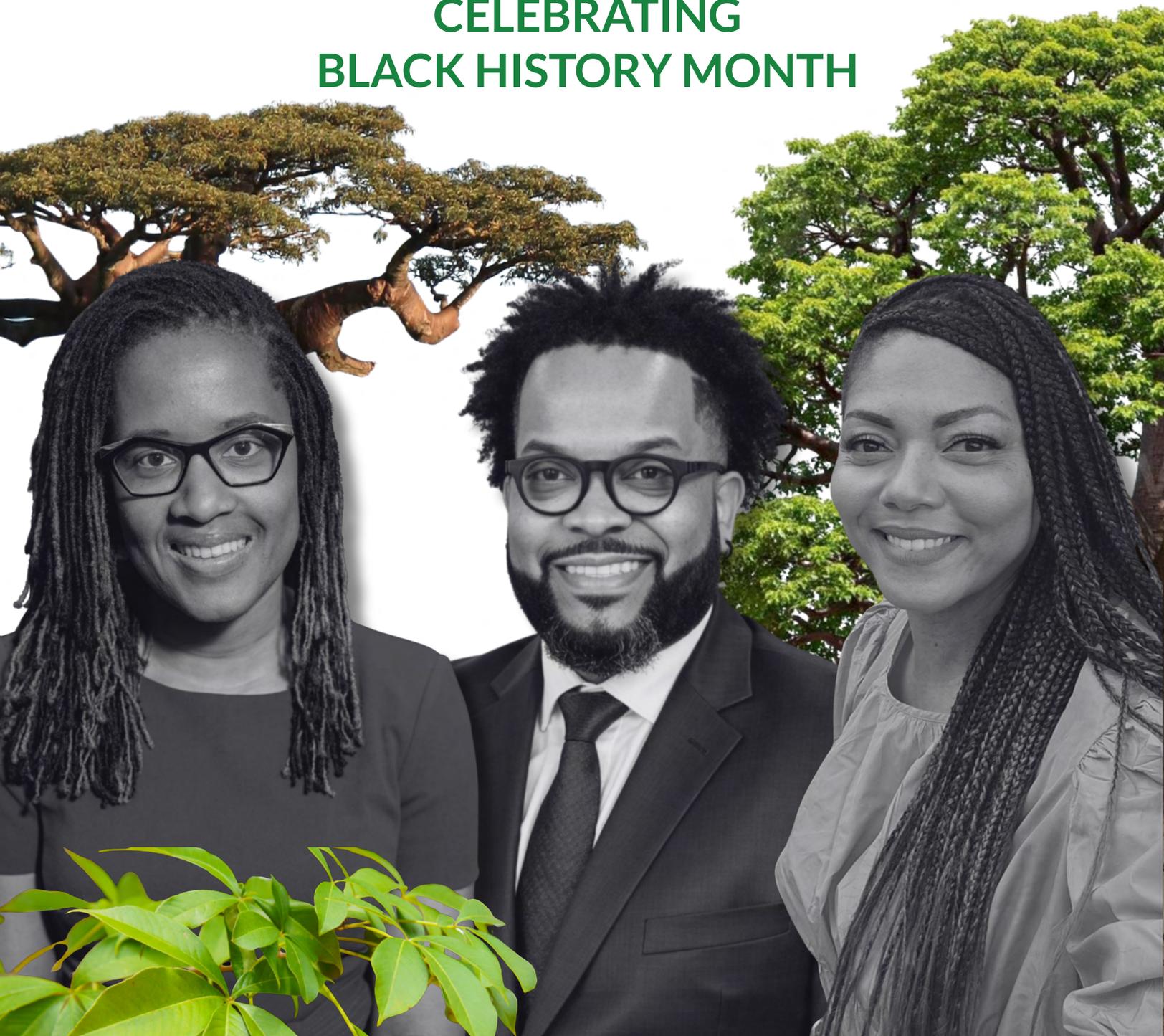


WE ARE OHSU

CELEBRATING
BLACK HISTORY MONTH



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every February, we celebrate Black History Month, that recognizes and honors the contributions, achievements and culture of Black Americans in the United States.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson also known as the “Father of Black History,” dedicated his career to African American history and believed that young African Americans were not being taught about their heritage or knew about the achievements of their ancestors. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) was established in 1915 by Dr. Woodson, an organization founded to promote, research and preserve Black life, history and culture to the global community. His work led to the establishment of Negro History week in 1926 and with continued advocacy from Dr. Woodson and others, Black History Month was established in 1976.

When Dr. Woodson created Negro History Week, he realized the importance of focusing on a theme to bring to the public’s attention. The 2026 Black History Theme is “A Century of Black History Commemorations,” celebrating 100 years of organized Black History recognition since Dr. Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926.

BOABAB TREE

Throughout this magazine edition, different aspects of boabab trees were used. The Boabab tree is rooted in African culture, also known as the “Tree of Life; symbolizing resilience and life.



WE ARE OHSU

CHANELL D. WALKER

Chanell D. Walker often goes back to her lineage; grounding herself in the people, experiences, and stories that made her who she is today. In doing so, she honors both the obstacles and achievements that shaped her path and the legacy she continues to carry forward.

“It’s very important that we know where we came from... it plays into your level of perseverance,” Walker said.

For Walker, lineage is more than background. It’s the foundation of who she is and how she moves through the world. She does not see herself as self-made, but as someone shaped by generations of movement, resilience, and sacrifice; a perspective she carries wherever she goes, shaping how she connects, leads, and creates community.

MOTION WITHOUT FEAR

For Walker, movement is not something to fear; it’s something she was raised to embrace. Her approach to change is shaped by generations of perseverance, where each step forward expanded what was possible for the next.

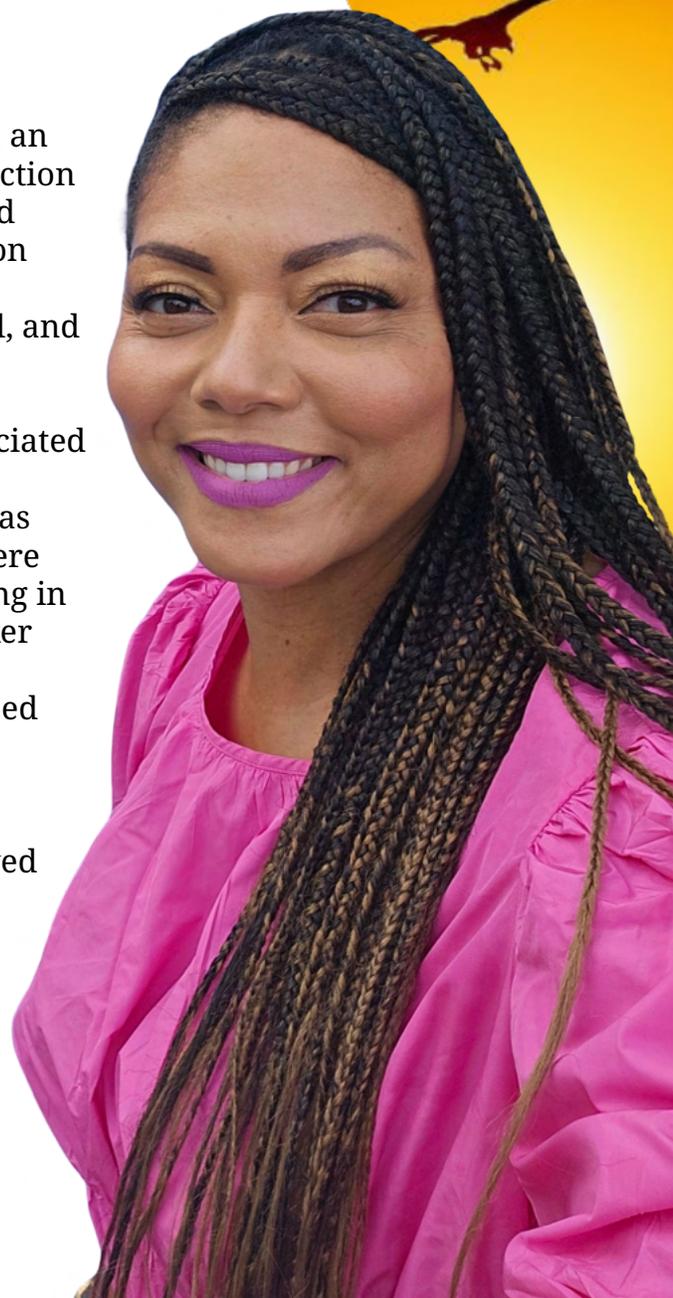
In her family, progress looked

different across generations. Walker’s grandmother was the first to complete middle school. Her mother became the only one of her siblings to pursue career-specific training and certification, while Walker is the only one in her family to pursue a bachelor’s or graduate-level higher education.

Her mother would later relocate for a new opportunity, where she met Walker’s stepfather, an entrepreneurial construction contractor from Trinidad and Tobago. That decision broadened how Walker viewed migration, travel, and the world.

“There was no fear associated with moving away from the familiar because I was raised by people who were blazing trails and thriving in uncharted places,” Walker said, reflecting on how relocation was normalized early in her life.

With roots in Macon, Georgia, her family moved to Chicago in search of opportunity. Years later, her mother continued that pattern, relocating to Fort Lauderdale, Florida in pursuit of career advancement, as a biomedical engineer;



reinforcing the belief that growth often requires stepping into the unknown.

For Walker, relocating represents possibility.

“We’re not trees. There’s something powerful about realizing you can move somewhere new and stretch your capabilities,” she said.

Three years ago, that same mindset led Walker to Oregon. A move rooted not in uncertainty, but in opportunity and in her continued desire to build community wherever she goes.

A CONNECTOR IN MOTION

Walker’s journey has not followed a linear path; it has been shaped by creativity, adaptability, and a willingness to grow beyond traditional roles.

Raised in performing arts schools, she developed an early love for costume design, set design, and fashion, discovering her passion for creating and reimagining.

That creativity, paired with her passion for organization and ideation, shaped her early career in retail, where she moved into operations and logistics management roles. She managed large teams in fast-paced, customer-facing environments with competing demands. There, Walker sharpened her instincts for leadership, learning how to solve problems in real time and build connections.

“I grew up around very goal driven, side hustle, secondary occupation people... I am proud to be a serial entrepreneur,” Walker said.

Her passion for fashion led her to open her own vintage shop, where she sold upcycled pieces, transforming existing materials into something new. But even as she found success, Walker didn’t see herself

confined to one industry. Instead, she saw her skills as transferable, allowing her to move between spaces with confidence.

There is something grounding for Walker in creating with her hands.

“Something about creating something and then stepping back and seeing it, knowing you built it; it feels like an accomplishment,” she said.

That same sense of creation extends beyond fashion, shaping how she builds teams and creates spaces where others can grow.

“Don’t count yourself out. Learn it, apply for it, try it, be it, do it,” she said. “Let someone else tell you no, but never tell yourself no.”

That ‘never quit’ mindset ultimately led her to healthcare. After moving to Oregon as an operations and logistic manager supporting the expansion of a catering company, Walker began exploring new opportunities. Inspired by her mother’s path and driven by her own desire to grow, she turned her attention to OHSU.

At OHSU, Walker’s work sits at the center of patient care, ensuring that environments where healing happens are safe, welcoming, and ready for those who need them the most. As a perioperative environmental services supervisor, she leads



a team, supports staff, and collaborates across departments, serving as a bridge between people, spaces, and care.

Walker's leadership extends far beyond operations; she's intentional in how she shows up for her team, creating a sense of belonging through everyday actions.

"I have a gift for connecting and meeting people at any level," she said. "Even if that means I'm calling and saying 25 individual good mornings," she said, describing the small but meaningful ways she builds connection.

For Walker, leadership is about ensuring that no one feels overlooked. "I want everyone to feel seen, heard, and respected," she said.

That same commitment to connection extends beyond her department. Through her involvement as the development chair in the Black Employee Resource Group (BERG), Walker has helped cultivate community within OHSU while building connections with leaders across the Portland metro area, creating a space where others feel supported and connected.

"My original goal for joining BERG was friendship. I was looking for community," she said. Seeing an opportunity to grow a space, Walker took

initiative in helping create structure and more defined leadership opportunities within her group. "I created the titles because it's what the ERG needed, while also leveraging the strengths of our leads," she said. "People thrive when they have something to work toward."

Outside of work, Walker remains grounded in giving back. She is a member of the Junior League of Portland, mentors others, attends local theater events, and volunteers with organizations such as Feed the Mass, Portland Opera, and NW Children's Outreach. "In the spirit of Sankofa, I believe in giving back...each one reach one," she said, a reminder to keep learning while reaching back to support others.

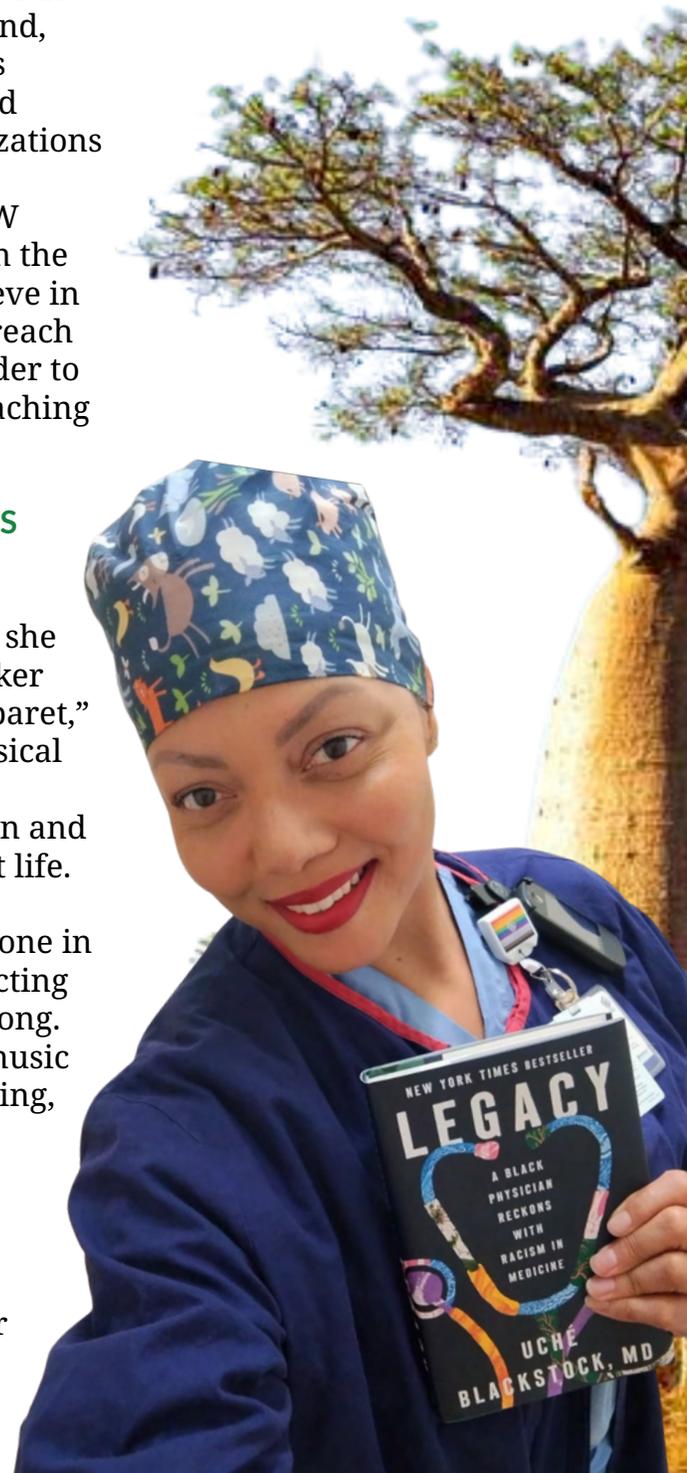
A RHYTHM THAT MOVES HER

When asked what song she feels connected to, Walker pointed to "Life is a Cabaret," a number from the musical Cabaret, a reflection of embracing the unknown and living a full and vibrant life.

"What good is sitting alone in a room," she said, reflecting on the message of the song. "Connections are life, music is energy, it's transcending, and it's movement."

The song serves as a reminder for Walker to live fully and find opportunities wherever she goes. She doesn't

just move through spaces; she creates them, shaping connection and possibility wherever she lands.



WE ARE OHSU

CONSTANCE TUCKER

Constance Tucker often describes her approach to educational innovation and leadership through a simple metaphor: the ‘academic gardener.’

“I like to think of myself as a gardener in an educational way, cultivating educators and learning environments,” Tucker said. At the root of her garden are her values that have shaped her life; lessons about preserving history, resilience, and service to community that began early in her life.

THE BUFFALO SOLDIER WHO INFLUENCED HER OUTLOOK

Tucker often reflects on the lessons she learned from her

grandfather through the stories he shared. William Jones, a Buffalo Soldier and prisoner of war, left a lasting impression through his resilience.

A Buffalo Soldier was a term used for African American soldiers who served in segregated U.S. Army regiments beginning in 1866. Known for their bravery and resilience, they developed a reputation as some of the best-trained soldiers in the Army. Jones enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1941, becoming one of the last Buffalo Soldiers before deploying to Korea in 1950, where he was captured and taken prisoner. Along with others in the 10th Cavalry, he endured horrific conditions, including no beds and eating rice that damaged his teeth, yet he remained hopeful. So hopeful that fellow prisoners gave him the nickname “Preacher,” as he read Bible passages and shared words of encouragement to keep their spirits up.

After 20 years of service, Jones returned home and started a used lumber and glass business, committed to providing affordable materials to help neighbors build and repair their homes.

“My grandfather’s experiences shaped the way I think about resilience, as well as one’s mindset and attitude around tough things,” Tucker said. “If you grow up with someone who tells stories

of resilience, you gain hope about what people can overcome.”

Through these stories, Tucker learned the power of storytelling and how sharing lived experiences preserves history and honors those who came before us.

“I feel like I have an obligation to tell their stories and build resilience in service to community,” Tucker said. Those lessons continue to shape how she approaches leadership today.

FINDING VOICE IN THE FACE OF HARM AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

During college, Tucker received a scholarship and was later invited to attend a gala with other student recipients and donors who made it possible. What began as a moment to celebrate her achievements and those of her peers quickly became a defining experience when a donor made racist remarks during a conversation at her table.

“I remember thinking, no one is saying anything... like maybe I’m the only one that heard that,” Tucker said. “I was frozen and hoping somebody would say something.”

In that moment, Tucker came face to face with a difficult realization.

“There are people out there

who are absolutely thinking things that are racist... and what do you do about that?” Tucker said.

While she didn’t find her voice at the table, the experience stayed with her.

“While I didn’t find it at the table, I did find it after, using my own words to bring awareness to this experience,” Tucker said.

Determined to ensure it wouldn’t happen again; Tucker wrote a letter and met with university leadership to advocate for change.

“I didn’t want it to happen again, to anyone,” she said.

That experience became a turning point, shaping how she understands voice, advocacy, and leadership.

“It highlights how we choose to have voice and advocate for others who may not be able to,” Tucker said.

This experience didn’t just shape how Tucker uses her voice; it also shaped how she creates spaces for others to use theirs.

ROOTED IN VALUES TO CREATE A PROSPEROUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Tucker serves as vice provost for educational improvement and innovation at OHSU, where she works across the university to support



Tucker's grandfather, William Jones

educators and strengthen learning environments. Trained as an educational psychologist, her work; one grounded in listening, asking questions, and helping others grow.

Her work spans everything

from supporting faculty development to helping solve complex challenges across the institution, all with the goal of strengthening teaching practices and creating environments where educators and learners can thrive.

“Really, I’m a problem solver. Some days you’re celebrating what’s working and other days you’re helping someone navigate challenges,” Tucker said.

CULTIVATING BELONGING THROUGH LEADERSHIP

Beyond problem-solving, Tucker’s work is rooted in creating environments where people feel seen and heard. Through deep listening, she fosters meaningful conversations across OHSU, helping individuals feel connected and supported. She believes belonging is not something that happens by chance, but something that must be intentionally cultivated.

Drawing from her own experiences, Tucker focuses on curiosity and connection, often using questions to better understand the perspectives of others.

“‘Help me understand’ is safer for me than ‘how dare you,’” Tucker said.

“Inclusion can feel messy and complicated, but when you do the work in community, you start to see moments of awe,”

Tucker said.

For Tucker, building inclusive environments is about reflection, growth, and creating a space for dialogue; ensuring that people feel valued not just for what they do, but for who they are.

Tucker finds joy in small moments where her skills help move a conversation, project, or a person forward. She reflects on what energizes her to continue being an ‘academic gardener,’ sharing some of her favorite blooms; moments from her work that stand out.

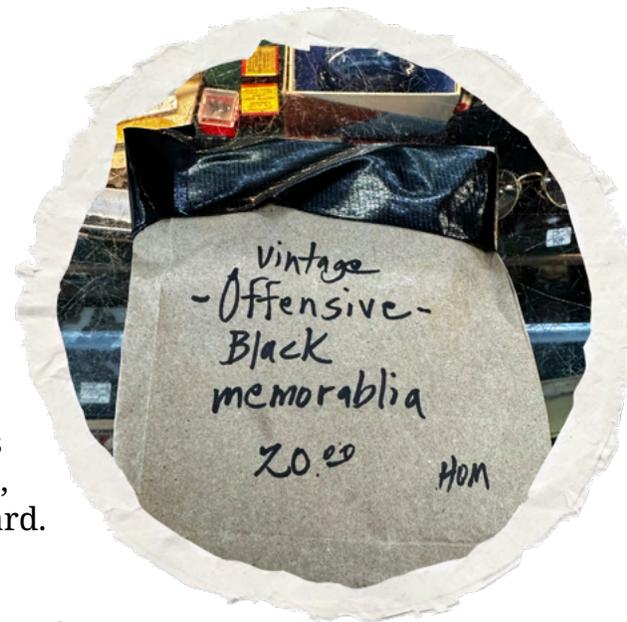
“There are moments where you see your value added, and you feel like you’re a piece of that larger puzzle,” Tucker said. “The little things like the one-on-one conversations where you made someone think differently. Pouring into people brings me joy.”

PRESERVING HISTORY THROUGH ARTIFACTS AND STORYTELLING

Through the stories of her grandfather, Tucker developed a deep appreciation for storytelling early on, eventually coming to see it as a responsibility.

In her free time, Tucker searches across the Pacific Northwest, visiting vintage shops in hopes of finding Black Americana — artifacts that often reflect painful and

One of Tucker’s shop finds.



dehumanizing portrayals of Black life, alongside important historical representations.

Rather than turning away from these items, Tucker intentionally collects them as a way to preserve history, educate others and reclaim narratives, serving as a reminder not only of the past, but of the resilience and stories that continue to shape the present.

Inside her home, Tucker has created what she describes as her own personal museum; a space that invites conversation, reflection, and a deeper understanding of history by preserving stories. “My way of doing something about it is storytelling, collecting it, holding it,” she said.

Tucker hopes to pass down these artifacts to her children, sharing history with future generations. “I want people to

see the contrast; this is what people may say and have said, but this is who you are.”

“Being in the present means holding on to the past and telling the stories,” Tucker said. “Some parts of history are painful, but if we don’t hold onto them, we start to forget.”

THE SONG THAT KEEPS TUCKER GOING

When asked what song best reflects her life, Tucker pointed to two songs. ‘Alright’ by Kendrick Lamar and ‘Brown Skin Girl’ by Beyoncé, both rooted in challenge and celebration. “There’s something in both songs that reflects our storytelling, the acknowledgement of difference, the challenges that come with it, and the celebration of it all in one,” Tucker said, sharing why both songs bring her joy. “I have to dance to both. It might be a chair dance at work, but it’s a full-on mom dance at home.”

For Tucker, these songs reflect more than a moment; they reflect a mindset rooted in resilience, truth and growth.

“He’s saying we’re going to be all right, and it’s not all right. We’re going to be,” Tucker said, describing the message behind Lamar’s song.

That perspective, sitting in discomfort while still moving forward, mirrors

how she approaches her work, her leadership and the environments she helps cultivate.

As an ‘academic gardener,’ Tucker understands that growth doesn’t happen overnight; it takes care, intention and willingness to nurture something over time. Whether she is creating space for others to find their voice, building environments where people feel they belong or preserving stories that might otherwise be lost, her work is rooted in the belief that what we plant today shapes what can grow tomorrow.



WE ARE OHSU

JARROD LOCKHART

For Jarrod Lockhart, education was never just a career path; it was rooted in family life. Raised in Birmingham, Alabama, in a family of educators, Lockhart quickly understood the power education holds and the opportunities it could create.

His parents instilled the belief that education is the foundation of opportunity.

“Education was always a conversation within our household,” Lockhart said.

Committed to their children’s success, his parents made a promise to put each of them through college debt-free, whether through scholarships or their own support.

Lockhart’s commitment to learning carried him far beyond his bachelor’s degree, leading him to earn both a master’s and a doctorate. His educational journey eventually came full circle as he stepped into the role of an educator himself, focusing on preparing the next generation of learners through pathway programs.

For more than two decades, Lockhart has worked to expand access to education by building partnerships between schools, universities,

and community organizations that strengthen pathways into STEM and health care careers.

Today, Lockhart serves as assistant vice provost for education outreach at OHSU, where he also directs the Office of Science Education Opportunities and serves as an assistant professor of academic and student affairs. Through initiatives such as OnTrack OHSU, Lockhart helps connect middle, high school, and college students to health care and STEM pathways while expanding opportunities for students across Oregon.

THE POWER OF PATHWAY PROGRAMS

Jarrold’s mother, Brenda Lockhart, was a guidance counselor, and his father, Charles Lockhart, Sr., was a principal at the same school. Interestingly, Lockhart initially ran away from a career in education because he saw how much work his parents did, convinced that he wanted to become a physician. As a high school student, Lockhart took part in a medical pathway

internship that changed the trajectory of his life; a program designed to expose students to careers in medicine



through experience and conducted research. This led him to an undergraduate position in the School of Education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. There, while teaching STEM programming in local middle and high schools, he discovered his true passion for education. “Pathway programs show students what they want to do — but also sometimes what they don’t want to do,” Lockhart said.

“These programs changed my life, and now I get to help create that experience for other students.”

BUILDING A SENSE OF BELONGING

Lockhart’s work begins long before students

step onto the OHSU campus, building pathways that help students imagine themselves in health care and laying the foundation for opportunity. “My work focuses on students who are not OHSU students just yet,” Lockhart said. “We’re helping them see what’s possible before they ever get here — I love that my work takes me outside of the office and into communities across the state.”

Growing up as a Black man in the South gave Lockhart deep awareness of how access and representation shape educational opportunity. “There were moments where I did everything right, but the color of my skin still limited my access,” Lockhart said.

Now, through pathway programs at OHSU, he works to build that sense of belonging long before students arrive on campus, something he believes institutions should cultivate before enrollment.

“These programs build belongingness well before they get to our doors,” Lockhart said. “When they walk through the doors later as students, they already know they belong here.”

GUIDED BY MENTORS

The work Lockhart does today is also shaped by the people who guided him along the way and influenced the type of leader he strives to be.

Lockhart’s face lights up as he begins talking about his strongest personal mentor, his mother, Brenda Lockhart. He recalls how she created a space filled with unconditional love at home, with her students, and in the community — an environment that allowed him to grow and thrive but also shaped what kind of educator he’d become.

“My mom taught me to step back and look at situations with empathy for other perspectives,” Lockhart said, noting it remains one of the most important lessons he carries with him today. Throughout his career, Lockhart has also been shaped by mentors who trusted him early on and encouraged him to step into leadership opportunities. “These experiences taught me to advocate not only for myself, but for people who aren’t at the table.”

Lockhart also draws inspiration from leaders who paved the way long before his own career began, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Shirley Chisholm, and Rosa Parks. Growing up, Lockhart heard stories from his parents and grandparents who experienced racism and threats during the civil rights era, strengthening



The Lockhart Family

his understanding of the sacrifices that created opportunities for future generations.

These stories shaped how he understands his work today. For Lockhart, expanding pathway programs and educational access is part of a larger legacy of perseverance. “We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us,” Lockhart said. “Even if we don’t see the change in our generation, we still have to do the work.”

CARRYING THE WORK FORWARD

For the Lockhart family, education has always been the foundation of opportunity; a belief that has guided him throughout his life and his career. Today, he carries that belief forward through his work, helping students discover possibilities they may not have once imagined for themselves.

Some of the most meaningful moments often come long after his students complete their pathway programs. Lockhart smiles when talking about former students who reach out years later to share milestones in their lives.

“These moments really bring me joy and make my soul happy,” Lockhart said.

When asked what song best reflects this chapter of his journey, Lockhart points to “Glory,” by Common and John

Legend — a song that speaks to progress and perseverance.

“This song reminds me that progress doesn’t happen overnight. We’re continuing work that generations before us started,” Lockhart said. “It’s a reminder that the work we do today is part of a much bigger journey, helping the next generation go further than we did.”



Student Affairs leadership team at OHSU.

WE ARE OHSU

OHSU is a diverse campus with members with different identities. Diversity is one of our core values, and we strive to create an environment of respect and inclusion. We acknowledge that diversity is not always seen, and we want to be intentional. We Are OHSU is an initiative to highlight OHSU members. This will go on all year long, where we can uplift and celebrate members of all communities, highlighting their impact on campus and their daily lives and showing everyone the wonderful communities we belong to.

BY: JHOSELYN DE LA GARZA HERNANDEZ LOPEZ

Editorial direction, interviews, and design

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