apprentice, then advanced to journeyman, qualified to work across the whole country. That was way back. Now he, along with his wife Ali O’Neill, owns Portland’s biggest Black contracting firm—one of the top three Black businesses in Oregon. Annual sales have topped \$14 million.

At the height of the season, some 75 find work with O’Neill Electric, and about 50 work permanently throughout the year. Some 40 to

45 percent of the O’Neill Electric employees are minority. But that proportion is higher among what Maurice calls his “core people,” the foremen, project managers and supers. The O’Neill Electric superintendent on the Portland Transit Bridge project, spanning the Willamette, is Latino. The company’s lead on the new Portland Community College SE campus is a woman. Another project manager is from Haiti. The company works with organizations like Constructing Hope, Oregon Tradeswomen, Second Chances are for Everyone and Youth





Building to offer real apprenticeships leading to journeyman positions. But Maurice—chair of the Metro Alliance for Workforce Equity and president of the National Association of Minority Contractors—wants to see more Black and other minority businesses. He reckons if minority contracts are really receiving the money claimed by Portland and its agencies, such as the Portland Development Commission, then there should be at least 10 contractors the size of O’Neill Electric in the city. In the state, there should be 50. The city, counties and state are playing a numbers game, a “shell game” he calls it.

The result is fewer job opportunities and real apprenticeships for minorities. It also leaves little incentive for majority contractors to stop seeing diversity programs as just stereotypical bureaucratic hoops.

Most minority jobs in construction are in trucking, flagging, moving dirt and cleaning up. The high-paid, skilled jobs in mechanics, electrical and plumbing mostly go to the majority workforce. Current diversity programs do little more than encourage contractors to boost menial jobs to meet quotas. But the real problem is “fee brokering,” where a majority-run

contractor offers a small minority contractor a significant percentage to front a bid that meets diversity hiring requirements. Although the minority contractor may be no more than a one-man office and do little or no actual work on the contract, the percentage is reported as city or state investment in minority jobs. There may be almost no substantial minority jobs as a result.

There are excellent programs to copy: Portland’s TriMet, for instance, or projects under a CBA (Community Benefit Agreement).

Instead of just tracking dollars and ignoring the scam, the city, counties and state should track skill levels—journeymen, foremen, superintendents and real apprenticeships—and contractors’ ability to “self-perform,” to actually do the job. Maurice says, “If a contractor says they can wire a ten-story building, and when you go to their office, that’s it—just a small office, no gang boxes, no coils—then it’s a front. TriMet and CBA projects do that kind of checking.”

Real-world monitoring would lead to more people like Maurice: Black apprentices, journeymen and business owners.



CASE STUDY 11

FOR YOUNG BLACK PROFESSIONALS, OREGON CAN BE A TOUGH SELL

Cystal Roberts is an overachiever. She has a résumé to die for. She's a high school valedictorian with straight As, an honors GPA and scholarships. She went on to a law degree from Lewis and Clark, with memberships in Delta Sigma Theta sorority, legal associations and mentoring networks. She's both a civil rights investigator and a Rose Festival princess.

Crystal accomplished this in spite of the feeling that she was not always welcome. "Growing up in Portland, it was so normal for me to go places where we didn't get service. Or why is the family behind us getting served first, and we've been standing here for 10 minutes waiting to be acknowledged? As children, our feelings were hurt and we wanted to leave."

Crystal says, "You second-guess yourself. Am I crazy? Is this happening because of my race or some other factor? You're overly polite and overly nice, and then you feel like you're letting yourself get run over. It's a very troubling sentiment that you have to face internally and struggle with."

Crystal says, "If you don't have people actively telling you that you could do better and that you are somebody—people who lift up your self-esteem and encourage your spirit to push through and persevere no matter what you're experiencing—then it's easy to fall into the stupor of depression."

Bryan Burroughs has come a long way from home in Alabama, via San Antonio and Baltimore, to work in Portland. He took a pay cut to come west and work in the city's VA medical center as a senior manager in the anaesthetics department.

Bryan was attracted by Portland's growing reputation as a great place to live, and by the opportunity to care for the people who'd served this country. Friends and family were shocked by his choice to move to Oregon. "You don't hear about Black people in Oregon."

He's the only Black person in his department. "It's challenging, but the people I work with have been amazing."

Bryan likes Portland and the state—the food, the mindset, the environment, cycling, the coast, the mountains, and the clean air. "It's the cleanest air I've ever breathed."

But it's clear he misses the company of Black folks. "There's little diversity here. I joined a Masonic lodge for support, but I'm the only Black person in their lives."

Bryan says, "I'm in survival mode, I do what I have to do to make it, learn to adapt, keep an open mind and make the best of it. Still, being able to connect with other minorities is huge. I don't know whether I can do this. I negotiate with myself on a weekly basis whether I'll stay."





THE PATH FROM PRISON TO EMPLOYMENT IS A LONG ONE

After 22 months locked up, Spencer is looking forward to leaving Columbia River Correctional Institution. Spencer has been through this process before.

This time, he knows it's going to take patience. He says, "When you're released, you think you can make up for all these lost opportunities; you can rush to the finish line."

When it comes to finding employment, Spencer knows he's looking at an uphill battle. While looking for a job, he has prison-related expenses, including monthly payments to his parole officer and the cost of any job training he might need. According to Spencer, these training programs can cost around \$150, and the parole officer might want \$50 a month. Some parolees are also ordered into programs on drugs and alcohol, domestic violence and anger management. This can make the costs even more debilitating, but not making the mandatory payments can result in a parole violation.

Spencer feels the prison could provide more effective job preparation for inmates. Educational programs are available, but he feels they have limitations. There are also job preparation programs, but only a few of them translate into finding work immediately out of prison.

Even with training, former inmates are subject to employment discrimination. Being a hard worker and a model inmate is no guarantee a potential employer will look past your criminal past. Spencer

supports the Ban-the-Box campaign, which seeks to remove the felony box from job applications. "I think everyone should have an opportunity to bounce back—have a second chance."

As stressful as finding work can be, Spencer says most of the pressure actually comes from the obligations he has to his family. They may not understand why the process could take a couple of months. "It isn't that my loved ones intend to put that pressure on me. But people in the free world are also dealing with the same stress and worries."

For example, his daughters, who are going into a new school year, need clothes and supplies. And it hurts him not to be able to provide for the people, like his mother, who supported him during his hardest times.

He says, "It's important to prepare for disappointment and rejection. That way, it's easier to not get down on yourself and fall back into old behaviors."

He credits his daughters with his motivation to keep on the right path. In fact, he's working on a book titled "Respect Our Daughters." It includes contributions from 30 other inmates.

Spencer marvels at all the potential housed in the prison. "Why is all this talent being wasted on the wrong things? Not everyone wants to be a rapper. Some want to be architects. Others want to go to culinary school. They just don't know how to get there."





CASE STUDY 13

THE STORY OF ONE WORKER'S FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

Every Oregonian deserves a workplace free from discrimination. The state's labor commissioner confirmed this when six workers at Daimler Trucks North America won a \$2.4 million settlement after suffering racial abuse and discrimination at the company's Swan Island, Portland, plant.

The six were forced to take sick leave with no pay for stress, after months of daily racial abuse and discrimination, including:

- **Repeatedly being shown a rope noose and physically threatened**
- **Being assaulted at the time clock**
- **Having chicken bones and watermelon dumped in a personal locker**
- **Simulated whippings**
- **Frequent use of the n-word as well as racial and sexual epithets**

Much of the abuse was witnessed by supervisors. Despite frequent complaints to the plant's HR department, the company failed to stop the harassment and abuse.

One of those who bore the brunt of the abuse, a Black materials handler, described being shown a noose in the parking lot on the night shift: "He pointed at me and showed me a noose. He said he was going to tie me up and drag me down the

road, and when he was finished I was going to be 100 pounds lighter."

Other workers were confronted with nooses in the production areas. Nazi hate symbols remained in the rest rooms. When two of the workers signed up as shop steward candidates, their names were crossed off the election list.

"I'm very uncomfortable at work. It's a very hostile and unfair work environment. Since I complained about the noose and the hostile work environment, I haven't felt safe. I feel threatened, harassed and uncared-for."

On the advice of the Urban League, he filed a complaint with the state Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI). He'd experienced weight loss, sleeplessness and anxiety resulting from the constant threat of harassment and violence at work.

As part of the settlement, Daimler agreed to:

- **Installing a civil rights complaint hotline for workers**
- **Mandatory supervisor trainings organized by BOLI**
- **Training at least two designated managers to conduct internal investigations in any future incidents**
- **Supervisor logbooks for recording any future incidents**

Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian says, “This settlement sends a strong message that every Oregonian deserves a workplace free from discrimination. It’s difficult for any worker to step forward in the face of a hostile work environment.”

The bureau interviewed more than 60 current and former Daimler employees and supervisors and reviewed hundreds of documents. The award of \$2.4 million was the largest monetary settlement in the history of the bureau’s Civil Rights Division.

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION



Although Blacks make up only **2%** of the population, **40.2%** of Oregon’s reported workplace discrimination claims from 2009 to 2014 were filed by Black employees, compared with just **7.3%** of Whites.¹²





CASE STUDY 14

STAYING STRONG FOR ALL OF HIS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

As a gay Black man, Mr. Roland* describes himself as a “two-spirit multi-ethnic warrior.” Even though he’s going on his eighth year teaching at his high school, some colleagues still treat him as though he’s invisible.

He experiences microaggressions first thing in the morning, simply trying to greet colleagues. “I’ll say good morning and they won’t turn and look at me. I’ll say good morning again but they won’t look at me or acknowledge me.”

Roland teaches drama and dance and serves as a resource for LGBTQ students and students of color. He also works with the student government, Southern Oregon University’s Queer Resource Center and Multi-Cultural Student Center, as well as other entities around the state to develop anti-bullying material and suicide-prevention training.

Institutional pushback is an ever-present reality. “I was told if my name and face were on it, then a lot of other teachers wouldn’t get on board.”

When it comes to racism and homophobia at the high school, he says most of the incidents revolve around words. He once received a death threat, but for the most part, he deals with White students’ frequent use of the n-word and the f-word. What makes matters worse is that their parents often excuse it or refuse to acknowledge there’s a problem at all.

He says, “I don’t think they understand the race thing here. They don’t get it. I’ve had a grown man in his 40s coming into my office, saying “colored.” I honestly believe he felt that was an OK thing to say. Not to make an excuse for him, but I feel that because of White privilege, it didn’t even register for him.”

According to Roland, the high school has a 1.5 percent Black student population. There are very few teachers of color. As a result, many students rely on Roland for support.

Early on, that stress took a toll on his health. He was having trouble sleeping, often waking up early in the mornings. He was also drinking and gaining excessive weight from stress eating. Things reached a breaking point five years ago.

Roland decided he needed to find balance by focusing on his mental, physical and spiritual health. “Instead of running away from the problem, I’ve cleaned up what I eat. I definitely eat to perform. I don’t stress eat anymore.”

Getting his health in order helped Roland focus more on his students, especially those who rely on his counsel. Before, he used most of his energy dealing with the people making racist and homophobic comments. “It’s not my work to police those things for them. I need to be healthy and be here for myself and for *all* my students.”

* The subject’s name has been changed to protect his privacy.





A JOBS PLAN for Black Oregon

As the Oregon private sector moves forward to create a 21st century workforce, additional steps are needed to ensure its diversity. Even when Black Oregonians meet the education, training and employment requirements for good jobs, we still encounter an environment that leaves Black workers behind. Oregon businesses should challenge and improve their own hiring practices, and we must do more to ensure they access a talented pool of diverse workers.

1 Meet Oregon’s 40-40-20 goal to improve education outcomes for Black Oregonians

To meet the needs of the 21st century workforce, Oregon has set the 40-40-20 goal. By 2025, Oregon will work to see that:

- 40 percent of adults will have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher
- 40 percent of adults will have earned an associate degree or post-secondary credential
- 20 percent of adults will have earned at least a high school diploma, modified high school diploma or its equivalent

Equal representation of Black youth and adults in the 40/40/20 vision requires that we first address the educational inequities they face by:

- Developing new models for, and resourcing of, secondary completion support for Black students that take into account each student’s individual barriers and the need for accelerated individualized student success approaches
- Targeting a goal and strategy to counteract Black students’ current disproportionate lower achievement levels in the middle “40” educational goal

- Expanding apprenticeship opportunities in high-wage and high-demand career paths and developing recruitment and employment goals specifically targeting Black students as a way to drive 40/40/20 achievement
- Analyzing current outreach, education and training efforts in the state’s public schools, 4-year colleges and university systems and their results for Black Oregonians related to program completions, graduations and related employment outcomes

2 Make Certified Work-Ready Communities a real option for Black Oregonians

In order to attract businesses, our communities must have a diverse, skilled and job-ready workforce. A new strategy designed to certify them as “work-ready communities” offers employers a way to understand the availability of skilled workers, while giving job-seekers a way to certify their skills.

To ensure that all Oregonians can fully benefit from the resources being invested in Certified

Work-Ready Communities, we must first address specific barriers facing Black Oregonians by:

- Increasing awareness of the “Certified Work-Ready Community” initiative and how Black Oregonians can participate, become certified and benefit from the initiative
- Identifying areas of strength and areas that will require additional support to close skills gaps in the Black community
- Developing ways to link the work-readiness certification levels of the assessment with the real work experience, professional certifications and credentials—or lack thereof—of Black Oregonians so they can use the certification to inform their career path or secure employment
- Ensure related economic development efforts establish local hiring goals and utilize community benefits agreements

3 Expand workforce development for Black Oregonians

Oregon’s public workforce development system is investing significantly in coordinated new ways to meet the needs of both employers and Oregon’s un/underemployed population, but Black Oregonians are not taking enough advantage of available workforce education, training and development services to make needed changes. This is due to chronic unemployment within the Black community, a technology gap, lack of sufficient transportation and access to job training opportunities, higher rates of criminal justice involvement, poor credit and poor health outcomes.

We can improve Black Oregonians’ access to workforce development by:

- Creating new training programs to match projected high-demand, high-wage employment opportunities for Black Oregonians
- Ensuring that WorkSource Oregon, community-based organizations and other nonprofits are working together to produce greater employment outcomes for Black

Oregonians

- Developing ways for Black Oregonians to explore in-demand career opportunities, map their career pathway and get culturally appropriate career coaching and counseling, through training and during the first year on the job
- Developing industry-specific networking groups to help mentor Black students, trainees and new employees as their career progresses
- Establishing a specific education and training fund for Black Oregonians that helps them achieve their career goals by: accessing employment and training services; lowering costs for tuition, books, fees, fines, licenses and childcare during the training period; and gaining greater access to paid internships and on-the-job training
- Secure stable funding for culturally specific non-profits providing workforce services for Black Oregonians
- Ensure goals for Black recruitment and completion of apprenticeship programs

4 Support entrepreneurship

Supporting the growth of small businesses and entrepreneurship in Oregon is not only a critical part of wealth creation in Black communities, but is also a significant source of jobs for all Oregonians.

All entrepreneurs, even the most successful, need help along the way. They need capital to fund their growth, operational experience, industry expertise, and a peer network to call on for shared information. Oregon needs to invest in un/underemployed communities to ensure that existing businesses are protected in urban renewal areas and that community investment efforts address barriers to small business growth in Black communities.

To boost entrepreneurship and small, medium and large business, we must:

- Coordinate existing small business development, economic opportunity and minority business development programs to make them better-known and more accessible
- Expand access, training and investment of small business development programs for Black entrepreneurs
- Increase and improve targeted capital-access programs such as microenterprise and venture capital funds for Black entrepreneurs
- Set up crowdfunding ventures that provide capital to Black entrepreneurs by allowing them to raise smaller investments of capital from other entrepreneurs
- Make federal, state and local procurement opportunities more accessible for Black entrepreneurs by combining existing programs
- Provide technical expertise assistance and training to Black entrepreneurs on building and growing their business

5 Bolster employer commitment to Oregon's Black Communities

We all benefit when businesses have a social responsibility to work with communities to ensure equal access to livable wage jobs, and invest in growing and diversifying the state's pool of job applicants.

In addition to compiled disparities in education outcomes and job readiness, Black Oregonians face employment barriers that include practices in hiring, workforce advancement, pay scale and earnings. These are areas that public policy can't control. As community education and workforce development efforts are under way, employers should also do their part to address barriers to Black equality, such as lack of skills development and job training, hostile workplace environments, hiring from limited networks and poor outreach to Black communities.

Local businesses can help bolster Black employment by:

- Developing reports that show the business benefits of a diverse workforce
- Ensuring that industries better reflect the diversity of the communities in which they operate through carefully outlined community benefits agreements, local economic developments—such as urban renewal areas—and other publicly funded initiatives
- Expanding first-source hiring processes and enforcing targeted hiring provisions in all state, city, county and economic development construction and service contracts
- Creating customized training and hiring plans that lead to permanent jobs for Black Oregonians and communities most impacted by unemployment using the projected training needs to create scalable customized training models
- Establishing and supporting professional networking associations in high-growth, high-demand and high-wage industries, focused on building new pipelines and retention models for Black Oregonians
- Identifying and supporting culturally specific nonprofits as the best vehicles for service delivery
- Using Excellence in Diversity Awards, priority contracting opportunities and other incentive programs to recognize companies for their workforce diversification efforts, especially those related to hiring Black Oregonians

Our Jobs Plan for Black Oregon was developed by the Urban League of Portland in partnership with John Gardner, Director of Business Services for Worksystems Inc. Our approach was informed by multiple community partners and developed to complement state-wide jobs initiatives.



CHAPTER 6

PROSPERITY & OPPORTUNITY

Just as the indicators of poverty shift over time, so too must our solutions. Given the rising cost of living and debt, income is no longer poverty's single most accurate measure. Policymakers need to pay closer attention to the effects of multi-generational poverty, high-interest rate loans, credit card debt, poor access to business capital, low wages, part-time employment and financial systems that are hard to navigate. These factors combined with inherited poverty across generations have a cumulative effect on many Black families' ability to build wealth and assets.

Financial stability of the next generation needs to be a priority for policymakers; it is an opportunity to advance the security of the Black middle class. Improving wages and income, entrepreneurship opportunities, financial literacy and retirement security and ensuring affordable childcare can all play a role in building equity within Oregon's Black communities.

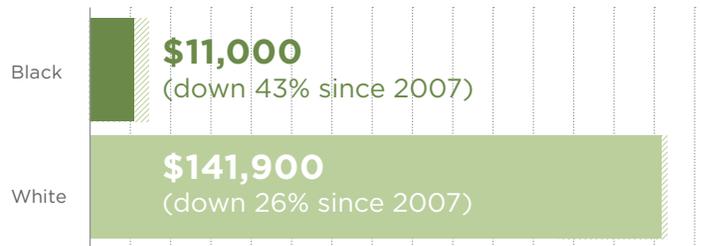
Home Ownership vs. Renting

(2010)



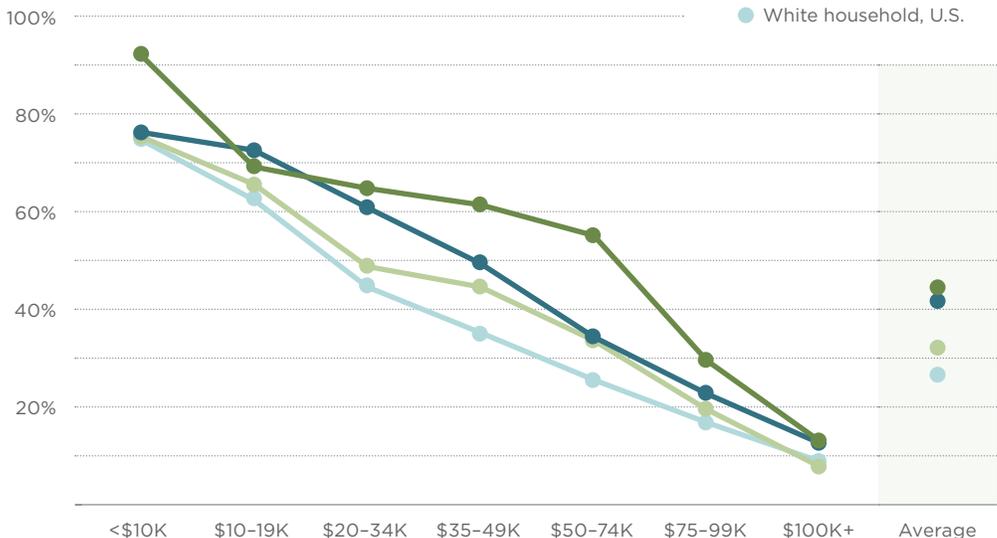
Median Net Worth of National Households

(2013)



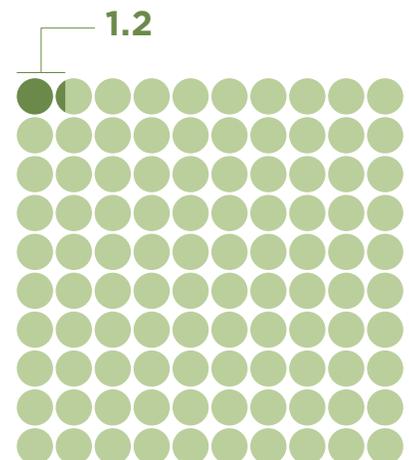
Cost-burdened Households

(households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs, 2006-2010)



Number of Black-owned Small Businesses

(per 100 small businesses in Oregon)





ACTION VISION

Strengthening financial security for Black Oregonians is dependent on ending student and consumer debt, increasing home ownership and access to business capital and mandating affordable childcare and retirement security.



ESSAY 11

A NEW PROSPERITY PARADIGM

Mike Green

Co-founder, ScaleUp Partners, LLC

Entrepreneurship is the driving force behind the growth of the global economy and creation of wealth. That's great news for Black Americans, who lead the nation with a 60 percent annual growth rate in entrepreneurship. Black and Hispanic populations have demonstrated entrepreneurial growth, yet represent a disproportionately smaller percentage of the GDP and job growth.

EDUCATION KEY TO THE NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

Today, America's students are in a global competition for opportunity and wealth creation. More colleges and high schools today than ever before are adopting a culture of entrepreneurial education to equip students with essential basic skills needed to succeed in a 21st century economic paradigm: critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, curiosity, creativity and imagination.

Black Oregonians, in particular those clustered in the Portland area, are uniquely positioned to lead the nation in developing new educational models. These focus on STEM entrepreneurship (science, technology, engineering and math) and are bolstered by policy investments that equip Black communities to contribute more to regional economic competitiveness.

STEM education is the single entry point to dual opportunity pipelines: a high-wage, tech-based workforce and a high-growth, tech-driven entrepreneurial landscape that creates generational wealth. As the nation,

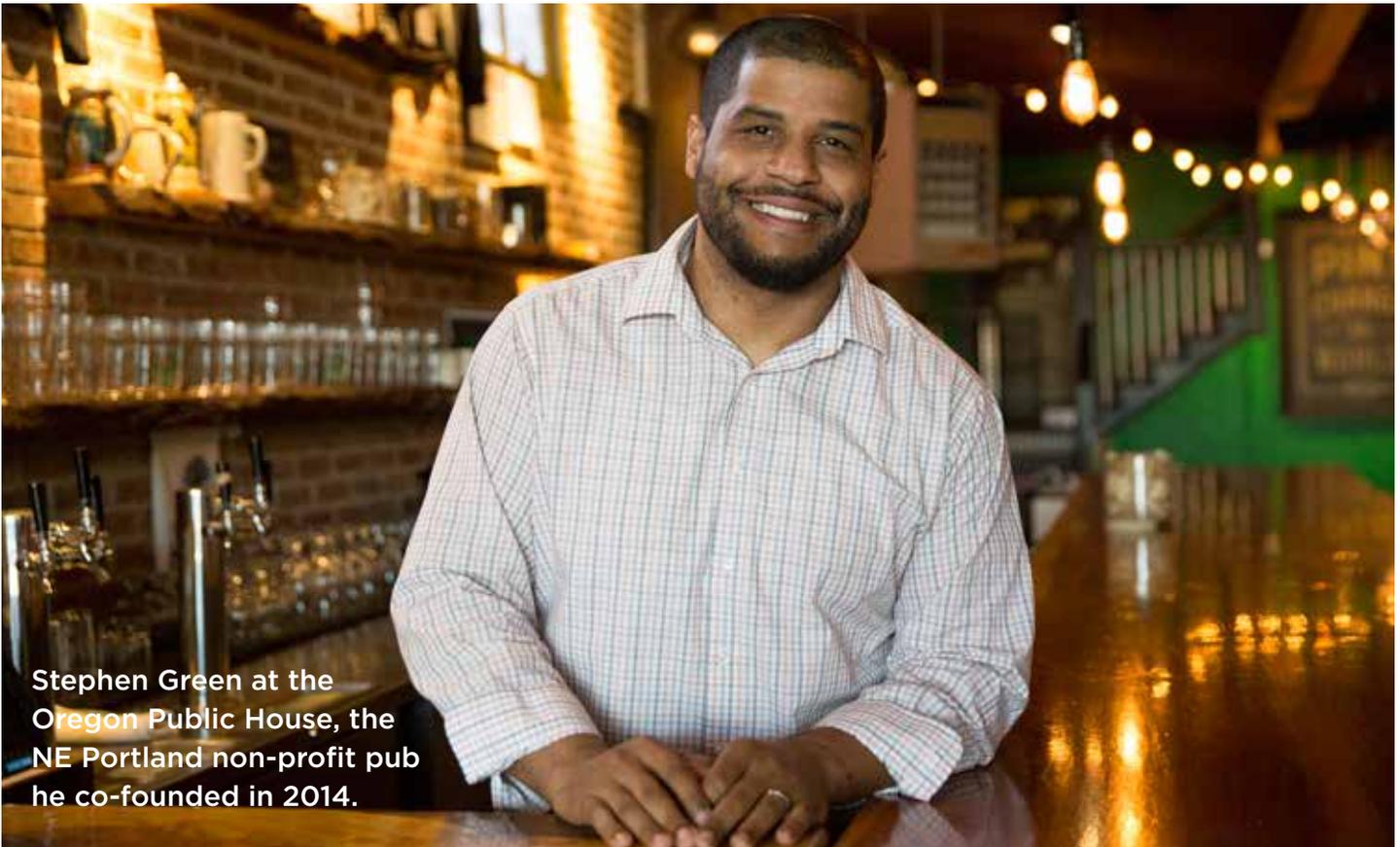
driven by demographic shifts, turns toward a vision of inclusive competitiveness strategies and frameworks, Oregon finds itself with an embarrassment of riches hidden within its Black population.

Portland's Black population has a significant number of leaders in key positions across several communities of influence: education, policy, investments, business and economic development. These leaders need to collaborate by sharing an economic vision and creating effective strategies for long-term investments with measurable outcomes. Their strategies, based on the inherent talent in our Black communities, can transform the whole nation's economy.

AMERICA'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: BLACK INNOVATION

Ironically, America's landscape of deprived minority communities is now her greatest opportunity. By mid-century, the Black and Hispanic populations are projected to make up 42 percent of the nation's entire population. The health and wealth of Black and Hispanic communities depend on their own ability to produce jobs. On a larger scale, the strength of America's global economic competitiveness also depends on these two demographics adding greater business productivity, jobs and wealth.

America's economy once depended on the richness of Black labor. Today, history is revisited as America again needs the inherent talent found in its Black population. But this time the "free"



Stephen Green at the Oregon Public House, the NE Portland non-profit pub he co-founded in 2014.

market private sector must embrace meritocracy, invest in new infrastructure and establish greater access to capital resources. It must redesign the K-12 and higher education landscape to develop, not undermine, all potential talent. It must engage in the process of economic gardening to grow local innovators, entrepreneurs and qualified workers who enrich the area that, in turn, enriches their lives.

Additionally, we need to look at older adults as a valuable resource for the Black community and for all of Oregon. One in four individuals ages 44 to 70 is interested in becoming an entrepreneur, and 63 percent of Americans plan to work during retirement, according to the website www.encore.org. Small business ownership is a good option for many baby boomers. Small business owners who get long-term counseling may see bigger sales, hire more workers and have more longevity. The Small Business Administration and AARP Inc. provide training and mentoring services to older entrepreneurs to help them successfully start and grow businesses and create jobs.

We can envision the economic landscape for Black Oregonians over the next five, 10 or even 20 years. We can join Greater Portland Inc. as it develops the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies plan for the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Statistical Area. We can gather the data that will help us transform Black communities into investment-worthy areas. We can overhaul education in the public schools that serve low-income communities so that their curricula develop entrepreneurial skills and a tech-based workforce.

We can come together and establish an economic vision to create jobs and wealth for Black Oregonians. The only question is whether we will.

The health and wealth of Black and Hispanic communities depend on their own ability to produce jobs



ESSAY 12

UNIVERSAL CHILDCARE OPENS DOORS

Cheryl Miller,

Executive Director, Oregon Home Care Commission

Poverty has traditionally been calculated by comparing a family's median income with expenditure on essential costs of living, such as housing.¹ Now, with the rising cost of debt, housing costs, cuts to public assistance, and ballooning childcare expenses, Black families face more roadblocks to wealth creation and pathways out of poverty. Offering a childcare subsidy would spur wealth creation and diversified employment opportunities to the Black community, especially Black women.

As public assistance declines, childcare, if adequately funded, would be cost neutral. A German study, released in June 2012 by David Domeij—titled *Should Day Care be Subsidized?*—showed that government-subsidized childcare increases the labor rate among young women.² Their added tax contributions to the economy more than cover the cost of the subsidies. Childcare subsidies can also reduce the number of women and families needing public assistance. Oregon's own experience in helping families return to the workforce through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) confirmed that Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) helped people stay employed and off state and federal benefits and build wealth, and provided a lift out of poverty. This type of program can make a significant difference in the lives of women, children and families.

Childcare subsidies can also offer Black women good business opportunities—with the added benefit of making childcare more culturally responsive to the needs of Black children. The skills developed as a childcare provider can lead some Black women to consider working in the healthcare field as a homecare or personal support worker, earning a living wage with good benefits.

It is clear that child care subsidies are not only beneficial to families in need of affordable childcare, but to a potential growth industry of childcare workers, in equal measure. Small business entrepreneurs may also provide adult or child foster home services for children, seniors and people with disabilities. Expertise in childcare may also lead to work as a community health worker or personal health navigator. Training community members for such jobs ensures linguistically and culturally appropriate services to the community while offering Black women an opportunity to advance their careers.

This is only half of the solution. Providing opportunities to overcome poverty will require more than just affordable childcare, but helping mothers get back into the workforce by providing affordable, quality childcare options will grant women the ability to pursue multiple pathways out of poverty.



INTERGENERATIONAL CHANGES, INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Participants in the Black Older Adults Focus Groups (see Appendix D for survey description) felt that younger generations lack early financial education and that a community norm of Black property ownership is critical for developing financial security. Participants felt that their peers must play a critical role in instilling strong financial values early in life, as their parents did, who paid cash for homes and clearly communicated the necessity and value of frugal living with a building-for-the-future.

Participants felt that the preference among Blacks in the 1990s to rent in outlying areas rather than buy homes in Black neighborhoods significantly reduced opportunities to learn valuable financial lessons as well as contributing to the disintegration of Black neighborhoods and businesses. Ultimately, this has placed the Black community in a continuous state of starting over, rather than building from one generation to the next.

BLACK FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE

In general, Black Americans are inadequately prepared for retirement.³

Blacks retire earlier

than the general population and with less than half the median savings in their employer plans—

\$9,000 compared with \$20,000.⁴



Blacks are more likely to use credit cards and less likely to have savings accounts. Many report not learning financial skills from their parents. Black college graduates say that they're disadvantaged by a lack of financial literacy and by their inability to manage debt.⁵

Financial literacy programs can overcome these barriers. Such programs should help participants:

- Know their legal rights
- Access financial products and options
- Gain awareness of individual susceptibility to temptation
- Develop structures to facilitate good financial decisions

- Enlist social networks to promote positive actions regarding personal finance.⁶

Social Security is a critical program to help older Blacks as well as children

- Social Security benefits are the only source of income for two of every five Black retiree households age 65 or older receiving benefits.
- More than a third of Blacks expect Social Security to be their major source of retirement income.
- One of every five children (nearly 21 percent) who receive Social Security disability benefits is Black.
- Social Security keeps roughly one-third of older Blacks and Hispanics and 20 percent of older Asians out of poverty. Nonetheless, high poverty rates persist among these groups.
- In Oregon, 91.6 percent of older Blacks receive Social Security benefits, which they have earned through a lifetime of work.⁷





UPWARD MOBILITY

43% of Americans born into the bottom economic quintile remain stuck there as adults. Among those born into the two lower quintiles, **70% can't even move to the middle of the ladder.**



Stable family income makes possible investments, such as college education, that can play a large role in upward mobility.



College graduates, dual-earning families and those who are continuously employed have a more than an **80% chance of moving up the ladder**

This is not true for most of those without college, single-earning families and people who've been unemployed.

A study by the Pew Charitable Trust found that upward income mobility is not directly related to personal savings and wealth. Instead, families with more savings can better make the investments, such as college costs, that lead to upward mobility. The parents of those who moved up had almost double the income of those who remained in the bottom.⁸



CASE STUDY 15

SUCCEEDING AGAINST ALL ODDS IN SOUTHERN OREGON

A self-described “little, small, Black woman,” Julie Grey maintains a large presence in Southern Oregon. The tiny Black population, old boys’ club atmosphere in the business community and small but vocal White supremacist presence haven’t stopped her from succeeding as the owner of the only Black-owned construction business in town. Julie says, “If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere.”

Her company, Complete Home Repairs & Remodels, covers two counties—operating out of Jacksonville, a small suburb of Medford and Ashland. Julie is also involved with the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs, the Medford Chamber of Commerce, the Women Entrepreneurs of Southern Oregon and the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration’s Workforce and Small Business Advisory Committee.

Being so involved, she makes it a point to support Black-owned start-ups. Most of the Black population in Southern Oregon is concentrated in Ashland, as part of the Ashland Shakespeare Festival. As a result, there’s little support for Black businesses, and many close down within a few months. “There’s no leadership development,” she says. “There’s no business organization that addresses our particular needs as a minority group struggling to grow a microbusiness into a small business.”

In particular, she’s had trouble obtaining government contracts. The vast majority of public works contracts go to two or three large firms who use the same subcontractors on all of their projects. Southern Oregon University is the only institution that has welcomed Julie, despite her efforts to reach out to larger contractors and the City of Jacksonville. “If I got government contracts, that would let me grow my business. I could do more hiring and show credibility in being able to do the work on time and within budget.”

Southern Oregon doesn’t put much emphasis on minority women and emerging small business participation. There are no political initiatives to encourage a change in this atmosphere. “They don’t have a mandate. They have goals, but they don’t intend to meet them.”

Despite these odds, she manages to keep pushing forward. She participates in various business organizations, makes a point of meeting with realtors and has worked hard to build relationships with other small contractors. “I’m constantly referring work to a local woman electrician—as she does to me. I make connections with other contractors so that they can make referrals to me in areas where they don’t work.”

Her visibility isn’t lost on the White supremacist elements in Southern Oregon. Most notably, Julie made headlines when she stood up to

participants in a White supremacist rally and, with the backing of other concerned community members, forced them to pack up and go home. Since that incident, she's had a few run-ins with them, including threatening phone calls and an in-person threat on her life.

Julie emphasizes that these were isolated incidents, and that most of the community is friendly and supportive. Still, she's considering

relocation to a place with a larger Black population and support networks like the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, located in Portland.

Julie says, "Interaction with other Blacks is something you can't replace because there's a mutual understanding of the obstacles we face, like the difficulty of growing without proper financing or support. But we support each other."



WEALTH CREATION STRATEGIES THAT WORK

Individual Development Account (IDA) programs increase financial literacy and well-being for low-income individuals. According to one Ohio State University survey of a local IDA program, graduates:

- experience higher post-program financial assets than those who drop out
- have a higher annual household income
- are more likely to own an investment account and be employed full-time

Of program graduates who saved to purchase a home, all but one still owned it. Additionally, three-fourths of IDA participants who used funds to open a small business were able to sustain it.⁹

In Oregon, the IDA Initiative has produced similar findings, but the outcomes are slightly different for Blacks. In Oregon, 7.2 percent (600) IDA program participants were Black, over half of whom were saving to buy a

home. Of these Black participants, almost 40 percent couldn't complete program requirements for reasons like "not being able to attend financial education classes or asset-specific education."¹⁰

When funding these programs, it's important to:

- provide extra support to minorities and people who have employment difficulties
- educate participants on the benefits of investment accounts
- stress the importance of future life events, such as buying a home or college costs
- foster skills that help in coping with situations of limited resources
- encourage participants to pursue/explore the possibility of formal education

IDA program outcomes demonstrate that increasing financial literacy is critical to long-term wealth creation in the Black community.¹¹





Kayin and Cleo Davis of Soapbox Theory and Screw Loose Studios run one of the few remaining Black-owned businesses on Williams Avenue.

GENTRIFICATION'S IMPACT ON PORTLAND'S BLACK BUSINESS

Participants in our Black Older Adults Focus Group (see Appendix D for description) were pessimistic about the future for Black businesses in Portland. They agreed that gentrification affected Black business in such a profound way that the Portland Black community may not reach previous levels of entrepreneurship for a very long time, or ever. Black business in N/NE Portland specifically, and in greater Portland generally, was described as “a thing of the past.” It was generally perceived that racial discrimination occurred around liquor licensing and business loans, resulting in the widespread dismantling of Black businesses in N/NE Portland.

*Note: Portland saw a vibrant Black business community in N/NE Portland, with its hub on N. Williams Avenue, before the large-scale urban renewal project near Legacy Emanuel Hospital.

“Gentrification and displacement aren’t inevitable. Black Oregonians have voiced a vision for thriving neighborhoods. That vision for community development can be made real with a clear focus on racial justice and empowerment.”

— Dr. Lisa K. Bates

IDA PROGRAM TAKES BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Ime Etuk's passion for film has taken him from Jefferson High School's prestigious television production program to Atlanta to the Director's Guild in Los Angeles. His film credits are lengthy, including award-winning movies like "Crash" and "Training Day." Now, over 20 years later, he travels all over the globe, directing movies and music videos, as well as assisting small businesses through his own production company, Laugh Cry Love Entertainment.

Ime says, "I want to do projects that make you laugh—that make you cry. But with the understanding that love is the most powerful thing and the only undefeatable force."

He started Laugh Cry Love in 2012, five years after moving back to Portland. Despite spending nine years in L.A., becoming a member of the Director's Guild and working with the likes of Denzel Washington and Laurence Fishburne, his business sense was limited.

At the time, Ime was still doing most of his large projects in L.A. But between jobs, he was struggling to find work. He began doing small-budget video production for friends and church organizations. While he found some assignments particularly fulfilling, his income didn't reflect that enthusiasm. "I was doing these different things that were smaller in budget but trying to give them high production value. They were good in the sense that they were passion projects, but it didn't really make sense for business because I

wasn't making money, and I might've lost money sometimes by the time I put the project together the way I wanted to."

Ime began Laugh Cry Love to provide small businesses with affordable, high-quality video production. In order to make his company sustainable, he began attending meetings of the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs. In his search for entrepreneurial resources, he came across Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon (MESO). This program helped Ime with marketing research, networking opportunities and one-on-one counseling. From the outset, the close-knit atmosphere of the MESO office impressed him. "They had everything you needed at one place. It was just such a small supportive family feel. I knew it was something I wanted to be a part of and could benefit from."

Using MESO's services also let Ime take advantage of the Individual Development Account (IDA) program. Through it, MESO clients receive 3:1 matched savings. For every dollar the client saves, the organization matches it with a \$3 grant. The program encourages clients to practice good savings habits and accumulate capital to purchase necessary business assets.

Before applying for an IDA, Ime had some lights, cameras and old computers that were sufficient for his small budget projects. However, some clients required high-end equipment, so he had to outsource. Besides cutting into his budget,

this also limited his productivity. With the IDA, Ime upgraded his equipment, including a new computer to replace his old Macbook. “That computer was dying. Now I’m able to do two things at once. It’s made me more efficient and more profitable.”

Despite Ime’s extensive résumé, he recognizes that competition is all around him. New technology allows more people than ever before to be videographers. Thus, his better

equipment and efficiency help separate Ime from people who can charge far less, but can’t produce nearly as good a product. Now, when his customers see fliers with him standing next to Denzel Washington and Al Pacino, they know it’s not just for show.

“I may do the same job as someone down the street,” Ime says. “But you know that I’ve been around greatness and I know what I’m doing.”





OWNING THE ONLY BLACK BUSINESS IN PENDLETON

Leon Ransom's home has walls plastered all over with pictures. He can tell you the story behind each one. He says, "I'm the family historian."

This is a rightful distinction, considering that he's been in Pendleton since he was six-months old. Born in Springfield, Illinois, Leon moved with his mother and older brother to Pendleton in 1952. They were following his father, who'd arrived two years earlier to work on the railroads.

Leon's parents had worked as sharecroppers in Mississippi. His father would pick 200-300 pounds of cotton a day. "I asked my dad why he stopped here in Pendleton. He said he wanted to get as far away from the cotton fields as he could."

As a youth, Leon was never afraid to speak his mind. When the family went back to Mississippi, they wouldn't let him go into town with his seven siblings because they feared for his safety. Leon's attitude didn't endear him to many in Pendleton either, but his athletic exploits more than made up for that. He played football, basketball and baseball, and he ran track.

Despite a few confrontations, he never got into too much trouble because the school wanted him on the field. He was one of the top football players in the state, even though he only played his senior year—surprising because he spent that entire school year in jail. Leon had gotten

caught with marijuana. To make an example of him, the judge sentenced him to a year behind bars. He could, however, get out to go to school and play sports. Ironically, the man who prosecuted Leon helped him get into University of Nevada in Las Vegas. To this day, he stays in contact with many of his teammates. His wife jokes that high school never ended.

Now, he spends a lot of time with horses. He works as a pen rider, attending to farmers' cattle. "If you don't know livestock, they don't want you around them. But I grew up with these guys. They know that I can ride. That I can rope."

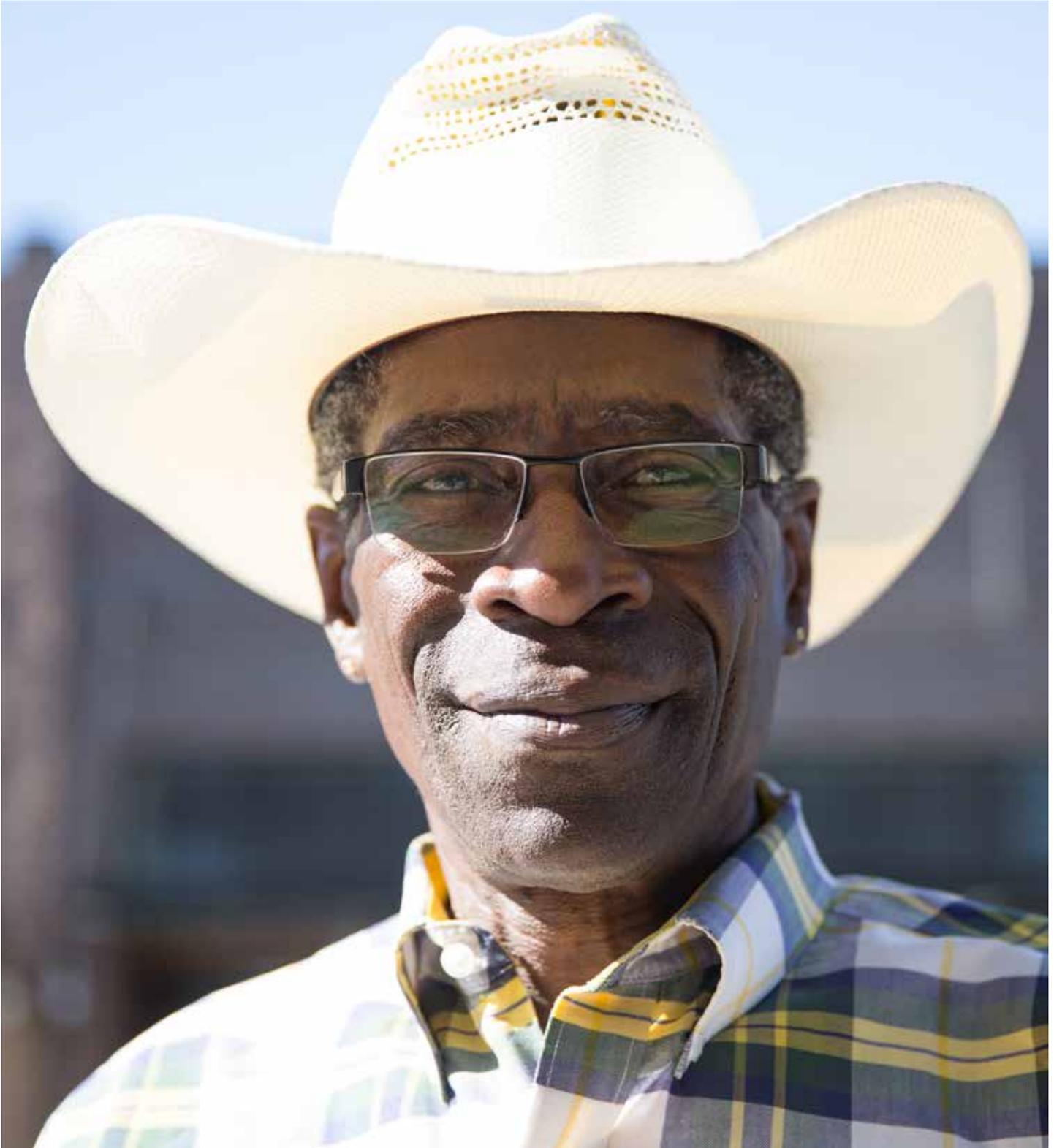
Leon first took an interest in horses and farming as a child. He and his father would go hunting with George Fletcher, a famed Black cowboy and rodeo competitor, whose statue now stands in downtown Pendleton.

Leon started going to the Pendleton Round-Up, one of the world's biggest rodeos, when he was six. The town's population quadruples for the event. The Round-Up gives him a chance to catch up with other Black cowboys who come into town. They pay little attention to the antics of some of the other cowboys. "These good ole boys, they'll test you. Anything but the n-word I'll let slide most times. You'll stay mad all the time if you keep that in your head. It's got nothing to do with me. It's their personal problem."

Much of the town's economy depends on the Round-Up. He and his business partner own one of the few local businesses that defy the reality of rodeo culture—Get Wit It Detail, a car detailing shop. It's the only Black-owned business in town. Leon attributes their success to providing a service no one else offers. "They only support Get

Wit It Detail because they want their cars done, and they don't want to do it."

With so little to do in Pendleton, most of Leon's family moved to Portland decades ago. He visits often but has no intentions of moving. He's used to being "the only one."





POLICY ACTIONS

Strengthening financial security for Black Oregonians is dependent on ending student and consumer debt, increasing home ownership and access to business capital and mandating affordable childcare and retirement security.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

1

Ensure affordable childcare for all Oregonians. Resources invested in employment, housing and adult education should reach all families in every community.

2

Invest in public and private sector initiatives that encourage Black community financial literacy, savings and investments, and provide a range of public options to enable saving and retirement security, including:

- Children's Savings Accounts
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Consumer-oriented credit-building tools
- Employment match programs
- Modernized retirement savings vehicles

3

Do more to encourage Black wealth creation—from homeownership to business development—through social enterprise and collaborative business endeavors, by providing:

- Down payment assistance and homeownership support targeted to priority households and communities
- Targeted business development services and resources
- Expanded and fully-enforced public benefits agreements

4

Update poverty measurement to consider housing, utilities, childcare, transportation, healthcare, household goods, emergency and retirement savings, student debt, public assistance and taxes

5

Remove barriers to financial advancement, including asset limits for public programs and “benefit cliffs” that penalize increased income



***“What the people
want is very simple.
They want an America
as good as its
promise.”***

— Barbara Jordan

WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Legislature
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Oregon Department of Education
- Oregon Housing and Community Services
- Business associations



COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 7 132

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

CHAPTER 8 156

WRITING OUR NEXT CHAPTER

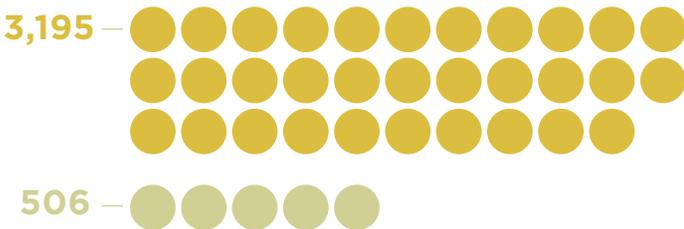
CHAPTER 7

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Families and individuals need community to aid social and economic well-being. This can mean having a neighbor who cares for your kids on short notice so you can make it to a job interview; knowing that families who've been in the neighborhood for generations will continue to support your business; walking a few short blocks with friends to church on Sunday instead of taking the bus alone from across the city; or ensuring your newly immigrated family can connect with other African families for support in navigating a new culture. These underlying layers of community can determine the effectiveness of public policy and cushion or enhance the impact of economic trends.

Oregon policymakers must identify and reverse policies that break up Black communities. Policy initiatives that predictably increase racial disparities can no longer be tolerated. They are unsustainable. A strong, cohesive community is more than just an ideal condition for families. Rather, it should be the foundation of strong local and state economic and health policies.

Incarceration Rate per 100,000 People
(each circle represents 100 people)

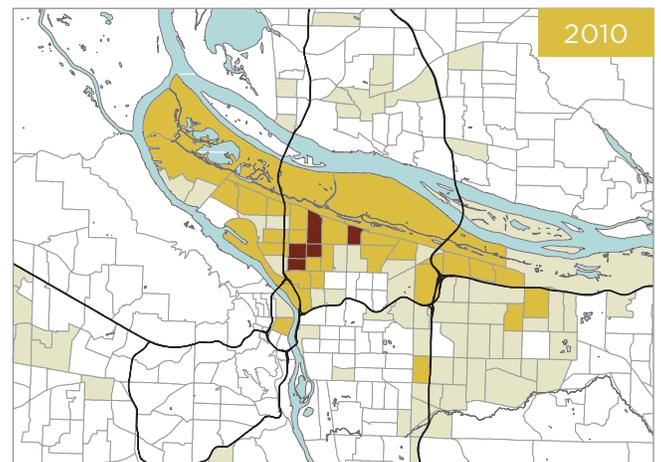
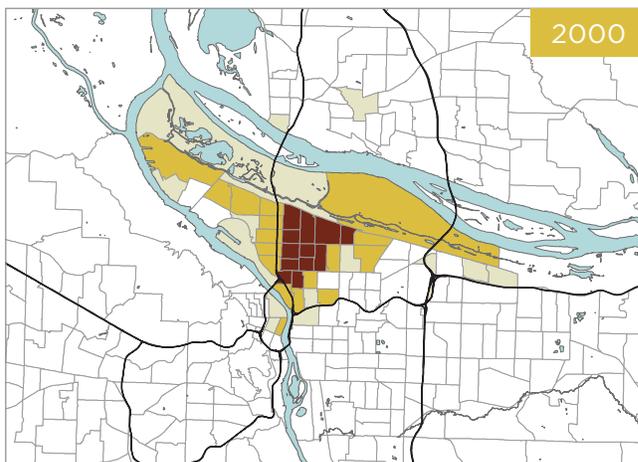


Race at Police Stops
(percent of total traffic & patrol stops, Portland, 2010)



Black Portlanders Movement Over Time
(Change in density, 2000-2010)

- <5%
- 5.1-10%
- 10.1-25%
- >25%





ACTION VISION

Urban renewal, law enforcement and related policies that unfairly burden and disadvantage Black communities must be reformed to form a more equitable, fair Oregon for its Black community. To restore confidence in law enforcement and to ensure public safety, we must implement reforms that change the culture and practice of policing, including policies and methods of de-escalation to keep incidents from rising to an excessive use of force.



THIS IS GENTRIFICATION

Lisa K. Bates, PhD

Associate Professor, Toulan School of Urban Studies & Planning; and
Black Studies, Portland State University

Portland's planning has been held up nationwide and internationally as the epitome of sustainability and urban livability. Our "emerging" and "up-and-coming" N and NE neighborhoods are cited as vibrant. But for Black Portlanders, this planning "success" just continues a history of displacement and disenfranchisement. Memorial Coliseum. The Minnesota Freeway. Emanuel Hospital. I-5. Long-time Black Portlanders can point to former homes and businesses as they run down the litany of sites.

During what we think of as the "bad old days" of urban planning, Black neighborhoods were often under threat from the bulldozer. Urban renewal was premised on stopping the spread of blight—with slum clearance tearing down buildings for real estate development and highway construction. Community opponents often called it "Negro removal." In effect, Black people were seen as a problem, and urban renewal as its solution. The presence of Black communities in substandard housing justified a blight designation. These practices didn't address the structural causes of racialized poverty, poor-quality housing and segregation; they simply eliminated the problem people from a valuable location.

It's now widely recognized that these practices were counterproductive. Many locations—like the Williams Avenue lots, vacant for decades—were never profitably redeveloped.

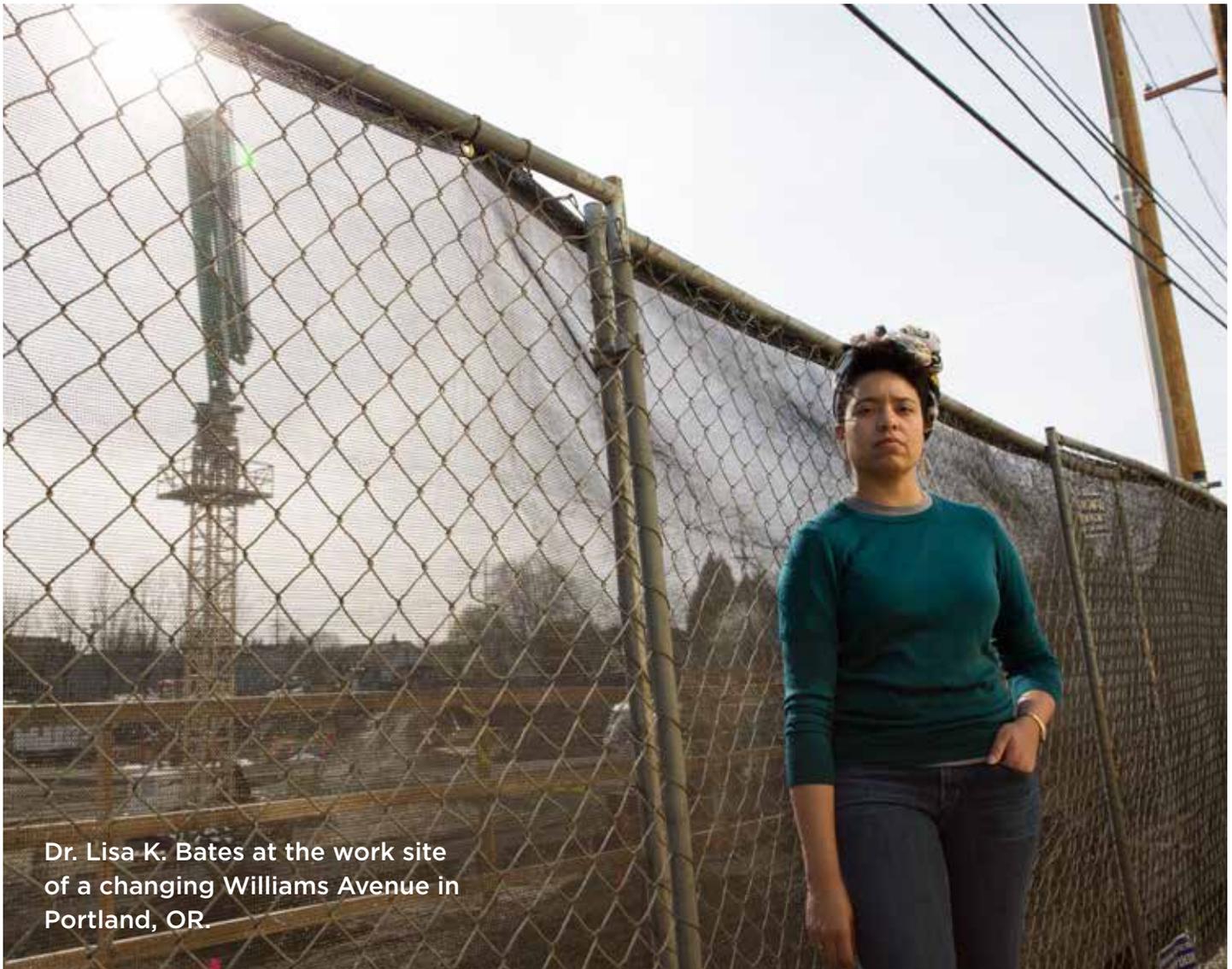
More important, these actions deepened race and class inequality by destabilizing Black

families and communities. The results included: losing property, related to the massive racial wealth gap; "root shock," caused by displacement from homes and neighborhoods and linked to a variety of negative health outcomes; and separation from economic opportunities. Urban renewal's large-scale clearance has passed, but the underlying concept remains an urban policy assumption—neighborhoods are fixed when they're remade for new people.

Even without government-sponsored demolitions, many Blacks are now experiencing déjà vu. An estimated 10,000 Black people have moved out of N/NE Portland. Many were displaced involuntarily from their homes by: rising rents; properties converted from rented to owned; or foreclosure.¹ With no majority Black neighborhood left in Portland, today's demographic changes are more complete than the old "Negro removal" ever was in moving Black people away from desirable and potentially valuable locations.

This is gentrification: fundamentally changing the character of neighborhoods as those with economic means and racial privilege outbuy existing residents. Unlike the days of bulldozers and red lines on bank maps, it can be difficult to identify the actors on the scene. Public investments are framed as community benefits; equity goals are set in community plans; eminent domain is no longer the primary tool for development; and "social sustainability" is a buzzword.

Policymakers and real estate interests have a new



Dr. Lisa K. Bates at the work site of a changing Williams Avenue in Portland, OR.

language for this change. Today's neighborhood revitalization is celebrated as sustainability and a "return to urbanism." Politicians point to new amenities and vitality, asking "what's the downside?" of change. Others dismiss community outcry by saying that neighborhoods have always changed, and gloss over the uneven distribution of change's benefits and burdens. The more the community demographics change, the more new housing and commercial developments respond to new tastes at higher prices. Policymakers call this "the market" and claim it's beyond their control.

Behind these rationalizations, planning policies continue to "upgrade" urban neighborhoods with little attention to the needs of the people already living in them. As development and rehabilitation

funds pour into Portland neighborhoods, the promised programs and resources to stabilize and prevent displacement don't materialize. In Oregon, Tax Increment Financing subsidies can only be used for "bricks and sticks," leaving out workforce development, education and health interventions. As historically Black neighborhoods become high-value hot spots for economic growth, Black community indicators have hardly budged.

The small size of Portland's Black population makes the effects of gentrification even worse. You couldn't erase Blackness from a place like Harlem, where the deeply ingrained Black presence is seen as culturally vital. But for Portland's N/NE neighborhoods, it will soon be as if Blacks had never been there at all.

What's the alternative? How can Blacks participate in neighborhood revitalization that includes them, rather than displacing them? We need an entirely new approach, where community development empowers people living in neighborhoods to plan for and benefit from change.

Black-centered community development is founded on community history and values.

It prioritizes the work of Black-serving organizations and demands that the public sector align its practices with community values.

Gentrification and displacement aren't inevitable. Black Oregonians have voiced a vision for thriving neighborhoods. That vision for community development can be made real with a clear focus on racial justice and empowerment.

A MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH TO FIGHTING GENTRIFICATION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & THE RIGHT TO STAY IN PLACE

- Housing is the most basic element of security, and too many Blacks are precarious in their homes. Safe, decent and affordable housing has been at the core of community development programs. A stable housing priority needs a strong anti-displacement component, including a right to return for those involuntarily relocated through public policy and its market consequences.
- Presence and visibility are critical for community. Urban design, art, public spaces and community events should honor history and culture in meaningful, not superficial or stereotypical, ways. The talents of Black designers make public places welcoming. Public social spaces also need to be safe. A Black "right to the city" includes the ability to walk, bike, shop and socialize in our neighborhoods, free from suspicion, police profiling and violence.

MEANINGFUL & INCLUSIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

- Lifting up people requires resources for education, workforce development and job placement in growth industries to ensure Black participation in emerging areas.
- Oregon's entrepreneurial values of creativity, innovation and sustainability are all embodied within the Black community. Given appropriate capital support and technical assistance, these potentials could be realized in revitalized neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood organizations need authentic participation by community members who are vulnerable to displacement and economic precariousness. Black civic engagement is not only important for social ties, but also for decision-making and resource allocation.

A BLACK-CENTERED APPROACH TO PLANNING

- Black neighborhoods must be fully engaged in building supportive institutions like schools and community-based organizations. Their planning must focus a racial justice lens on systems that affect Black people's ability to thrive in place, including predatory lending and racist policing practices.
- Displacement occurs in part due to lack of ownership—of homes and businesses. Black community development should encompass a range of possibilities, not only individual, but also collective and community ownership. Historically, Blacks have shared collective values of putting down roots, creating multi-generational opportunities and building community-wide prosperity. For instance, Blacks helped to create the first community land trusts in 1969.

BLACK POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT & ACCOUNTABLE PUBLIC POLICY

- Too often, policymakers protest that gentrification is out of their hands, while their decisions foster private profits without insisting on public benefits. Communities of color need collective political education and mobilization to create action strategies that will hold public officials accountable for their decisions. Community development demands a Black voice in decision-making.
- Instead of offering developers no-strings-attached tax incentives and subsidies, economic development agencies must require them to address social impacts in return for public dollars. This includes minority contracting and hiring, and funds to offset negative effects of new building.
- A strong, organized community can negotiate directly with developers and demand legally enforceable Community Benefits Agreements aimed at specific outcomes.

“We’re survivors as people. And we’re trying to connect as much as we can. But as far as cities like Fairview or Gresham are concerned, they’re not giving the Black community a sense of being wanted out there, and certainly not that they want to meet our needs.”

-Older Adults Focus Group participant



BREAKING THE CHAINS

David Rogers

Governing Committee Chair, Oregon Voice

America is beginning to wake up and recognize that we have a profound problem. For 30 years, we've been on a massive prison build-up. The U.S. has 5 percent of the world's population, but over 25 percent of the world's prisoners—no other country comes close.² In Oregon, the prison population has almost tripled since 1990. If you're Black, you're six times more likely to end up in the Oregon prison system than a White person, although actual crime rates remain largely the same across racial groups.³

CHANGE IS NEEDED

How do we break the chains forged over years of denial, bad intentions, misinformation and misguided policies? There isn't just one solution. We need to take individual and collective responsibility for factors within our control, but we also need multi-dimensional system changes. Oregonians need to push policymakers for thoughtful ways to reduce racial disparity in our justice system. We need policies based not on emotions and media hype, but on evidence.

It's time to put the punishment paradigm behind us. Look what it's gotten us so far. We can have safe and healthy communities by breaking chains, not making them.

RACISM IN SENTENCING

Recent research confirms what we've known for years, that racial bias plays a role in the

way police, prosecutors and judges make discretionary decisions. If we don't address inequities at each of these decision points, we compound the problem. Sentencing policies, including a mandatory minimum term for a low-level offense, must be reformed to support safe communities and reduce our reliance on the criminal justice system.

SOLUTION

Apply Oregon's new Racial Impact Statements to analyze how various policies might bring about racial disparities in funding and policy decisions. The legislature needs to use them with proposed sentencing or juvenile justice bills. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission should also identify needed reforms by applying racial impact analysis to key existing laws, such as Measure 11.

FUNDING ALLOCATION

Since the 1980s, the Department of Corrections has had one of the fastest-growing state agency budgets in Oregon. This leaves less money for education and the social services that would more effectively build safe and healthy communities.

SOLUTION

Prioritize investments in programs that help people impacted by crime rebuild their lives: drug and mental health treatment; alternatives to incarceration; and re-entry options for former prisoners. These are all proven ways to reduce justice involvement and recidivism.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

In Oregon, Black youth under age 18 are more likely than White youth to be charged as an adult for the same offenses. Adult conviction records follow them around for the rest of their lives—creating barriers to education, housing and employment.

SOLUTION

Eliminate Measure 11's automatic transfer of youth to adult court. Adopt sentencing policies that address disproportionate school discipline and the ways in which "in school" arrests lead to justice involvement.

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

Women are being incarcerated at a faster pace than men, in a pipeline already known for racial disparities. It is estimated that 80 percent of

incarcerated women are mothers, most of whom are likely to resume parenting roles once released. Research clearly shows that young people with incarcerated parents are more likely to end up incarcerated themselves.

SOLUTION

Oregon's Department of Corrections is set to phase out its Family Preservation Project in early 2015. Nearly half the women involved identified as a person of color and benefitted from skills development and improved relationships with their children. Not one participant in the program's history has returned to prison. Although the Department of Corrections (DOC) might not be in a budgetary position to sustain the program on its own, DOC needs to begin developing innovative partnerships with other state agencies to build on this work and take it to scale.

Emanuel Price is the founder of Second Chances Are For Everyone (SCAFE), a non-profit that works to reduce the rate of recidivism for men & women leaving the criminal justice system



Issues of intergenerational criminal justice involvement, family health and successful youth development are not the responsibility of the Department of Corrections alone. Complex social problems require cross-sector collaboration and responses. For example, before eliminating programs like the Family Preservation Project, DOC should look to partner with Child Services, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Education.

Additionally, we need to begin looking at front-end solutions. There are ways we can begin keeping families together by changing sentencing laws. The Washington State Legislature passed a law in 2010 that created a judicial sentencing alternative designed to keep non-violent offenders with minor children out of prison. The Family & Offender Sentencing Alternative, or FOSA, is a collaboration between Washington's Department of Corrections and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). This is the kind of innovation we need in Oregon.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Socioeconomic status is a significant factor in property crimes, which are roughly half of

crimes committed. Economic instability leads to increased justice system involvement. Racially disproportionate incarceration leads to greater instability of Black communities. It's a vicious circle: no job — crime — stiff sentence — release — no job — more crime — even stiffer prison sentence; with the family affected as much as the prisoner.

SOLUTIONS

Target policies to lift up the economic viability of communities of color.

Enact "Ban-the-Box" laws that eliminate questions about conviction history on job applications. The prospective employer can still learn about the conviction later in the hiring process, but the former prisoner won't be ruled out at first glance. Ensure that people doing the hard work of turning their lives around don't get shut out of viable employment opportunities—a vital component to a strong economic justice agenda.

Eliminate policies that limit the eligibility of people with criminal records, and their families, for public benefits or subsidized housing.

***"If you want to see where society is failing,
one need only look in prisons"***

— Max Williams, CEO Oregon Community Foundation



TAKING ACTION FOR BLACK IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

The foreign-born Black population is impacted by institutionalized racism, such as disproportionate involvement in the criminal justice and foster care system and bias-based policing. Black Muslim immigrants and refugees also face religious discrimination. Others can't progress economically because the system doesn't recognize the certificates or diplomas they earned in their country of origin. Next steps include:

- **Licensure:** Oregon should develop a reciprocal licensing program for immigrants and refugees who hold advanced or specialized degrees from their countries of origin—to make good use of our newest residents' skills.
 - **Employment:** New trainings can help skilled Black immigrants and refugees enter Oregon's job market.
 - **Data collection:** Black immigrants and refugees have specific challenges
- and issues. State, county and local governments must collect disaggregated data to identify people by country of origin and language, not only race.
- **Services:** Don't wait for data collection. We already know the severity of disparities Black populations are facing. The state, counties, local governments and private foundations must invest in culturally-specific community-based organizations that serve all Black Oregonians.
 - **Programming:** Black immigrants and refugees can benefit from the knowledge and experience American-born Blacks have gained in fighting for racial justice. American-born Blacks can benefit from Black immigrants' and refugees' connection to the African diaspora. So we encourage developing programs that can promote cross-cultural leadership and community building.



ESSAY 15

THE ROLE OF FAITH IN KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

Rev. Dr. T. Allen Bethel
Albina Ministerial Alliance

In our history's turbulent times, houses of faith have provided information, values, places to develop demands for justice and refuges from the injustices and disparities experienced by the Black community. The church was central in the civil rights movement and continues to play an influential role today as a source of hope and a strong moral voice.

The Black community has long had roots deeply embedded in faith, even before slavery brought our forefathers to this country. W. E. B. Du Bois asserted that the Negro church is “the only social institution among Negroes which started in the African forest and survived slavery.”

The excessive use of police force—such as officer-involved shootings that result in death—and the lack of police accountability are paramount concerns in our community. When community and police relations are poor, senseless shootings occur in escalated situations—and too often, police rely on the legal defense of “I feared for my life.” When there’s no accountability for those actions, it exasperates any community.

When this scenario results in death, the health and well-being of our community are threatened and nervous energy begins to rise, sometimes to an explosive point. Feeling unsafe in your own community makes people afraid to be near officers—seeing them as dangerous and uncaring. The loss of life of a young mother, father, sister, loved one or friend makes you wonder if you’ll ever heal, or will bear this cross for life.

WE NEED ACCOUNTABILITY

To further community protection, we need a systemic review of police policies. Applying a racial justice lens to hot-spot policing, exclusion zones, gang designation and racial disparities in police stops and searches will all help to ensure equal protection under the law.

SOLUTIONS

- Amend Oregon statutes so an officer’s “fear for my life” statement is not grounds for exoneration. State law should allow juries to decide what a reasonable person would believe, under the circumstances in question.
- Develop community-based police oversight bodies, with the authority and means to investigate police misconduct.
- Policies and methods of de-escalation to keep incidents from rising to an excessive use of force should require:
 1. A thorough review by an independent investigator; if findings warrant, employ a prosecutor not aligned with the police agency under investigation
 2. Restrictions on law enforcement and the media releasing information that suggests the victim/suspect deserved what happened due to history and the officer “did the right thing”

3. Appropriate discipline, including termination and loss of certification, when an officer is found out-of-policy in using excessive force that results in death or injury
4. Clear and enforceable accountability
5. Termination of all race-based policing practices, beginning with gang “enforcement” units

Let’s break the pattern of showing up only during a crisis and leaving after the media and buzz have settled until the next crisis. Those of us in the community who continue the struggle daily need your voices, even in the quiet before the storm. We’re still fighting for accountability, police reform and “justice that rolls on like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream!”





CASE STUDY 17

GENTRIFICATION AND HOUSING INSECURITY ERASE THE PAST AND CREATE AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Charlene Campbell has lived most of her life in N/NE Portland. Now, like many of her former Black neighbors, she lives east of 82nd Avenue. Charlene says, “There are more Blacks living out here than before. Go farther out—Burnside and 162nd, and even out on 181st—you see a lot of Black faces. All those people you mean when you say, ‘I wonder what happened to them.’ They’re out here.”

For the last seven years, Charlene, 62, has lived with her 39-year-old daughter and her three granddaughters, ages 21, 13 and 8. Earlier, she moved from place to place, progressively farther from N Portland, where she grew up.

Before moving in with her daughter, Charlene’s last stable living situation was a house in NE Portland. She received a “no cause” eviction; the landlords didn’t have to explain why they were kicking her out. The constant uncertainty was a struggle. She says, “It affects a lot because you don’t know whether you’re going to be in a place or on the streets.”

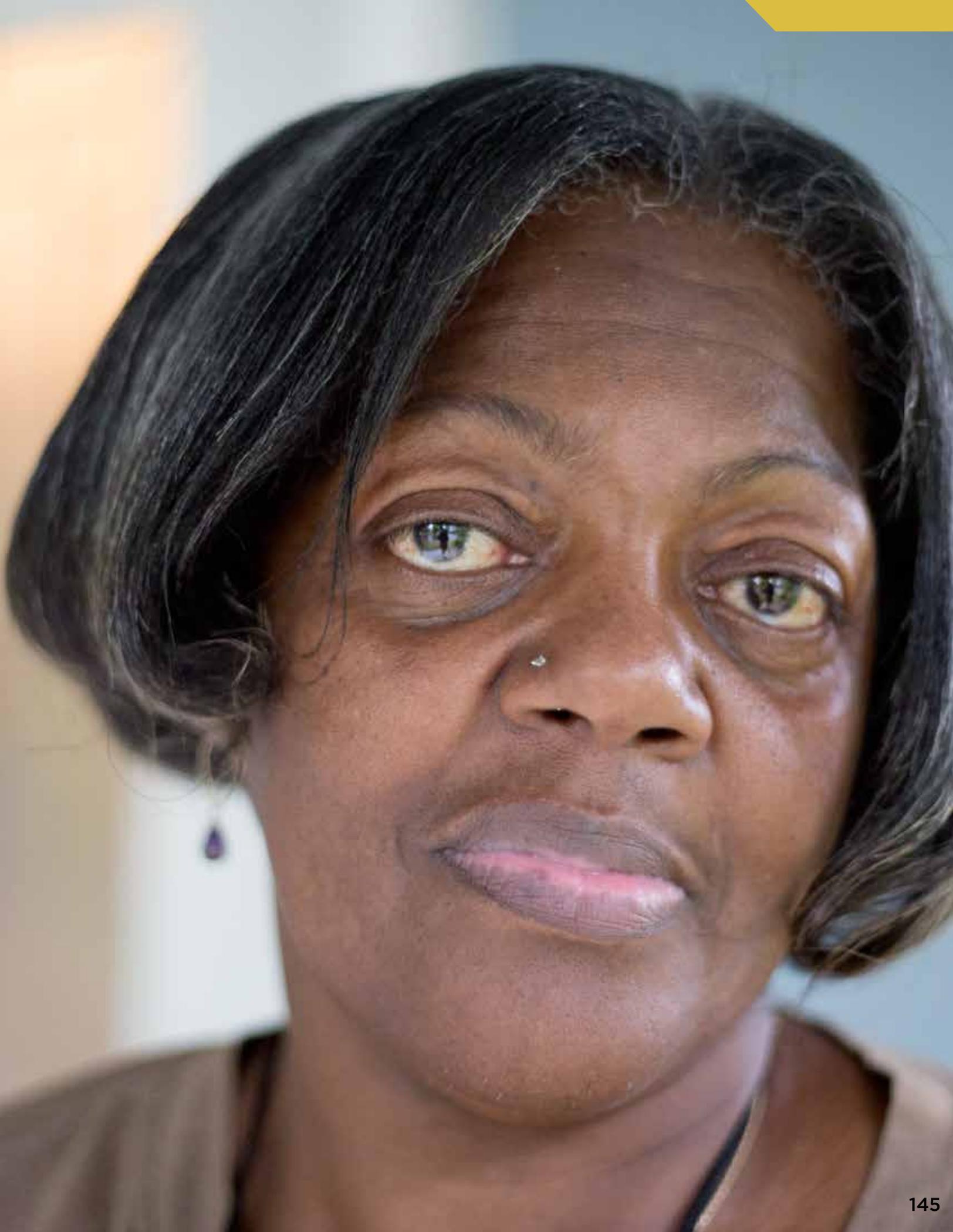
Charlene helps her daughter pay rent and bills. Even though Southeast is more affordable than Northeast, it’s still a daily struggle to make all the payments. With the inflation in rental

prices, going back to her old neighborhood is unthinkable.

Charlene grew up in Columbia Villa when Blacks primarily lived in North Portland. Places like Mississippi Avenue and Alberta Street are starkly different from when she was young. She rarely saw Whites in these areas, which were predominantly Black, full of businesses that served the Black community. Now they’re mostly White, with little indication of the past.

Even Columbia Villa is a far cry from what she remembers. It was rebuilt and renamed New Columbia in 2005. Charlene says the most noticeable difference is the influx of housing developments. “When I lived there, it was better because you had your own yard. You could do your own thing. You had neighbors, but it wasn’t like your door here, their door there.”

While her new home in many ways reminds her of where she grew up, there are also major differences. Southeast is rural. The streets are long, with few sidewalks, and you can walk long stretches without seeing a crosswalk. She has few friends who live in the area and relies on the phone to stay in touch. For the most part, Charlene keeps to herself.





CASE STUDY 18

DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS POWER THE OREGON SOMALI FAMILY EDUCATION CENTER

When Somali immigrants come to the U.S., transitioning into a new society is a tall order. At one Beaverton apartment complex, five volunteers are up to the challenge. Founded by Abdi Muse, the Oregon Somali Family Education Center (OSFEC) seeks to empower Somali families, smoothing their transition to the U.S. Abdi says, “The end goal here is a self-sufficient community moving forward as a contributing part of our society.”

Serving 150 people, OSFEC receives a small grant from the City of Beaverton, but mostly relies on volunteers. The group’s journey began in 2001, when Abdi was working at Jackson Middle School. He and other community members noticed that recently immigrated students were struggling.

One seventh-grade girl in particular was the catalyst for creating the organization. According to Abdi, she only spoke Somali but couldn’t write it. Jackson teachers asked him to help her. This turned into one of the biggest challenges of his life. How was she supposed to learn English, math and science when she couldn’t even write in her own language? “That’s like throwing you into a Chinese college and saying, ‘Hey, start from there, my friend. Your next assignment is due next week. Have a nice day.’”

OSFEC officially began in 2002 with tutoring and a homeschool program. Coming from refugee camps, where there was little, if any, schooling, students had a lot of ground to make up. Since then, the program has expanded, with the help of student volunteers from Portland State University, to include adult English classes.

In addition to tutoring, OSFEC educates parents about the U.S. school system and reaches out to schools so staff can better understand Somali students’ specific needs. “Back home, education was about teachers taking care of students, period. Having an immigrant family come here throws them off.”

OSFEC also helps families fill out forms, provides interpreting to help people with their bills and even offers a tailoring class. The volunteers also handle police profiling, domestic violence and child custody issues, as well as other daily troubles.

Another major issue facing many Somalis is nutrition. Back home, they only ate organic foods and walked most places. In the U.S., they’re bombarded with processed foods and have a number of sedentary transportation options. As a result, the rate of diabetes has increased in the community. Through a partnership with Oregon State University, volunteers teach people about American foods and cooking dishes like the food from back home.



There are also tensions left over from Somali's civil war. Some families from opposing sides refuse to speak or work with each other. However, Abdi notes that clan dynamics are dying down, due in large part to the youth. "Over here, people just go through a different identity crisis. 'Am I African? Am I Somali? Am I Muslim first? Who am I?' With no connection back home at all, the young ones assimilate right away."

This rapid assimilation, however, makes it difficult to ensure youth retain their culture. With children spending the majority of their time in school and parents working, there's little time to pass on traditions.

Job-hunting causes many Somali families to leave Oregon. Recent college graduates are having a particularly difficult time. In response, many Somali graduates relocate all across the country, with their families coming along for support.

Those who choose to stay in the Beaverton area can rely on the dedicated members of OSFEC to have their backs. As tiring as the work is, Abdi knows it's essential. "It's very time-consuming. But if you're passionate about helping people like I am, you have to do it."

THE HISTORY OF OREGON'S BLACK LOGGERS WILL NEVER BE LOST

By honoring the legacy of her family and preserving the history of Maxville's multicultural logging community, Gwendolyn Trice hopes to effect change and empower others.

Gwendolyn's family history in Oregon dates back to 1924. Her grandfather and father came from Pine Bluff, Arkansas, to Eastern Oregon in a boxcar. The Bowman Hicks Lumber Company recruited them. Her grandfather had experience in mechanics, which he passed on to his son.

At the time, Blacks could saw the logs but weren't allowed in the mill. Gwendolyn says that while the racial climate wasn't as intense in Eastern Oregon as it was in the South, there was segregation.

"In the South, if you were to look at someone in a different way, you might get hung," she says. "In Eastern Oregon, it wasn't that way. There was still a separateness and that Southern mentality."

The logging company separated workers by their ethnic groups. However, they used baseball to build camaraderie by forming a successful mixed team. Ultimately, the economic impact of the mill prevented more hostile White supremacist elements from gaining a foothold in the town. One Ku Klux Klan member was even de-hooded by community members.

"They're not going to stand with the Klan if it's going to mess with the income and industry coming in," says Gwendolyn.

Her father in particular made a reputation for himself as an advocate for the Black community. Gwendolyn notes that he once saved a young, White logger's life. She, however, didn't get to see his exploits first-hand because he was 56 when she was born.

By that time, the logging industry was long gone. The combination of the Great Depression and World War II killed the industry and caused most of the Black community to relocate. The exodus of the Black community brought an end to the Southern mentality. Soon, schools were integrated. However, Gwendolyn doesn't look back on this time with fond memories. She was isolated and didn't learn much about her cultural history or identity.

In 1977, she decided to move to Seattle. There, she found steady work and had a chance to heal. She also found a new mission: preserve and share the history of her father and the Black logging community of Maxville.

Gwendolyn moved back to Wallowa County, where she was surprised to find welcoming neighbors. Since returning, she's noticed ongoing effects of the loss of the logging industry.

Gwendolyn does, however, see potential for a budding tourist industry. There is an abundance of natural resources, which Gwendolyn believes can be used to create jobs.

In 2008, she founded the Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center. Their mission is to preserve and record the history of the multicultural

logging and timber industry of Maxville. In addition to the tours, exhibits, and educational programs, the organization also puts on community events. One of the most notable is the Maxville Gathering, which the center puts on in partnership with the Nez Perce. The center continues to build community through history and story.





FOR MAY BATES-PATTEN, IT'S ALL ABOUT FAMILY

Despite being Black and lesbian, May Bates-Patten doesn't worry about discrimination.

The former Benson High School basketball standout works at both SEI and Charter Communications while going to school to become a teacher. On top of that, she plays the role of second mother to her two daughters. Juggling work and school, she's focused on providing for them.

For May, family support is crucial. Growing up in a religious family, she was nervous about coming out to her mother. But the family still loves and supports her to this day.

May is open about who she is with anyone who asks. With her outgoing personality and ambition, she gets along with almost everybody. Her ambition was evident in middle and high school, where May says she didn't have a sexuality. She was too focused on school and basketball. Her athletic prowess took her to the University of Arkansas, where she spent a semester before returning to Oregon.

May explored many other areas before she realized her calling to be a teacher. "Adults are harder to fix than kids," she says. "Kids, you can still influence them and show them the right way."

A key to her success, she says, is that she doesn't go into a new situation with the attitude that

she's going to be discriminated against. That can lead to a confrontational first impression. If someone interviewed with her, looking for a job with that attitude, she admits she wouldn't hire that person either.

She's had no problem finding housing. Between her income and credit, she's able to rent anywhere. Currently, she lives in the Alberta District, close to a host of bus lines, businesses, friends and family. Equal parts Black, Hispanic and White, everyone in her apartment complex gets along. "Everybody's cool. Their kids play with my kids."

May hasn't thought about marriage, but her lack of legal rights makes her uneasy. "It's not even trust. It's like faith. You have to have faith that whatever happens I'll always have my kids."

For May, everything comes back to family.

*For May, everything
comes back to family.*





CARVING OUT OPPORTUNITIES IN KLAMATH FALLS

Betty Henderson came from Arkadelphia, Arkansas, to Klamath Falls in 1954. Her new home was like nothing she'd ever experienced. The town was very prejudiced. Few jobs were available to Blacks.

But something changed for the town in the '60s. She links the turn in racial politics to the arrival of the Air Force base. The military often

intervened in instances of discrimination against Black officers and their families. Suddenly, Blacks were allowed to apply for many jobs and to rent anywhere in town.

In another part of Klamath Falls, Lee Harris never formally learned about Oregon's exclusion laws. As a "military brat" in Klamath Falls, she didn't need to. Her family moved there in 1958, when





she was 6 years old, and her father went to work on the military base. Lee lived a different reality from that of her civilian peers, like Betty. In Klamath Falls, there were cross-burnings and Blacks had to walk on the left side of the street, but Lee's family lived "the military life."

When Betty first came to town, she made a living cleaning houses. She became one of Klamath Falls' first Black cooks, then later moved on to home healthcare. With the change in racial climate, Whites began attending Black churches and vice versa in the early '60s, helping to bridge White and Black relations.

Lee was the second Black person to work in the school district. By the time she retired in 2009, the district had only hired three Black employees in its whole history.

Raised with the "tools" to deal with racism, Lee often confronted co-workers and other

associates. Her contemporaries even convinced her to become the president of the Classified Employees Union. Through labor fights and her presence in the district office, she built a reputation. People couldn't intimidate her, and few dared to mess with her sons. Now when she goes out, many people recognize her even though she doesn't know most of them.

Lee is one of the few Black people in the small town. People often ask if that bothers her. "I grew up during segregation," she says. "I was always the only one. That don't bother me. I was raised so that I can go and do anything I want to."

Betty notes that Black youth, mostly bi-racial, often leave Klamath Falls to go to school and find jobs in more active cities. But as a retiree, she loves the town's comfort and quiet. "I'll be here until the Lord tells me to move."



POLICY ACTIONS

Urban renewal, law enforcement and related policies that unfairly burden and disadvantage Black communities must be reformed to form a more equitable, fair Oregon for its Black community. To restore confidence in law enforcement and to ensure public safety, we must implement reforms that change the culture and practice of policing, including policies and methods of de-escalation to keep incidents from rising to an excessive use of force.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

1

Support the 10-point plan put forward by the National Urban League, which calls for:

- Widespread use of body cameras and dashboard cameras
- Broken windows reform and implementation of 21st Century Community Policing Model
- Review and revision of police use of deadly force policies
- Comprehensive retraining of all police officers
- Comprehensive review and strengthening of police hiring standards
- Appointment of special prosecutors to investigate police misconduct
- Mandatory, uniform FBI reporting and audit of lethal force incidents involving all law enforcement
- Creation and audit of national database of citizen complaints against police

- Revision of national police accreditation system for mandatory use by law enforcement to be eligible for federal funds
- National comprehensive anti-racial-profiling law

2

Call for thorough review of potentially illegal police actions by an independent investigator.

3

Prevent and reverse the detrimental effects of gentrification through multi-level community development, by:

- Advocating for a community-owned and cooperatively-controlled land bank/trust to be used to fulfill community-development needs and neighborhood stabilization
- Implementing a “Right to the City” policy to reconnect Black people, geographically, to the heart of our Black Community

- Adopting of the HUD mandate to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing, which will de-concentrate poverty and increase integration by creating affordable housing in areas of high opportunity
 - Engaging Black neighborhoods in building supportive institutions like schools and community-based organizations
 - Strengthening housing stability and choice through policies such as rent control, just-cause evictions controls monitoring and enforcement of the Fair Housing Law in the rental market.
 - Securing Black businesses in traditional neighborhoods through development, incubation, access to capital, subsidized leases and location incentives
 - Investing in resources for education, workforce development and job placement in growth industries to ensure Black participation in emerging technological areas
 - Providing capital support and technical assistance to ensure that Oregon’s entrepreneurial values of creativity, innovation and sustainability are lifted up in Black neighborhoods
 - Finding solutions that ensure accountability, monitoring and evaluation of the efficacy of targeted policy interventions
- Prioritizing investments in programs that help people impacted by crime rebuild their lives, such as drug and mental health treatment, alternatives to incarceration and re-entry options
 - Eliminating Measure 11’s automatic transfer of youth to adult court
 - Adopting sentencing policies that address disproportionate school discipline and the ways that “in school” arrests lead to justice involvement
 - Providing additional education and mentoring resources to children of incarcerated parents
 - Prioritizing living-wage jobs and economic security as a core component of all re-entry programs

4 Make key reforms to the Justice System in policies that have disproportionately hurt Black communities, by:

- Eliminating mandatory minimum sentences for low-level offenses and racism in sentencing policies and discretionary judicial decision-making
- Applying Oregon’s new Racial Impact Statements to analyze how various policies affect racial disparities within the criminal justice system

5 Increase civic engagement in displaced neighborhoods to ensure that the voices of Black Oregon are heard, and support a new generation of leaders to foster a growing new electorate and maximize its influence.

WHO CAN MAKE THE CHANGE?

- Oregon Legislature
- Oregon Department of Corrections
- Police departments
- Local planning bureaus
- Business associations
- Neighborhood associations

CHAPTER 8

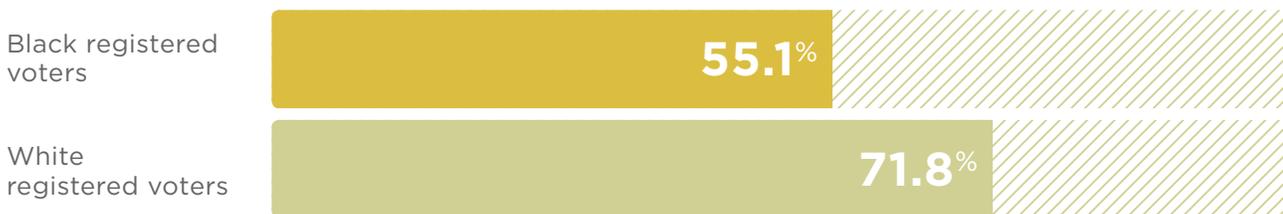
WRITING OUR NEXT CHAPTER

Connecting Black communities across Oregon is key to increasing political influence and securing our role as a political force in the state. It is also an important step for Black Oregonians to play our part fully among the rising American electorate of voters of color, women and youth.

By advancing a distinctive Black political agenda, including policy and elected leadership, we can create a political environment that fosters vibrant, productive communities and healthy generations of Black Oregonians.

We can begin by engaging a new generation of voters and leaders.

2014 General Election Turnout, All Ages



2014 General Election Turnout, 18-24



Black 18-24 Year Old Registration Gap



“We are the ones we have been waiting for”

—June Jordan





LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

Kathleen D. Saadat

Community Activist

Midge Purcell

Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, Urban League of Portland

If our community is to thrive, we must be the leaders we want to see. The legacy of Black leadership in Oregon is proud and deep. The task now is to identify and develop a new corps of courageous leaders who are knowledgeable about power, policymaking and the legislative and electoral process. Elected or appointed, young or old, activists or faith leaders—all can work together to build structures that let us coordinate efforts, communicate effectively, exchange ideas and develop strategies for change.

While we honor the past, new technological tools can help us organize to achieve a viable, prosperous and sustainable future for Blacks in Oregon.

ORGANIZING BLACK COMMUNITIES

Gentrification and its related migration have made it difficult to identify a specific geographic place that is the location of the Black community. While the last census showed that the Black population had diminished in N/NE Portland, it had grown statewide by more than 24 percent. It's time for Black people in Oregon to look beyond historical geography. Wherever we reside, we define the Black community by our shared culture, experience and common set of issues.

For building a Black Oregonian movement, our greatest assets are the network of Black organizations, the faith community and our

dynamic youth. Many of these activists, leaders and students were motivated by the events in Ferguson, Missouri, and elsewhere. In Oregon, we can overcome our dispersal by linking Black individuals and communities statewide with a strong, shared vision; expanding the groups that exist already; and recruiting, training, mentoring and supporting new leaders.

ACTIVATING BLACK VOTERS

As voting rights are being rolled back across the nation, Oregon continues to lead in expanding access to the vote. The push for automatic registration means that our community can focus on mobilizing voters to fulfill an agenda for change. A new generation of Black Oregonians must raise awareness among all Black voters that voting is a small but firm step toward equality and justice.

Let us begin with our youth—preparing all young people to participate in the political process. The next generation of Black leaders must also understand that true leadership means a life of service, a life of building bridges and cultivating unity.

WHAT DOES A POLITICAL STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LOOK LIKE?

- Develop specific actions to win policies and campaigns on issues that affect the Black community in our cities, counties, region and state.



ELECTORAL POLITICS

- Elect decision-makers committed to our agenda and accountable to our communities. Invest in candidate recruitment and development, with a long-term strategy for moving good candidates toward higher office.
- Invest in training a new generation of grassroots political campaign organizers.
- Develop effective electoral infrastructure; use available tools like political action committees and organizations with lobbying capacity; and develop pipeline programs modeled on the Emerge program to prepare Black candidates to run successfully for offices across the state. Ensure that the structures and expertise exist to support their candidacies.

ORGANIZE WINNING CAMPAIGNS

- Develop campaigns led by the most affected communities with tangible results on issues like jobs, education, policing and policies to end gentrification.

COALITION BUILDING

- Build racial justice coalitions led by communities of color and supported by allies. Their combined resources and political coordination can promote agendas that will benefit all low-income and working Oregonians. When all of these are working together, we build long-term movement and community power that will be instrumental in winning victories at the ballot box.



WE ARE ALL BLACK OREGON

Kayse Jama

Founder/Executive Director Center for Intercultural Organizing

Oregon is home to a growing number of Black immigrant, refugee and asylum-seeking communities hailing from Africa, the Caribbean and South America. Because our populations are subsumed under the category Black/African American by the U.S. Census Bureau and state and local jurisdictions, official population statistics remain unavailable. The Oregonian estimated Multnomah County's population of Africans alone at 18,000. Taking all Black foreign-born groups into consideration statewide, the number is likely closer to 25,000, with the vast majority having arrived in the past 15 years as refugees from East Africa.¹

Somalis are the largest African population in Oregon, but there are significant numbers of other East African groups, including Ethiopian, Eritrean, Kenyan, Tanzanian and Ugandan. Other countries of origin include Angola, Mali, Liberia, Togo, Chad, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In my work at the Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO), I've encountered African Oregonians from most of these countries. In addition to people from the African diaspora, Black immigrants and refugees include those from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and other Caribbean islands, as well as Afro-Brazilians and other Black South Americans.

Although most foreign-born Black Oregonians live in the Tri-County Area, many are venturing out to rural areas in search of affordable housing and jobs or have been placed in rural

areas by refugee agencies. Some families have relocated to the small towns of Marion County, such as Woodburn, Mill City and Stanton—and agricultural work in Hermiston has lured a number of Somalis.

Like our American-born brothers and sisters, Black immigrants and refugees struggle with high unemployment rates, acute healthcare disparities and poor access to living-wage jobs. In addition, the majority of foreign-born Black Oregonians face additional difficulties, including cultural and language barriers.

CULTURE SHOCK

Oregon's Black population is linguistically and culturally diverse, but in the eyes of many other Oregonians, all Blacks are the same group. The overt, covert and institutional racism that Black immigrants and refugees experience immediately on arrival is a shock to the system because for them, this is a new concept. Back home, people may identify themselves by their country of origin—such as Kenyan or South African—or even as a particular tribe or clan, but never before on the basis of color. Their resistance to this newly assigned identity isolates them from the American-born Blacks with whom they now have much in common.

This is particularly clear within the education system. Once foreign-born Black children arrive, they're immediately assigned the identity of African American and are treated accordingly. Like American-born Blacks, the immigrants and refugees find their kids falling



behind educationally and being expelled from school at a much greater rate than their White counterparts. Their youth also linger in jails, exposed to the full brunt of our failed criminal justice system. All this is discussed in African homes, but not well understood.

To quote a young Somali man, Omar Shey Omar, “When you are here, people do not care if you are African American or Black immigrant/refugee, they only see you as a Black person.

As a youth I have seen Somalis being expelled or suspended from school. I have seen many young men profiled by the police, and I have seen many youth without jobs or prospects of achieving economic mobility. They treat us like African American youth, but when I go back home, I have to deal with the additional struggles that my parents face because they do not speak English, nor do they understand how to navigate their new country’s cultural and racial dynamics.”



WE NEED EACH OTHER

Bruce Poinsette

Contributing Writer, State of Black Oregon

We hear it all the time. The same people who tell us we're the leaders of the future are often the ones who silence us and refuse to see the work we're doing—the impact we already have.

Politics is more than speeches, voting and protests. Politics emerges from the things that unite us. It's culture, music, fashion and sports. And it's business. In the face of unemployment, we're gradually building economic power through entrepreneurship.

Every time we come together with other Black people, we're building networks. We depend on them for job recommendations and collaborate with them to create galvanizing art, organize political actions and devise innovative business ideas.

At the end of the day, politics is about taking care of our people. We all want stable housing. We all want others to respect our rights. We would all like to be comfortable being ourselves.

But embracing our identity, never mind taking care of our economic needs, can be difficult in Oregon. We're spread out all over the state. Even the largest concentration of Blacks in North and Northeast Portland is dispersing as a result of gentrification. If you live in places like Knappa, Lake Oswego or Klamath Falls, some Portlanders

don't even know you exist. We don't see each other and, as a result, we don't communicate.

As young people, we're going to have to be more intentional about building community. We have to network, coordinate gatherings and use technology to reach out to everyone we can. We live in different parts of the state, characterized by different natural resources, economies and opportunities. We don't have to escape to L.A., Atlanta or New York. The business partner, bandmate or collaborator you've been looking for might be just a two- or three-hour drive away.

Of course, as youth, our resources are limited. We need mentorship, job training and access to gathering spaces. Historically Black organizations like the Urban League provide these things, but many of us don't know this or don't take advantage of it. We feel disconnected because we don't communicate. All we know is what we see in the news and the political campaigns.

Many people ask for our participation but don't address our concerns. Often, it feels as though we don't even get the chance to speak—the chance to be taken seriously. We need to make our presence felt. If we don't feel organizations are serving us, we can go to them and initiate the conversation. Even with our small numbers, we can do so much. But we need each other. We are our most reliable natural resource.



OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We can't forget that the Black community's relationship with law enforcement and the criminal justice system can hinder our efforts to engage new voters. Research shows that negative contacts with criminal justice institutions alter how people perceive government and their own role as citizens. Those who've had even minor encounters with police later vote less often, trust elected officials less and become less involved citizens than their peers who are simply facing economic disadvantages.

- People imprisoned for more than a year trust government nearly 40 percent less than those without any contacts with the criminal justice system.
- When asked how much government leaders "care about people like me," 75 percent of people involved in the criminal justice system said "very little," compared with just 36 percent of similar people with no criminal justice contact.
- Compared with people who've never had contact with the criminal justice system, those who've been arrested but never convicted are 16 percent less likely to "feel like a full and equal citizen" of the U.S. These individuals are also 20 percent less likely to believe that "everyone in the U.S. has a chance to succeed."
- People who've been stopped and questioned by police, or arrested for a crime but never convicted, are about 10 percent more likely than comparable people to express distrust of government.^{3,4}



POLITICS IS ABOUT COMMUNITY

Although Amber Starks didn't know it at the time, a call to Oregon's Board of Cosmetology was about to change her life. She wanted to braid foster children's hair but didn't have a license. Amber says, "If you touch anyone's hair that's outside of your family, you need a license. Volunteering is not an exemption."

The woman on the other line jokingly said that the only way around this was to change the law. Furious, Amber decided she was up for the challenge.

Today, her name is synonymous with the passing of HB 3409, which exempts natural hair care from the state's barbering requirements. Previously, braiders were required to go through 1,700 hours of cosmetology training, which doesn't even include natural Black hair care.

Although changing the law seemed to be a matter of common sense, the process was anything but simple. It took Amber two years of diligence and persistence to see the bill become law. Even though she was the face of the campaign, she emphasizes it was a community effort.

The process started in early 2011. At the time, Amber was going through the Urban League's Social Justice and Civic Leadership Academy. Frustrated by statistics outlining disparities in the Black community, she decided to take action.

After learning Black and Native American kids were over-represented in the foster care

system, Amber chose to pursue hair braiding. "I didn't want to volunteer just for the sake of volunteering. I wanted to do something that would help these kids' confidence and self-esteem."

The Oregon Department of Human Services informed her that she'd need a license. This prompted the frustrating call to the cosmetology board. After that, upset but determined, Amber began searching the web for similar situations in other states. The search led her to an article by Alan Durning that highlighted unfair laws in the Northwest, including the requirements for braiding. Amber reached out to Durning, who helped her draft a letter to her state legislators. Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer and Senator Jackie Dingfelder responded.

Amber followed up with weekly emails until she secured a meeting in the fall of 2011. There, they decided the fairest solution would be an online test for a hair-braiding license. The politicians insisted that Amber work with the cosmetology board and the Oregon Health Licensing Agency to get a bill ready for the next legislative session, a year away.

Over that next year, Amber launched an online petition and social media campaign and attended a number of natural hair care events. Soon, local media took to her story. In particular, she credits *The Skanner News'* Lisa Loving with spreading the word across the country and

encouraging other news outlets to address the issue. The last piece of the puzzle brought Amber full circle, back to the Urban League, which was so enthusiastic that she was hired to be a lobbyist for the bill.

Meanwhile, Rep. Keny-Guyer and Sen. Dingfelder were working diligently with the cosmetology board and the health licensing agency. By 2013, they had the cosmetology board's support. When it came time for Amber to go to Salem, the bill passed unanimously in the House of Representatives. The Senate posed more of a challenge, including a senator who dismissed the bill as "reverse racism." However, it still passed 18-11, including three Republican votes.

Amber notes that HB 3409 was really a perfect bipartisan bill. It was designed to create economic opportunities by eliminating

unnecessary government regulation, and to top that off, it didn't create any additional fiscal worries for the state.

Amber credits her community for the bill's success. While she was the mouthpiece, she praises her representatives and the community organizations that backed her without trying to take control of the bill. She also notes that persistence and not skipping any steps in the political process were essential.

But, at the end of the day, she says that it would've all been for nothing without her passion for what she was doing. "I genuinely care about the way people in my community feel about themselves," Amber says. "For me, this is bigger than money. This is about us having access and choice and being able to use our craft to make a living."





CASE STUDY 21

PROTESTER TO PARALEGAL: FIGHTING FOR HOUSING JUSTICE

In 2009, Fredi Jackson wanted to move closer to her sister in inner Northeast Portland. She found a home right next to her. The house, built in 1936, with two bedrooms—each the size of a closet—and one bathroom, was going for \$325,000. Fredi changed her mind and moved to Gresham. Her new home there, which was half the Northeast price, has four bedrooms, two bathrooms and much more space than her first choice. Many Black Portlanders, hoping to buy in their old neighborhood, are going through the same situation. Fredi says, “They (the City of Portland) make it hard (for us) to buy in the inner city. It’s easier for them (newcomers).”

According to a 2013 report in the *Portland Tribune*, homeowners in North, Northeast and Southeast Portland are paying property taxes based on less than 60 percent of their homes’ true values. East of 82nd Avenue, residents are paying taxes based on 80, 90 and even 100 percent of the true value. “Their taxes are less than mine and their house costs twice as much,” Fredi says. “The tax is unfair and unequal.”²

Fredi’s frustration has led her to become a housing activist. She speaks with local politicians like Senator Jeff Merkley, who held a press conference in front of her home in 2012. Fredi also works with local community activists. In the past, she worked with We Are Oregon, a

group that, among other things, advocated for older Black folks trying to keep their homes. Many were the victims of housing scams and sub-prime mortgages. Fredi, who’s 74, is no stranger to the situation. She’s been battling with Bank of America for the last few years, trying to refinance her home.

Fredi had to slow down her activism because of illness. However, she’s had time to work on the next phase of her justice work—becoming a paralegal. She’s studying at Portland Community College’s Cascade Campus—the only PCC campus with a law program. Her goal is to become a reputable lawyer with a background of winning cases against what she calls “big, greedy banks and scam artists.”

Whenever she can, Fredi urges other people of color to pursue the law. “I think I can work through the law to make differences that I can’t make as a regular person,” she says. “The kind of case I’d be interested in, the legal clinics wouldn’t take.”

Upon completion of her course, she has a job waiting for her in the PCC law department. It doesn’t matter that she’s one of the oldest students in the program. She’s on a mission to make changes. “You don’t need to have a bunch of people to make a difference. That one voice crying in the wilderness is all it takes.”





COMMUNITY ACTIONS

SOCIAL CHANGE



ADVOCACY

This approach speaks the needs of other people.

SERVICE

This approach meets people’s immediate needs. Direct services fall in the “give a man a fish” category.

ELECTORAL

This engages public officials on a deeper level to support the development and implementation of policy initiatives, gets measures on the ballots and encourages people in their communities to vote.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This approach addresses issues such as low-skilled workers or the need for more employees in a particular industry through workforce skill development.

The issues facing our communities are influenced by political, social and historical frameworks. As we deepen our understanding of the issues, institutions and policies that affect our lives, it’s critical that we begin to think about how we effectively advocate for ourselves and for our communities.

Our community has a rich history of building movements and working together to achieve social change. When thinking about how we engage in our neighborhoods, schools, workplaces and faith communities, the Community Actions section can provide a framework for moving forward.

The Community Actions section is meant to serve as a toolkit for social change. It outlines four approaches and provides examples of what you can do to address inequities and improve the lives of people in our communities. Understanding these approaches is critical to the advancement of equity for Black Oregonians.

ADVOCACY

DEFINITION: An individual or group that speaks on others’ behalf.

EXAMPLE: The work of PFLAG Portland Black Chapter and Urban League of Portland is a great example of advocacy.

There is a significant lack of data about the lives of Black LGBTQ people and families locally and across the country. Elevating the visibility of this often hidden population is our first step forward. Black LGBTQ people are parents, children, and families in our community. The Urban League of Portland and PFLAG Portland Black Chapter partnered to produce LIFT EVERY VOICE: The Black LGBTQ Oregonian Experience.

This report allowed others to raise the visibility of this community. It also articulated the unique needs of this historically underrepresented and underserved group.

DIRECT SERVICE

DEFINITION: This approach meets people's immediate needs.

EXAMPLE: Every week, Inger volunteers her time at Tubman Elementary to help close the educational achievement gap for African American school age youth. Tutoring is a great way to meet the immediate needs of people most negatively impacted by an issue. In this case the issue is education equity.

ELECTORAL

DEFINITION: This engages public officials on a deeper level to support the development and implementation of policy initiatives, gets measures on the ballot, elects community representatives and encourages people in their community to vote.

EXAMPLE: VOTE!! Had it not been for the African American vote, we would not have been able to benefit from the legacy of groundbreaking politicians like Senator Avel Gordly, Margaret Carter, JoAnn Hardesty, and Loretta Smith. Are there other Black politicians past or present in the state? With increased representation of Blacks in elected positions, we have a stronger voice and a better chance of influencing policy that addresses inequities in Black communities.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

DEFINITION: Community organizing is a process by which people who are most impacted by an issue organize and take measures to influence the policies and/or culture surrounding them.

EXAMPLE: Public school parents have organized to demand a high-quality education for their children. In 1982, Ron Herndon and others disrupted a Portland Public School Board meeting and insisted that Tubman be located in the heart of the Black community.

taking action:

+ advocacy

+ direct
service

+ electoral

+ community
organizing



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

REPORT FRAMING, POLICY ACTIONS & DATA

FRAMEWORK

The State of Black Oregon 2015 report illustrates the status of Black Oregonians through data, analysis and storytelling. To some, the statistics speak the loudest. To others, the stories and photography that lift up the face of Black Oregon are the most powerful. We believe it is the combination of these elements that help us understand the experience of Black Oregonians and the factors that shape our community today. The analysis—offered by academic experts in national and state policy—ties the data and research to best practice and offers a path toward a healthy, vibrant and engaged community, core to Oregon’s economic growth. The report is not organized in traditional policy “silos.” We have used a framework that looks at the entire individual, family and community through three sections: Children & Youth, Adulthood and Community. It highlights how multiple systems, service agencies and policy intersect with employment, housing and poverty to create either opportunity or inequity for Black Oregonians in key stages of their lives.

The framework assesses the current position of Black Oregonians and future prospects as job opportunities shift toward science, technology, engineering and math, healthcare, and a revitalized manufacturing industry. It has also guided our policy agenda. A holistic approach to policy and practice will produce greater results for all of Oregon.

ABOUT OUR POLICY ACTIONS

Over the next five years, the Urban League of Portland will work with our partners to advance focused, economic justice strategies with measurable outcomes. The policy actions at end of each chapter represent the areas where we believe policymakers, the private sector and public service providers need to apply their best thinking and implement change. These action areas are meant to serve as a guide for more comprehensive policy approaches to economic justice and social change.

THE DATA

This report sources the American Community Survey and U.S. Census for the majority of economic and housing indicators. Portland State University’s Population Research Center assisted significantly with this process. In this report, we used the U.S. Census Bureau’s race and ethnic group of “Black or African American alone or in combination with one or more other races” (BAOIC). With the changing demographics of Oregon, we feel this provides the most accurate picture of Black Oregon today. When we were not able to pull BAOIC data, we used data from the “Black or African American alone” race and ethnic group, which is noted with an asterisk. All data represents state figures unless otherwise noted (i.e. National, local).

All tables, graphs and infographics sources are in the Appendix C data tables, unless directly sourced or end noted. Our research team pulled the remaining data from state sources including-but not limited to-Oregon’s Department of Education, Department of Corrections, Health Authority and Department of Human Services unless noted. We worked closely with state agency partners to ensure the most updated state-level data. Please note that while the availability of quantitative data disaggregated by race and ethnicity has improved, it remains limited, especially on a state and local level. We have tried to complement missing state data with national sources, supporting research and community survey studies. *We will continue to advocate for improved data systems that regularly collect race and ethnicity data.*

APPENDIX B

END NOTES

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APPENDIX C

DATA TABLES

Demographics

Oregon Profile	Black #	Black %	White #	White %	Source
Total Population	98,479	2.50%	3,005,848	78.50%	PRC ¹ , 2010, State [2010 Census: Tables SF1-P5, SF1-P7, SF2-PCT3]
Geographic Distribution					PRC, 2010 Census [Table SF1-DP1]
<i>Astoria</i>	94	1.0%	8,458	89.2%	
<i>Bend</i>	698	0.9%	69,977	91.3%	
<i>Eugene</i>	3,815	2.4%	134,018	85.8%	
<i>Klamath Falls</i>	424	2.0%	17,380	83.4%	
<i>Medford</i>	1,234	1.6%	64,452	86.0%	
<i>Pendleton</i>	306	1.8%	14,507	87.3%	
<i>Portland</i>	45,545	7.8%	444,216	76.1%	
<i>Salem</i>	3,647	2.4%	122,213	79.0%	
Age Distribution					Calculated from PRC, ACS, 2010, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
Under 18	37,099	-	573,013	-	
18-64	56,098	-	1,938,200	-	
65 or over	5,282	-	494,635	-	
Subpopulations					ACS, 2010, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables] (Never Married, Now Married, Divorced does not equal Total Men or Women 15 and Older)
Total Men 15 and older	34,070	54%	1,302,423	49%	
- <i>Never Married</i>	17,122	50.3%	394,387	30.3%	
- <i>Now Married</i>	11,437	33.6%	703,931	54.0%	
- <i>Divorced</i>	4,135	12.1%	152,116	11.7%	
Total Women 15 and older	29,046	46%	1,360,345	51%	
- <i>Never Married</i>	14,444	49.7%	323,552	23.8%	
- <i>Now Married</i>	8,024	27.6%	691,366	50.8%	
- <i>Divorced</i>	3,888	13.4%	193,149	14.2%	
Female householder, no husband present (in family households)	6,449	22.7%	126,646	9.4%	
Grandparents Living w/own Grandchildren under 18	1,350	-	47,076	-	
Grandparents Living w/ and Responsible for Grandchildren	760	56.3%	20,381	43.3%	
Foreign-born Oregonians	8,989	12.8%	-	8.2%	ACS [2010, State] & PRC [Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-Year sample, Extracted using IPUMS USA]
- <i>English first language</i>	-	32.5%		31.7%	
- <i>English not first language</i>	-	66.3%		67.5%	
(Weighted Cases as % of racial category)					
All Homelessness	1,257	5.2%*	13,853	58.0%	OR housing & Comm. Services, 2011, State [Found here: http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/ISD/RA/docs/county-reports/statewide_findings.pdf]
- <i>HUD homeless</i>	864	20%	2,997	69%	
Prevalence of disability for working-age people (ages 21-64)	-	15.7%	-	12%	2012 Disability Status Report Oregon. www.disabilitystatistics.org
Older Adults (65+)	5,282		494,635		PRC [2010 Census: Tables SF1-P5, SF1-P7, SF2-PCT3]

¹ PRC refers to Portland State University's Population Research Center

Overall Note: The U.S. Census Bureau reports individuals identifying as a single race alone (e.g. Black), as well those individuals identifying with one or more of the other major race groups (i.e., White, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race), referred to as "race alone or in combination." And because the bureau considers Hispanic ethnicity separate from race, individuals of any race can identify as Hispanic/Latino.

Geographies Note: Data for other Oregon-specific geographies are available, including the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and City of Portland, but require additional compilation.

All data listed as percentage of Black or White population unless otherwise noted as percentage of total population.

APPENDICES

Black Youth and Families	Black	White	Source
Child population under 18 years	37,099	573,013	PRC, 2010, State [2010 Census: Tables SF1-P5, SF1-P7, SF2-PCT3]
Child population under 18 years - Metro area	25,845	230,911	PRC, 2010, Tri-County Metro [2010 Census: Tables SF1-P5, SF1-P7, SF2-PCT3]
Two-parent households	44%	74%	Children's First for Oregon, 2014, State
Number of foster children per family household by race	585	2,566	PRC, 06-10, state [Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, B09016]
% of Children that are Foster Children	1.6%	0.4%	PRC, 06-10, state [Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, B09016]

Community	Number	Percentage	Source
Black Urban population	93,688	95.1%	PRC, 2010 see below
Black Rural Population *Incarcerated blacks included in rural population data	4,791	4.9%	"
Source: 2010 Census, Tables P5 and P7			

Voting Demographics	Black*	White	Source
2014 General Election Turnout	55.14%	71.8%	2013, State [U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 2014 5 year estimates.
2014 General Election Turnout (registered 18-24 year olds)	30.4%	40.5%	"
Registration Gap	35%	-	"

Economic Opportunity

Poverty	Black	White	Source
% of all people under 18 whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	33.9%	16.3%	ACS, 06-10 [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
% of families with female householder, no husband present, whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	49.2%	27.8%	
Poverty Status by race: Individuals below the poverty level	29.3%	11.7%	PRC, 06-10, State [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B17001]
Poverty Status by race: Individuals at or above the poverty level	70.7%	88.3%	PRC, 06-10, State [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B17001]
Children living at 200% Poverty or below	62%	37%	Children's First for Oregon, 2014, State
Median net worth of households (Nationally, 2013)	\$11,000 (wealth loss : -43%)	\$141,900 (wealth loss : -26%)	http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/12/racial-wealth-gaps-great-recession/
Median net worth of households (National, 2007)	\$19,200	\$192,500	"
Homeless SNAP clients (Portland)	19%	68%	City of Portland, 2013 [Found here: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/513379]

Income Group	United States Householders		Oregon Householders	
	Black	White	Black	White
Less than \$10,000	76.4%	74.9%	92.2%	75.5%
\$10,000 - 19,999	72.7%	62.5%	69.2%	65.7%
\$20,000 - 34,999	60.9%	44.6%	64.8%	48.8%
\$35,000 - 49,999	49.4%	35.2%	61.4%	44.6%
\$50,000 - 74,999	34.3%	25.5%	55.1%	33.6%
\$75,000 - 99,999	22.6%	16.7%	29.4%	19.4%
\$100,000 or more	12.4%	8.7%	12.8%	7.6%
All groups together	41.5%	27.2%	44.3%	32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table C25095

1 Households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs.

2 Margins of error are not shown in this table.

Median Household Income (change over time) ^{1,2}	Black	White	Total population
2000	\$30,454	\$41,779	\$40,916
2006-2010	\$33,171	\$50,822	\$49,260
Change 2000 to 2006-2010	8.9%	21.6%	20.4%

Source: 2000 Census, SF4-PCT089; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B19013

1 Margins of error are not shown in this table.

2 Inflation adjustments from 1999 to 2010 dollars made using data from http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm, accessed 3/12/2014

Per capita income ^{1,2} , Oregon	Black	White	Total population
2000 (inflation-adjusted)	\$17,386	\$29,443	\$27,408
2006-2010	\$15,539	\$28,739	\$26,171
Change 2000 to 2006-2010	-10.6%	-2.4%	-4.5%

Source: 2000 Census, SF4-PCT130; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B19301

1 Margins of error are not shown in this table.

2 Inflation adjustments from 1999 to 2010 dollars made using data from http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm, accessed 3/12/2014

Households that received Food Stamps/SNAP in the past 12 months ¹		Black	White
United States	Total HH Received Food Stamps/SNAP	21.6%	6.3%
	HH 60+ Received Food Stamps/SNAP	4.7%	1.7%
	HH Under 60 Received Food Stamps/SNAP	16.9%	4.6%
Oregon	Total HH Received Food Stamps/SNAP	31.8%	11.5%
	HH 60+ Received Food Stamps/SNAP	5%	3%
	HH Under 60 Received Food Stamps/SNAP	26.9%	8.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey; SF4 Table B22001

1 Margins of error are not shown in this table.

Unemployment	Black*	White	Source
Unemployment rate 2013 Oregon	16.3%	8.7%	Source: US Census, ACS 1 year ACS; s2301
Change from 2008	+3.0 pts	+2.3 pts	
Unemployment rate 2013 Portland	20.7%	7.6%	
Change from 2008	+4.6 pts	+1.1 pts	

Unemployment Rate by Age and Race, Oregon 2013	Black*	White	Source
16-19 years	55.2%	23.4%	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey's 2013 1-Year Estimates
20-24	17.6%	15.9%	
16-24	28.2%	18.1%	
Population 16 years and older	16.3%	8.7%	

Work Status by Gender	Black Women	White Women	Black Men	White Men
2000 (full-time job only)	66%	64.8%	60.6%	65.0%
2006-2010 (full-time job only)	55.2%	63.4%	50.2%	67.5%
Change 2000 to 2006-2010	-10.9%	-1.3%	-10.4%	2.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4, Table PCT082
2010: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B23022
Compiled by PRC
Margins of error are not shown in this table

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Earnings by Race and Ethnicity for Persons in Oregon's Labor Force ¹ (2007–2011)	Black	White alone, Non-Hispanic	Total
Less than \$10,000	33.5%	26.4%	27%
\$10,000 – 14,999	8.1%	7.4%	8.2%
\$15,000 – 24,999	16.3%	13.7%	15.4%
\$25,000 – 34,999	12%	12.8%	13%
\$35,000 – 49,999	13.2%	15.2%	14.5%
\$50,000 – 74,999	10.7%	13.6%	12.7%
\$75,000 – 99,999	4.5%	4.9%	4.6%
\$100,000 – 149,999	1%	3.1%	2.9%
\$150,000 – 199,999	0.4%	0.8%	0.8%
\$200,000 or more	0.3%	1%	0.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007–2011 American Community Survey, PUMS Data Extracted from IPUMS USA on March 12, 2011
¹ Margins of error are not shown in this table.

Job by Occupation by Race/Ethnicity for Persons 16 years and Older in Oregon ¹	Black	White
2000		
Computer, engineering, and science occupations	4%	5.5%
Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations	10.9%	10.7%
Construction and extraction occupations	2.9%	5.4%
Production Occupations	8.9%	7.4%
2006–2010		
Computer, engineering, and science occupations	2.1%	5.6%
Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations	5.8%	11.2%
Construction and extraction occupations	2.7%	5.2%
Production occupations	4.8%	5.5%

Source: 2000 Census, SF4–QT-P27; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey, Table C24010
¹ Margins of error are not shown in this table.

Apprentice Discrimination, 2006–2010	Black	White
Completion rates	21.5%	54.5%
Termination rates	78.5%	45.1%

Source: Oregon Commission on Black Affairs and Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries Status Report on the Disproportionately High Termination Rates for African Americans Apprentices in 2006–2010, Nora Arevalo-Meier, pgs. 8 – 12, 2014

Adult Education	Black	White	Source
Community College Enrollment	2.3%	56.1%	Oregon Minority Teacher Report, 2014, state
Admitted OUS Compared to OR HS Grads	1.9%/2.5%		
Oregon University System Enrollment by Race	2.1%	67%	Fall 2012, OUS
GED Test Takers vs OR population	6%/2%	66%/85%	City Club of Portland, 2014 report-- 2012 data year, State, page 69 [Found here: http://media.oregonlive.com/education_impact/other/A%20Second%20Chance%20for%20Oregon%20High%20School%20Dopouts%20and%20the%20GED.pdf]
GED Test Pass Rate	75.3%	92.8%	2013, Annual Statistical Report on the GED test Report
% of GED test candidates in Correctional Centers	8.5%	66.1%	2010 GED testing srvs.

Black Business	Black	Source
Black Owned firms (% of total)	1.2%	Census, 2007, state [2007 Economic Census: Survey of Business Owners]

Arrests and Incarceration	Black	White	Source
Incarceration rates by race, # of people incarcerated per 100,000 people in that group	3,195	506	Prison Policy Initiative, 2010, Racial Disparities tabel: http://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/OR.html
Parole recidivism: Cumulative % convicted of any felony- % convicted in 12 months	17.6%	13.7%	Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2010 report, 97-08 Data years http://www.oregon.gov/CJC/docs/oregon_arrest_rates_by_race_1997_2008.pdf
Probation recidivism: Cumulative % convicted of any felony- % convicted in 12 months	10.7%	11.7%	

Policing (Portland)	Black	White	Source
Citywide Hit Rate of Stopped Drivers for all contraband (all hits that resulted in contrabands)			
All contraband	33.6% (of all hits)	39% (of all hits)	Portland Police Bureau, report year 2015, data year 2013;
Citywide Race at stops of pedestrians (traffic & Patrol)	17% (of all hits)	70.9% (of all hits)	"
Citywide Race at Stop of driver (traffic & Patrol)	12.8% (of all hits)	71.7% (of all hits)	"

Stable Housing

Access and Affordability	Black	White	Source
Household by type - Owner occupied	32.3%	65.2%	PRC, 2010 [Source: 2010 Census, Table SF2-HCT2; margin of error not shown]
Household by type - Renter occupied	67.7%	34.8%	"
Public Housing, distribution by head of household's Race as a % of 50058 Received	3%	92%	HUD, 2013-2014, Resident Characteristics Report
Mortgage Lender Denial Rates	20%	13.6%	2012, Metro Region [Found here: http://www.golocalpdx.com/news/portland-latinos-and-blacks-denied-mortgages-at-twice-the-rate-of-whites]
All homelessness (includes race & ethnicity information all people counted who were experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. This includes those who were: staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing, were turned away from a shelter due to lack of space, were provided a voucher for a motel or campground instead of space within an emergency shelter, or were living unsheltered).	5.2%	58%	OR housing & Comm. Services, 2011, State [Found here: http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/ISD/RA/docs/county-reports/statewide_findings.pdf]

Affordable Housing Units and Eligibility ¹	Black #	Black*	White #	White
Extremely Low Income <= 30% MFI	8,606	35%	212,806	15.7%
Very Low Income <= 50% MFI	12,404	50.5%	397,444	29.4%
Low Income <= 80% MFI	16,540	67.3%	648,760	48%
Number of Affordable Housing Units in Oregon			63,057	

¹ Households by race at or below the indicated County Median Family Income table,

Source: United States Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov>), 2013 ACS 5-year estimates tables: B19113, B19001A, B19001B

Table note: HUD-defined Income Limits:

30% MFI = Extremely Low Income

50% MFI = Very Low Income

80% MFI = Low Income

Data source: Oregon's Affordable Housing Inventory, maintained by Oregon Housing and Community Services, 1/30/2015

Data note: units include all funded affordable housing units from Oregon Housing Community Services as well as HUD, Rural Development, and local Housing Authorities

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Transportation	Black	White	Source
Transportation Profile (Community to work)			ACS, 06-10, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
Car, truck, or van—drove alone	65.2%	73%	
Car, truck, or van—carpooled	10.4%	9.9%	
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	13.1%	3.8%	
Walked	4.2%	3.8%	
Mean travel time to work of workers 16 years and over who did not work at home (min)	25.2	22	ACS, 06-10, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
Multnomah Co.	26.6	24.1	
Washington Co.	27.4	24.1	
Clackamas Co.	30.1	26.2	
Tri-County Area-Average	28	24.8	

Youth Success

School Readiness	Black	White	Source
Percent of families with female householder, no husband present, whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	49.2%	27.8%	ACS, 06-10, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
Children from low income families on SNAP, who live in a metropolitan county and moved at least once*	67.4%	61.2%	"Suzanne Porter & Mark Edwards (2014): Household and economic factors associated with geographic and school mobility among low-income children, Journal of Children and Poverty, DOI: 10.1080/10796126.2014.979140
Children from low income families on SNAP, who live in a metropolitan county, moved at least once and moved across a school boundary*	61.4%	52%	"
Hunger in Household+ (not age adjusted)*	11.6%	8.8%	State, 2010-2011, NOT age adjusted, Data from OHA BRFSS survey
Food Insecurity in Household (not age adjusted)*	44.1%	18.7%	
% of Children with Asthma	8.8%	5.4%	CDC, State, 2008
Eligibility for Free or Reduced Lunch	74.9%	41.4%	ODE, 13-14, provided by Office of Deputy Superintendent

Disproportionate Discipline Rates	Black	White	Source	
Discipline Rates - Elementary	% suspended	9.99%	PRC, 12-13, State, Oregon Department of Education (ODE)	
	% expelled	0.09%		
Discipline Rates - Middle	% suspended	19.55%		
	% expelled	0.46%		
Discipline Rates - High School	% suspended	17.78%		
	%expelled	1.01%		
Discipline Incidents by Race, 12-13, with one or more incidences in school year	14.4%	6.1%		ODE Report card, 12-13, state

Race definitions available at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/schoolanddistrict/testresults/reporting/asmtsubgroupdefs1011.pdf>; last accessed 5/23/2014

School Profile	Black	White	Of Color	Source
Teacher Demographics	0.6%	91.7%	8.2%	ODE, 12-13, State (also in minority report p.16)
School Admin Demographics [2088]	[43] 2%	[1872]89.6%	[173]8.3%	provided by Oregon Department of Education for school year 2013-14
Superintendent [198]	[1] 0.5%	[193]97%	[4] 2%	
Assistant Superintendent [58]	[0] 0%	[51] 88%	[7] 12%	
Principal [1173]	[29] 2.5%	[1043] 89%	[101]8.6%	
Assistant Principal [477]	[13] 2.7%	[410] 86%	[54]11.3%	
SpEd Administrator, director [145]	[0] 0%	[140] 96%	[5] 3.4%	
SpEd Administration, other [102]	[0] 0%	[96] 94%	[6] 5.8%	
Student Demographics	2.5%	64.7%	35.3%	OR Minority Teacher report
Non-Charter Enrollment	2.5%	64%	36%	ODE, 12-13, report card
Charter School Enrollment	1.9%	79.3%	20.6%	ODE, 12-13, report card
Preschool enrollment (percentage of 3-4 year olds enrolled in pre-school)	55%	57%	-	CFO, 2014
2013-14 Special Education <i>% of Special Education v. Total enrolled population</i>	3.4% v. 2.5%	63.7% v. 64.7%	36.3% v. 35.3%	provided by Oregon Department of Education for school year 2013-14
% of Students in Special Education	18.3%	13.2%	-	

Oregon School Achievement	Black*	White	Source
State Benchmarks Math			PRC, 12-13, State
3rd grade	40.2%	67.8%	
5th grade	37.8%	63.7%	
8th grade	40.3%	67.4%	
11th grade	40.5%	72.8%	
State Benchmarks Reading			PRC, 12-13, state
3rd grade	49.8%	73.7%	
5th grade	48.1%	74.2%	
8th grade	46.4%	72.8%	
11th grade	64.6%	88.5%	

Source: Oregon Department of Education (ODE); <http://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/Navigation/Navigation.Web/default.aspx#/PAGR>
Race definitions available at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/schoolanddistrict/testresults/reporting/asmtsubgroupdefs1011.pdf>; last accessed 5/23/2014

Portland School Achievement by Race and Ethnicity	Of Students who took State Assessment, percent achieving Meeting or Exceeding Status on last assessment			Average Daily Attendance
	Reading	Math	Science	
Pan African students	36%	25%	21%	94%
African American who are NOT Pan African	49%	34%	34%	92%
White	85%	77%	82%	94%

Source: This table was provided by Jared Kobak in the Research & Evaluation Department of Portland Public Schools. The data represents students from the 2014-2015 school year, and their most recent OAKS State Assessment test status. Student enrollment data was pulled on February 23, 2015.

Graduation Rates	Black	White	Source
Graduation Rates 4 year	57.1%	71%	PRC, 12-13, State, Oregon Department of Education
Graduation Rates 5 year	59.4%	75.2%	PRC, 12-13, State, Oregon Department of Education
Drop out Rates	21%	10.6%	ODE Report, 2009

Race definitions available at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/schoolanddistrict/testresults/reporting/asmtsubgroupdefs1011.pdf>; last accessed 5/23/2014

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Educational Attainment 25+	Black	White	Source
Less than a High School Diploma	18.1%	8.1%	PRC, 06-10, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010, Table SF4-DP02, Extracted using IPUMS USA
HS Diploma only	22.4%	26.1%	
Some College	37.2%	35.8%	
Bachelor	16.6%	19.1%	
Graduate	5.7%	10.8%	

Margins of error are not shown in this table.

Race definitions available at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/schoolanddistrict/testresults/reporting/asmtsubgroupdefs1011.pdf>; last accessed 5/23/2014

Higher Education		Black	White	Source
Retention of first-time freshman entering OUS institutions 2002-03 through 2008	Graduation rate	44.4%	54%	Oregon University System
	Stopped out	52.5%	42.7%	
Retention of first-time freshman entering OUS institutions 2007-08 through 2013	Graduation rate	46.1%	56.5%	
	Stopped out	47%	40.5%	

Juvenile Justice	Black	White	Source
Referral Rates ^{1,2}	2.54	1	Oregon Youth Authority, report year 2012, (DMC) Disproportionate Minority Contact report [Source: http://www.oregon.gov/oia/dmcs/2012/FINAL/DMCReport2012FINAL.pdf]
Referral Rates: Public Order (Ratio to WHITES: 4.3) (2009)	179	81	Oregon Youth Authority, Report year 2011, (JJSNA) Juvenile Justice System Needs Analysis [Source: http://www.oregon.gov/oia/dmcs/2011/FINAL/JJSNA_Juvenile_Justice_System_Needs_Analysis_Feyerherm_March_2011.pdf]
Average number of referral per referred youth	2.2	1.8	OYA, 2012, DMC report
Male	2.4	1.8	
Female	2.0	1.7	
Prevalence Rates (per 1,000) total	166.5	90.6	OYA, 2012, DMC report
Male	202.8	113	
Female	127.6	67	
Rate of cases transferred to adult court ¹	4.32	1	OYA, 2012, DMC report
Rates of Recidivism per 1,000	43.5	27.8	OYA, 2011, JJSNA
Cases petitioned rate ¹	0.77	1	OYA, 2012 DMC report
Referral rates of activity (OYA) (per 1,000 youth aged 10-17 in the population)	183	72	OYA, 2012 DMC report
% of Measure 11 indictment compared to general population	19% (4% of pop.)	61% (75% of pop.)	Safety & Justice, report year 2011, State [http://www.safetyandjustice.org/files/MM-Race%20Black.pdf]
Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities ¹	2.12	1	OYA, 2012, DMC report

¹ Relative Rate Index compared with White youth

² A referral is a written report or statement documenting juvenile justice involvement, which may or may not result in an arrest.

Foster Care and Adoption	Black	White	Source
Children Served in Foster Care	7.0%	68.6%	Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book 2013, state
% Of Children that are foster children	1.6%	0.4%	PRC, 06-10, [Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, B09016]
Entered Foster care	4.5%	54.9%	Health and Human Services, Child Welfare, 2012, State, http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/downloads/pdfs/oregon.pdf
Exited Foster Care	3.6%	60.5%	Health and Human Services, Child Welfare, 2012, State, http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/downloads/pdfs/oregon.pdf
Count of Children Removed	5.4%	66.9%	Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book data compiled by Natalie Seney & Angela Long, 2013, State
Ratio Median Months of Foster care*	22.47	18	Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book data compiled by Natalie Seney & Angela Long, 2013, State

* Of children discharged, the median number of months to discharge

Higher Education Support	Black	White	Source
Nationally, bachelors Degree Recipients with \$30,500 or more student loan debt	27%	16%	Center for American Progress (CAP), 2010, NATIONAL, source: https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2013/05/16/63533/borrowers-of-color-need-more-options-to-reduce-their-student-loan-debt/
Nationally, % of students who did not finish their college degree due to high tuition costs	69%	43%	
Nationally, % of students who borrow money	81%	65%	

Health and Wellness

Economic Security	Black	White	Source
Low Poverty Areas	57%	79%	Children's First for Oregon, 2014 / MAP
% of all people under 18 whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	33.9%	16.3%	ACS, 2010, State [06-10 ACS Survey selected population tables]
% of families with female householder, no husband present, whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	49.2%	27.8%	
Median Household Income	\$33,171	\$50,822	PRC, 06-10 [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B19013]
Poverty Status by race: Individuals below the poverty level	29.3%	11.7%	PRC, 06-10, State [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B17001]
Poverty Status by race: Individuals at or above the poverty level	70.7%	88.3%	PRC, 06-10, State [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B17001]
Children living at or below 200% Poverty level	62%	37%	Children's First for Oregon, 2014
Per Capita Income	\$15,539	\$28,739	PRC, 06-10 [U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Table B19301]
Hunger in Household+ (not age adjusted)*	11.6%	8.8%	State, 2010-2011, NOT age adjusted, Data from OHA BRFSS survey
Food Insecurity in household(not age adjusted)*	44.1%	18.7%	
Public Assistance	(31.8%)	(11.5%)	
Homeless SNAP clients (<i>local percentage of total</i>)	2,227 (19%)	8,027 (68%)	City of Portland, 2013 [Found here: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/513379]
Total Households that received food stamps/SNAP in last 12 months (<i>state</i>)	9,038	146,752	PRC, 06-10 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey; SF4 Table B22001

* Those were results from our 2010/2011 race oversample survey of African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and Asians/Pacific Islanders. The data were combined with completed interviews (both landline and cell phone) from the same three groups from the regular BRFSS survey in 2010 and 2011.

APPENDICES

Health Outcomes	Black	White	Source
WIC Participants by race/ethnicity (Participants may identify with multiple racial or ethnic categories; approx. 1/3 of WIC participants who ID'ed as Black also ID'ed as White, 2,682)	5% (7,921)	89% (143,627)	Oregon Health Authority, data tabulated by Becky Seel, 2014, total partic. 161,335
First Trimester initiation of Prenatal care	63%	75%	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Immunization rate for 2 y/o	74%	73%	
Uninsured Children*	4%	6%	
sUtilization Rate of Preventative Services for 11+ covered by OHP (<i>youth and adults</i>)	1.28	0.91	
Utilization Rate of Preventative Services for Children Birth-10 YO*	4.01	4.21	
Female Breast Cancer EARLY Stage of Diagnosis	62%	74%	
Female Breast Cancer LATE Stage of Diagnosis	38%	26%	
% of Oregonians 19-64 No Health Insurance	28%	20%	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
Diversity of Healthcare workforce vs. OR adult pop .	2%/2%	86%/82%	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Distribution APD and DD Clients Served	4%/2%	83%/84%	
Infant Mortality (deaths per 1,000 live births)	8.9	5.2	CDC, 2008, http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr61/nvsr61_08.pdf
Low birth weight	11%	6%	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Domestic Violence before pregnancy	9%	3%	
DV during pregnancy	4%	2%	
Child Abuse/Neglect Victims (Race comparison, children in OR 3.3% black, 68.8% white)	5.5%	60.7%	Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Data Book 2013, state
Teen pregnancy rate per 1,000 females 15-17	34.1	16.8	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
% of Adults who are Overweight	31.7%	35.0%	Oregon Health Authority, 2011, State
% of Adults who are Obese	33.6%	25.7%	
% of 8th graders who are Overweight	19.2%	13.9%	Oregon Health Authority, 2013, State
% of 8th graders who are Obese	15.4%	8.6	
% of Adults with High Blood Pressure	41%	25%	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
% of Adults who smoke	30%	20%	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
% of Adults w/Diabetes Rates	13.4%	6.2%	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
% of Adults w/asthma	16.5%	10.10%	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
% of Children w/Asthma	8.8%	5.4%	CDC, State, 2008
HIV/AIDS diagnosis by race/ethnicity in Oregon	7%	70%	Oregon Health Authority, Epidemiological Profile, 2012, source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/DiseaseSurveillanceData/HIVData/Documents/EpiProfile.pdf
Treatment Admissions (MH) in Portland	11%	70%	SAMHSA, 08
New HIV/AIDS Diagnosis/ 100,000 cases	17.5	5.4	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Rates of Infection compared to White OR	3.8 times more likely	-	Oregon Health Authority, Epidemiological Profile, 2012, source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/DiseaseSurveillanceData/HIVData/Documents/EpiProfile.pdf
% of Black w HIV in OR Foreign-born (Foreign born Blacks comprise 28% of living Oregon Black and African American HIV cases)	28%	-	Oregon Health Authority, Epidemiological Profile, 2012, source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/DiseaseSurveillanceData/HIVData/Documents/EpiProfile.pdf

Health Outcomes	Black	White	Source
Chlamydia incidence per 100K	900	-220	Oregon Health Authority, State Health Profile, report year 2012, Source: http://public.health.oregon.gov/About/Documents/oregon-state-health-profile.pdf
Years of Life Lost before age 75	7,708	6,047	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Homicide Rates per 100,000	7	2.6	Oregon Health Authority, Violent Death Reporting System, report year 2012, source: https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/InjuryFatalityData/Documents/NVDRS/Violent-Deaths-%20in-%20Oregon-%202012.pdf
Suicide Rates per 100,000	6	21.4	Oregon Health Authority, Violent Death Reporting System, report year 2012, source: https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/InjuryFatalityData/Documents/NVDRS/Violent-Deaths-%20in-%20Oregon-%202012.pdf
5 year Avg Homicide Rate among males (per 100k)	12.4	2.9	Oregon Health Authority & Oregon Department of Human Services, State of Equity Report, 2013, http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Documents/soe-report-ph2-2013.pdf
Firearm fatality rate per 100,000	7	13	Oregon Health Authority, Violent Death Reporting System, report year 2012, source: https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/InjuryFatalityData/Documents/NVDRS/Violent-Deaths-%20in-%20Oregon-%202012.pdf
Violent Death Rate per 100,000	15	26.8	Oregon Health Authority, Violent Death Reporting System, report year 2012, source: https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/InjuryFatalityData/Documents/NVDRS/Violent-Deaths-%20in-%20Oregon-%202012.pdf

Health Coverage	Black	White	Source
Health Coverage – Private	53.3%	69.9%	PRC, 2012
Health Coverage – Public	39.4%	32.4%	
Health Coverage – No Health insurance	15.2%	12.9%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2012 American Community Survey, 1 - Year Estimate, Table S0201
 1 Margins of error are not shown in this table.

APPENDIX D

BLACK OLDER ADULTS FOCUS GROUPS EXPLANATION OF ANALYSIS

The purpose of the focus groups was to hear first-hand perspectives and experiences of Portland's older Black population on issues related to health and aging, quality of life, neighborhood and place, race and racism, the impact of gentrification and other significant issues as defined by focus group participants. Findings were written to inform the State of Black Oregon 2015 report. The following report is a summary of focus group findings.

METHODS

Participants were recruited using paper and digital flyers. Five focus groups were held with the number of participants per group ranging from six to nine. Total number of participants was 41, though only 39 participants completed the brief demographic survey administered at the start of each group. Focus groups took place at two centers in North Portland: four focus groups were at the Urban League of Portland and one group at the Q Center. Participants received an information sheet about the purpose of the focus groups and completed a brief demographic survey preceding discussion. The focus group moderator for each group asked the same set of open-ended questions based on a semi-structured moderator guide, as well as follow-up questions that allowed for further probing into issues and experiences brought up within each group. Focus group discussion was approximately one hour. Discussion was digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. Participants were compensated for their time with a \$25 store voucher and provided with light, healthy refreshments.

ANALYSIS

Focus group transcripts were entered into Atlas.ti 7.0 qualitative software program. Transcripts were coded for recurrent themes and salient issues. Themes and salient issues were analyzed and summarized by Drs. Croff and Boise, who are trained in qualitative research methods. Representative quotes for themes and salient issues were selected for inclusion in this report.

LIMITATIONS

Focus group participants were Portland and near-Portland area residents and African American, which limits our understanding of the wider geographic and more diverse Black population in Oregon. While a focus group for African immigrants and refugees was arranged, circumstances beyond our control resulted in cancellation of this focus group.

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY RESULTS

Thirty-nine of the 41 focus group participants elected to fill out the demographic survey prior to group discussion. The demographic survey asked about gender, year born, marital status, highest level of education completed, employment status, household income, if the participant is caring for relatives or others in the same home, how many people are currently living in the household, what area of Portland does the participant live in and how long has the participant lived in his or her current location. The following tables present demographic results from the 39 participants that completed the survey. Numbers in parentheses indicate number of participants.

APPENDIX E

SUMMARY OF IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES COMMUNITY SURVEY

In 2014, the Urban League conducted a community survey of Black Immigrant and refugee Oregonians in an effort to go beyond the limited data that are available. There were a total of 134 surveys completed. Out of 134 participants, 82 were male, 50 were female and two declined to answer the gender question. The demographic percentages only take into account those who answered single questions, not whether they filled out the survey completely.

BETTER SURVEY & DATA COLLECTION

This survey had certain limitations due to a lack of sufficient resources and time. First, it was available only in English with the intention of working with community translators—which proved more challenging than anticipated due to lack of funding and community translators. Consequently, the results are biased toward immigrants able to read and write in English.

Future surveys/data collection should be translated into one or more languages spoken by African immigrants. Additionally, translators and/or community members should be recruited to support collection of data from non-English-speakers as well as those with limited reading abilities.

Due to limited access to computers and other technology, it is critical that adequate funding be allocated for survey/data collection. The survey was statewide, but due to our limited abilities to travel, a majority of responses came from the Portland metro region. In order to capture a statewide snapshot of African immigrant and refugee communities, resources should be allocated in additional geographic areas.

APPENDIX F

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS OF “AN ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL INEQUITY”

HOW THE ANALYSIS WAS CONDUCTED

The study area was the City of Portland. Two key data sets were used to map the proximity of the Black population to known or potentially contaminated sites. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) maintains a database that tracks sites with known or potential contamination from hazardous substances. PRC mapped the DEQ’s Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database as points, and compared the spatial patterns of the hazardous waste sites to the percent of the total census tract population that is Black or Black in combination with one or more other races.

PRC reviewed research literature on environmental justice mapping and found that there are three general methodologies used to define spatial proximity to hazardous sites. These methods are described by Maantay et al. (2010) as: (1) spatial coincidence analysis; (2) distance-based analysis, and; (3) pollution plume modeling. Spatial coincidence analysis assumes that the potential exposure to the environmental hazard is confined to the areal unit of analysis (e.g., census tract, ZIP code, county). Distance-based analysis assumes that the potential exposure to the environmental hazard is confined to a particular distance from the source of the hazard. Pollution plume analysis assumes that the potential exposure to the environmental hazard is influenced by both the characteristics of the hazard (e.g., chemical toxicity, rate of dispersion) and the local geologic and meteorological conditions. Spatial coincidence analysis and pollution plume analysis book end these three methodologies in terms of complexity; with the former being the most straightforward and the latter being the most complex. PRC opted to use a generalized distance-based method in which a continuous distance was measured rather than a discrete distance from each ECSI site. This choice was influenced by a key limitation of the ECSI data; the diverse types of environmental hazards in the ECSI database complicate the choice of an “appropriate” buffer or discrete distance within which to measure potential exposure to the hazard.

Rather than define a particular distance surrounding each site, PRC measured the distance to the nearest known or potentially contaminated site from the center of each census tract. In turn this yielded a measurement of the cumulative percent of the Black population living within a continuous distance band from the nearest DEQ site. This output is graphed as a function of distance from the nearest known or potentially contaminated site.

IMPORTANT CAVEATS AND TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are a few important caveats:

- The ECSI database is not a comprehensive list of known or potentially contaminated sites.

APPENDIX F cont.

- The ECSI database only includes contaminated sites reported to DEQ knows about—meaning there are likely additional sites not included in this data set. According to the DEQ, sites are added to the ECSI database through the following means: “investigative efforts by DEQ’s Site Assessment Program; referrals from other DEQ programs or from other agencies; reports of chemical spills; citizen reports/complaints; or data submitted voluntarily by site owners/operators.”
- A site being listed in the ECSI database does not necessarily imply that it is actually contaminated.
- Confirmation of contamination is not a requirement in order for a site to be listed in the ECSI database.
- The environmental hazard level varies widely and is not easily measured among the sites listed in the ECSI database.
- There is no clear way to categorize the ECSI sites by their level of hazard. The absence of this information makes it difficult, if not impossible to accurately assess the level of risk a site poses to nearby populations.
- The density of known or potentially contaminated sites is not measured.
- The distance calculations only measure the distance from the center of each census tract to the nearest single ECSI site; therefore this measurement does not capture the densities of known or potentially contaminated sites relative to census tracts with high percentages of Black residents.
- In summary the data available for analyzing issues of environmental justice are in many cases incomplete, limited in scope, and are not kept up to date. Due to these limitations, PRC recommends that any future analysis of environmental justice in Portland must rely on a more robust dataset or employ advanced spatial methods.





Published by

URBAN LEAGUE OF PORTLAND

10 North Russell Street
Portland, OR 97227
(503) 280-2600
www.ulpdx.org

Printed by 