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DJCO

Shining a light

A bill in front of the Oregon Legislature would require contractors to list the names of their general partners before getting a state license. **Page 3**

11 new construction bidding opportunities listed today. **Page 8**

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68 new public notices and calls for bids published today. **PAGES 15-25**

BOLI files complaint against contractor

State Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian says K&O Contracting violated employees' civil rights

By REED JACKSON
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An Aloha siding and roofing contractor allegedly violated civil rights laws when it retaliated against workers who had filed a complaint against the company with the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries.

An investigation by BOLI determined that K&O Contracting LLC suspended employees, reduced their hours and spread "malicious" rumors about them as punishment for approaching the agency with concerns about being misclassified on a project. Based on the results of the investigation, state Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian has submitted a complaint against K&O with BOLI's Civil Rights Division. The complaint could result in fines for the company, which also operates as KO Construction.

"We're gearing up the agency for an aggressive prosecution because of the level of intimidation that these employees seemed to be under,"

— BRAD AVAKIAN
Oregon Labor Commissioner

fantastic business community, but there are those employers that will try to gain an unfair advantage over competing businesses by doing some terrible things."

The employees' original complaint, filed in March 2012, focused on their work on an elementary school project in South Salem. The employees claimed that K&O had listed them as carpenters, and had paid them a corresponding prevailing wage. But the 12 workers said they actual-



Sam Turner/DJC
Jack Menashe, president of Ruben J. Menashe Inc., is hoping to break ground this summer on a 76-unit multifamily apartment building on North Williams Avenue. Plans for the project have been revised more than once after members of the Boise Neighborhood Association voiced concerns about the building's size.

North Williams project tries to find middle ground

Jack Menashe is ready to break ground on multifamily building, but some neighbors concerned about size

By LEE FEHRENBACHER
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Growing up is hard to do, especially when it comes to neighborhoods and development.

Rubén J. Menashe Inc. wants to break ground in June on a 76-unit, 78,000-square-foot multifamily apartment on

North Williams Avenue. The developer is striving for a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design gold rating, and plans to include 108 bike parking spaces as well as an automated car-stacking system able to accommodate 62 vehicles. But even though the company and neighborhood residents have spent the

See WILLIAMS, Page 4

Habitat for Humanity students build a future while learning construction

Salem program helps both young people and low-income homeowners

By TOM HENDERSON
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Brooke Jackson doesn't mind — too much — being one of only two girls in a class of 10 young people learning construction skills through the Habitat for Humanity chapter in Salem.

"There's a lot of pressure to stay in the program because you're a girl," the 17-year-old said. "It's like, 'Go Team Girl!'"

Natasha Epperson, 18, said being a girl in the class can be cool. "It's nice to prove that not only guys can do this kind of work," she said.

Tony Frazier, the executive director of Habitat for Humanity's Mid-Willamette Valley affiliate in Salem, smiles when he hears that kind of talk. "It means we're doing our jobs," he said. Teaching young people con-



Tom Henderson/DJC
John Watkins works on a table saw for a Habitat for Humanity construction class in Salem. Students in the class do basic exterior home and sidewalk repair for low-income homeowners.

Bill targets contractors' secret partners

Before getting state license, construction firms would be required to list names of general partners

By TOM HENDERSON
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Shady contractors sometimes hide under layers of business names and partnerships, Craig Smith told members of the Senate and Business and Transportation Committee on Monday. That's why the administrator of the Oregon Construction Contractors Board wants to stop them.

"Sometimes there's a legitimate need to set up a somewhat complicated business structure, but it can make it difficult to find who's at the end of the chain," Smith said. As the Oregon Legislature kicked off its

ARCHITECTURE

ZGF scores high-profile client in Colorado

Other Portland-based design team members include PAE Consulting Engineers and KPFF Consulting Engineers

By LEE FEHRENBACHER
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ZGF Architects in Portland is celebrating a big win in the form of a new client.

The Rocky Mountain Institute, an independent, nonprofit think tank devoted to innovation in sustainability, has selected ZGF Architects to design its new office building in Basalt, Colo. While the details of the project have yet to be ironed out,

the plan is to make the building highly sustainable and replicable from a construction standpoint.

"Rocky Mountain is the kind of nonprofit group that is really pushing the boundaries and barriers to the environmental movement, and figuring out ways to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels," said Kathy Berg, a principal at ZGF who will be working on the project. "So they have come to the table very eager to think outside the box and explore new possibilities."

"They also learn life and job skills such as the importance of showing up on time."

Armed with their budding construction skills, the students do basic exterior home repairs for people who meet low-income eligibility guidelines. "The idea is we're trying to preserve low-income housing," Frazier said.

Independence city officials are also helping students by letting them do minor sidewalk repairs.

"A lot of times we find cracks in people's sidewalks, and they don't have the ability to do anything about it," said Shawn Irvine, the city's economic development director. "This helps both the homeowners and the students."

Other partners in the program include Polk HALO, a career service organization in Polk County funded by Job Growers Inc., and the Boys & Girls Club of Salem, Marion and Polk Counties.

Habitat and its "A Brush With Kindness" program for low-income homeowners received a \$20,000 grant from Job Grower to start the program this year. "Hopefully, this will be the first of many annual programs," Frazier said.

This pilot project will run through June, with homeowners picking

tion of the business."

State Sen. Fred Girod, R-Stayton, said the bill troubles him. Even general partners have a need in some cases for anonymity, he said. If the bill's intent is to nab lawbreakers, he added, that ought to be specifically spelled out in its provisions. "This is a bazooka where we need a BB gun," Girod said. "A lot of people get involved in these things because they don't want their names out there."

Smith admitted the problem is small. "It is really only one out of a thousand contractors," he said. "The ones who are really bad are good at hiding who the owners are." He cited the web of businesses

Berg said the office building will be between 15,000 square feet and 20,000 square feet. Done right, its design and construction could be a good model for future projects, since most office buildings are of a similar size, Berg said.

ZGF will also be working with John Breshnars of Portland-based a2 (Architectural Applications), and Colorado-based Graybeal Architects. Other design team members include Portland-based PAE Consulting Engineers, KPFF Con-

up the cost of materials used. Frazier said the program could be expanded to other cities.

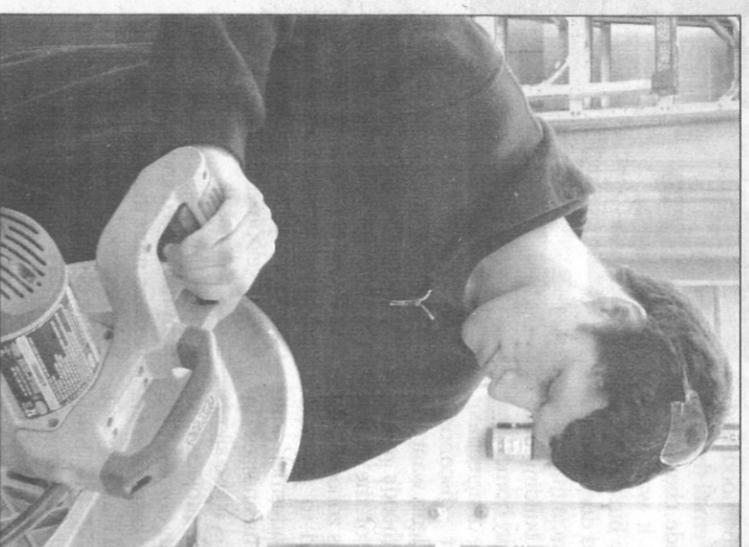
Construction students have been helping Independence for years, Irvine said. In 2009, the city received federal stimulus money, and 95 students in the HALO program installed picnic shelters in three local parks, repaired half a mile of sidewalk, planted flowers and removed noxious weeds along stretches of Ash Creek.

Irvine said at least 70 percent of the young people involved in those projects eventually found jobs or went on to further their education.

Through the new program, students receive 240 hours of training and earn a certification recognized by the SEDCOR Construction Alliance, which represents the building industry in the Willamette Valley.

"That's huge for the future of these young people to be recognized by certification," Frazier said. "We've tried to position ourselves as part of the solution in terms of workforce development. Employers respond favorably, he added.

"I've got employers telling me they want to hire our kids," he said. "That's the goal we're working for. I



Tom Henderson/DJC
Dustin James, 17, keeps an eye on his work during a Habitat for Humanity construction class in Salem.

had one contractor who said he'd rather have a kid who is just learning roofing so he can train him his way rather than an experience for a few more years of experience."

That excites Dustin James, 17. "This could lead to a paid job," he said. "They could possibly give

me some kind of paid apprenticeship to learn even more."

Epperson is not so sure about a career in construction but is still glad she's in the program. "Even if I don't do this kind of work, I think the skills I'm learning will be really helpful," she said.

Habitat: Certification recognized by construction alliance

Continued from Page 1

struction skills – and getting them excited about it in the process – is why Salem Habitat joined forces with similar organizations as well as the city of Independence to offer the program.

It is available to young people who have just gotten their General Educational Development (GED) certificates or are in the process of getting them, and who happen to find themselves what educators call "basic skills deficient." In other words, they miss some basic skills for getting and holding a job.

On the surface, the program teaches students basic construction skills. However, they also learn a lot more.

"It teaches you basic things like measuring and math," Jackson said. "You also have to communicate with people so you don't get mixed up. I think that's a good life skill to have."

Leslie Hayase, the program coordinator for Job Growers Inc., one of the partners in the program, said Jackson is not alone in his realization.

"A lot of the kids are able to grasp math concepts because of the work they do," Hayase said.

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