



THE

PORTLAND

SENIOR EXPERIENCE

PDXSX

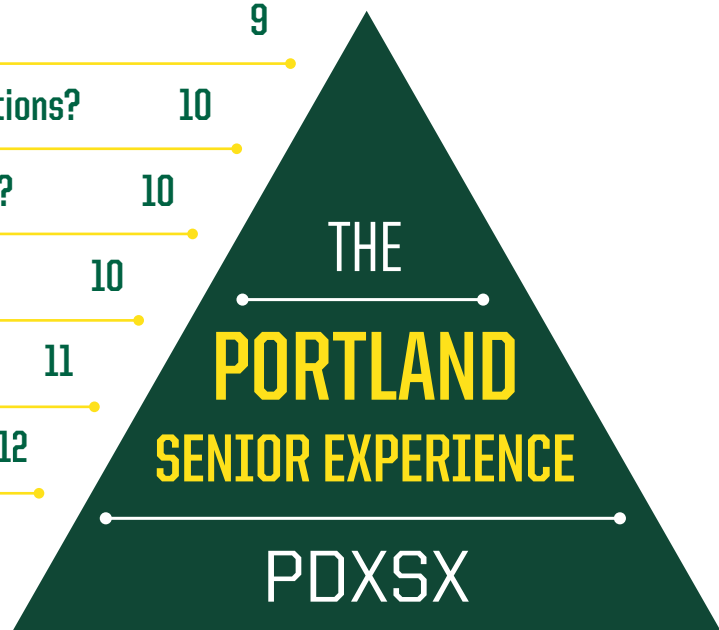


UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

School of Journalism and Communication
George S. Turnbull Portland Center

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What is the Portland Senior Experience?

The Portland Senior Experience (PDXSX) is one of the premiere college internship programs offered through the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC). This nationally recognized program provides SOJC students in their final term of college the opportunity to gain hands-on professional experience.

PDXSX internships are very competitive. Typically more than 60 applicants apply for the 25-30 positions offered each year. To gain admission, students must maintain good academic standing (2.9 GPA or higher), have previous professional or internship experience, express and demonstrate strong professional communication and social media skills, maintain a professional-level portfolio of work samples, pass a multi-person academic screening panel, and have current faculty recommendations.

The PDXSX, which has more than 100 professional partners, has served more than 200 students since 2006. The job placement or internship extension rate for each cohort has been higher than 60 percent. And during the spring quarters of 2010, 2011, and 2014, more than 75 percent of PDXSX participants had internships extended or were offered full-time employment upon graduation.

The PDXSX helps students begin careers while allowing our professional partners to see the impressive talent available from the University of Oregon SOJC.

Do students earn academic credit for their time with our organization?

Yes. All students who participate in the PDXSX program earn academic credit for their internship that counts toward their overall credit requirements for graduation. Confirmation letters attesting to a student's academic credit may be obtained from the PDXSX program director.

"Participating in the PDXSX program gave me experience interning for a major agency in Portland that I never would have been able to gain on my own while completing my final coursework."

-Jeff Pollock, Davis Elen

The PDXSX takes place twice a year:

FALL (SEPT.-DEC.)

SPRING (APRIL-JUNE)

SOJC DISCIPLINES

ADVERTISING

BROADCAST JOURNALISM

MAGAZINE

MEDIA STUDIES

NEWS EDITORIAL

PHOTOJOURNALISM

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Why should your organization partner with an academic internship program?

Ask yourself, How much does it really cost, in terms of time and resources, for your organization to search, find, hire, and train an entry-level employee before your organization reaps any return on its investment? In most cases, the cost and time commitment is substantial, reliance on an untested employee is risky at best, and the potential for future performance is uncertain.

But what if you could mitigate these uncertainties, increase productivity with limited resources, work with a potential employee on a trial basis, and deliver a “total win” opportunity to your organization and several other parties?

The writing is already on the wall. Organizations are asking employees to do more with less, improve productivity, take on more responsibility, and, above all, do so profitably. According to academic research and the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), professional experience in any form is one of the key traits that an entry-level applicant can offer an organization. And participating in an internship program is one of the best ways for an employer and a young professional to cooperatively augment this expertise.

Traditionally, internships have served as a bridge between classroom learning and professional experience for highly motivated young people, providing hands-on experiential learning and career preparation. The benefits to individuals who pursue internships are well documented, including higher entry-level salaries, stronger professional skills, and higher levels of job satisfaction.

Professional organizations also stand to gain from partnering with an academic institution’s internship program, because interns can take on projects that

employees neglect or shuffle from person to person. Interns also often boast an unmatched level of enthusiasm, comfort and evolving familiarity with new technology, and very low compensation expectations.

Research shows that partnering with an internship program helps professional organizations significantly reduce their cost-per-hire basis while increasing their pool of highly qualified candidates. What’s more, moving an intern into an entry-level position can save substantial initial investment costs because that individual is already familiar with the organization, internal structure, products, industry, and ongoing projects, whereas a new hire will require extensive ramp-up time. In the event that an intern does not work out, it’s far easier to cut ties without having to deal with the costly process of letting an employee go, such as severance packages, coworkers’ emotional distress, unemployment issues, or lawsuits.

For organizations with entry-level employment needs that require specific training or skills, internship programs also fulfill long-term strategic needs for developing and maintaining a recognizable brand and presence on a university campus. This is a boon when economic times are tough, candidate numbers are low, and competition for the best students is fierce. Partnering with a university-supervised internship program with a track record of matching top-tier talent with local businesses provides a pool of talented young professionals from which to draw.

As Kathleen Hickey notes in her 2003 article “Fair Trade,” an internship is “a tradeoff of giving people a good experience for their career, good coaching, in exchange for good work, a lot of work, and not a real high salary.”

The University of Oregon, the School of Journalism & Communication, and the George S. Turnbull Portland Center look forward to partnering with your organization.

Josh Netzer
PDXSX Program Director

*Originally published in The Portland Business Journal
March 26, 2010*



How do I get an intern?

All internships are coordinated through the faculty program director:

Josh Netzer

PDXSX Program Director and SOJC Instructor
University of Oregon, George S. Turnbull Center
70 NW Couch St
Portland, OR 97209
(503) 412-3661
jnetzer@uoregon.edu
@joshnetzer
pdxsx.com

If your organization is interested in working with the PDXSX program, please call or email the program director to discuss your opportunities, the skills your ideal candidate should possess, and the scope of work you visualize for an intern.

For fall term internships, you should contact us by August 15, and for spring term internships, you should contact us by January 15. You may also contact us before August or January to ensure an intern opportunity for your organization.

Once we have established you as an internship partner, we will try to match suitable student candidates with your organization and will ask you to arrange an interview date and time that works best for your schedule.

“I gained experience in communicating and pitching with the local media, client experience, and overall knowledge of the agency structure.”

-Ali Fishner, R/West Agency



How long does the PDXSX program last?

The PDXSX is designed to match the 11-week academic cycle. However, we encourage students to consider six-month internships rather than the typical 11 weeks, as that often works better with an organization's fiscal and client-project calendar. Many of our professional partners have expressed a preference for longer internships to make the most of the time and resources spent getting interns up to speed on client projects and accounts. A longer time commitment also allows them to better mentor interns and help them mesh with the organization's culture.

Students who are willing to commit to longer internships will also likely have more opportunities to interview, find greater access to client projects or accounts, make stronger business contacts, and enjoy more ownership of individual projects within an organization.

With this in mind, we try to make the PDXSX as flexible as possible. Students are able to begin their experience before the start of the academic year (during the summer) or extend it beyond graduation.

What is a typical schedule?

A typical student intern schedule runs 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., Monday through Friday. Students have a mandatory course on Monday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m., and many students have an elective course on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. Students can work longer on days they don't have class. We encourage students and our partners to develop a schedule that is appropriate for both parties.

Students are expected to give their internships the highest priority while they are in Portland, and we expect them to be engaged with their internship employer for 20-30 hours per week.

"The program helped me to make professional connections, which were very valuable when hunting for jobs."

-Chloe Demars, The Oregon Zoo



Are internships paid?

Although we do not guarantee compensation to students, the PDXSX prefers paid internships and gives priority to organizations that pay.

Because students must physically move from the main campus in Eugene and maintain a residence in Portland, we encourage professional partners to offer a small monthly stipend of \$750-\$1,000/month for students when possible. Generally, the average compensation at a for-profit organization is \$13-15/hour for approximately 20-30 hours per week or however much time an employer needs the student. Our policy is to strongly discourage students from working more than 30 hours per week because they have required academic coursework during the same period.

That said, if it comes down to the internship experience without compensation or no internship experience at all, we encourage students to take the experience. Because of the PDXSX program's incredible success and high demand among SOJC students, there is currently a one-year wait for internship opportunities.

The PDXSX program does not accept unpaid internship opportunities from for-profit organizations seeking to work with public relations or advertising students.

Special Note for Nonprofit Organizations

Although top priority is given to nonprofit organizations that are willing to offer a monthly stipend of approximately \$750/month or \$10/hr, the PDXSX program is committed to supporting our nonprofit partners and understands that traditional monetary compensation may not be possible for such organizations.

In these cases, the PDXSX program also understands that letters of recommendation, professional references, networking opportunities, hands-on experience, and internship extensions or job offers are also very valuable and can be considered acceptable forms of compensation.

The PDXSX program has also developed the **Staniak Scholarship** program to help provide a monetary incentive for students to work with nonprofit organizations. See page 8 to learn more about this scholarship.

Is my organization guaranteed an intern?

Many students have several internship opportunities, and we encourage them to attend as many interviews as possible before choosing one. The best way for an organization to ensure it will secure an intern is to contact the program director early about your organization's opportunity.

Top interns with previous work experience and professional-level skills tend to find opportunities (often paid) very quickly and are placed well before the start of the academic term. Contacting the program director early will increase your chances to review several candidates' résumés, browse student portfolios, and arrange for phone or face-to-face interviews before students have made their selections.

Organizations that have partnered with the PDXSX program previously will have the first opportunity to review candidates.

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What is the Staniak Scholarship program?

The Staniak Scholarship is a prestigious fund dedicated to the PDXSX program that provides a \$2,000 stipend to a recipient for the term they participate. Up to three scholarships are offered during the spring term, and up to two are offered during the fall term.

Staniak scholars must agree to participate in an internship with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or show significant financial need that would otherwise prohibit them from participating in the PDXSX program.

The Staniak Scholar application process is rigorous and includes a committee evaluation that considers a student's academic performance to date, financial need, and dedication or commitment to nonprofit service.

“For us, the Portland connection and the opportunity to provide area nonprofits with talented student interns was just right. The life skills students gain by moving to the city are equally important. Being able to meet the interns each term and hear about their experiences provides inspiration for us to keep things growing.”

BETTY '80 AND ERIC STANIAK '80

BETTY AND ERIC ESTABLISHED THE STANIAK SCHOLARSHIP
IN SUPPORT OF THE PORTLAND SENIOR EXPERIENCE

SCHOLARSHIP GIFT ESTABLISHED IN 2010

“College is easy ... you know what to expect. The PDXSX Program allowed me to push myself far and fast and encouraged me to take risks.”

-Whitney Seven, Elemental Technologies



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What should my organization do to ensure a successful internship?

Any organization that wishes to participate in the PDXSX should plan to have a few things in place:

1. A designated intern coordinator, supervisor, or manager.
2. A specific work schedule with a supervisor present.
3. Real projects an intern can participate or share ownership in.
4. A positive experience for the student and the organization.



“The PDXSX program helped me out because I was able to get hired on at the place where I was interning (City of Portland). I was hired on due to my professional appearance and demeanor I gained while participating in the PDXSX program.”

-Andrew Baldwin, City of Portland

Is any type of project acceptable for an internship?

Rarely have we run across unacceptable internship projects, but in the past we have had some challenges. While some “busy work,” such as data entry, filing paperwork, and database building, may be acceptable in the short term, most students are looking for real projects they can take ownership over that will polish their skills and add to their professional portfolios.

To avoid busy work, we encourage our professional partners to create a list of projects and goals for the intern to work on during their time with the organization.

Many organizations have enjoyed significant contributions from their interns, such as social media campaigns, outreach ideas, articles and newsletter content, communication outreach to clients, blogging, and help with large client projects.

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What if the intern candidate we want is interviewing at multiple organizations?

Historically, our students are quite competitive in the marketplace and often interview with multiple potential partners before accepting an internship opportunity. In the interest of professionalism, students who are participating in the PDXSX program are strongly encouraged to accept the first internship opportunity they receive from a potential partner.

If you are concerned about losing an internship candidate to another organization, we encourage you to interview more than one potential candidate for an opportunity and/or to speak with the program director.

What if I want to offer my intern an extension or employment opportunity?

Nothing makes us happier at PDXSX than when employers find an ideal employee through our program. Historically, more than 60 percent of our students receive an internship extension or employment offer before graduation, which is approximately double the national average of 30.1 percent (National Association of Colleges and Employers). As you can guess, we have lots of stories like these and want to hear even more!

If you would like to extend an internship or offer employment, you should contact the program director. We will not say anything to the student about the exciting news until you do, but we certainly want to know about an intern's stellar performance for our files and statistics!

“One of my fondest memories during PDXSX was spending time with my classmates. We shared a lot of the same goals and worries, so it was nice to be around a group of people I could really relate to.”

-Joani Jones, LaCie

Can I speak to former PDXSX interns or partners?

Absolutely.

Upon request, we will put you in touch with current PDXSX partner organizations or former students who are willing to share their experiences with you.



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What if our PDXSX opportunity is not working out?

This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed or corrected immediately. You should contact the program director as soon as there is an issue to discuss how best to handle the situation.

Upon acceptance into the PDXSX program, all students have a frank conversation with the PDXSX program director about the program's expectations. The students should therefore be clear about how the program works and the repercussions for failure to meet these expectations.

If an intern is not meeting expectations, your first recourse is to have the student meet with the PDXSX program director, their supervisor, and the director of the George S. Turnbull Portland Center.

Any intern who fails to uphold the standards or meet the expectations of the University of Oregon, SOJC, PDXSX, or their internship location — including failure to appear at work on time, poor-quality or consistently shoddy work, poor attitude, malfeasance, etc. — will be removed from the internship site, forfeit the internship's academic credit without refund, and lose the chance for another internship opportunity.



What
organizations
are PDXSX
partners?

Here's just a small sample of our PDXSX partners:

Edelman Worldwide
Waggener Edstrom
Frause PR
The Red Cross
The Oregon Zoo
The Special Olympics
OPB
VOX PR & PA
Portland Monthly
Flossin' Media
Oregon Bride
Intel
LaCie
TriMet
City of Portland
City of Beaverton Portland Center Stage
R/West
FCC
Adidas
UrbanAirship
Nike
Cascade Web Dev
Children's Institute
OMSI
Prichard Agency
Hollenbeck Group
Portland Art Museum
Davis Elen Adv & PR
PDOT
NW Natural
Office of Film and TV
Wend Magazine

Elemental Tech
PECI
Street Roots
Willamette Week
Portland Tribune
The Oregonian
Media Maison
Ziba Design
Travel Portland
Pine Meadow Golf
AARP
METRO
Mercy Corps
Standard Insurance
KBOO
Tripwire
PGE
SMART
MIX Magazine
Mac's List

Newest Partners

The Columbian
PDX Business Journal
The Portland Mercury
Beaverton Valley Times
Lake Oswego Review
Wilsonville Spokesman
West Linn Tidings
Hillsboro Tribune
FG News-Times
GoLocalPDX

Portland Society Page
Imbibe Magazine
Southeast Examiner
Oregon Business
Sustainable Business
Allison+Partners
Lemelson Foundation
Turtledove Clemens
Daimler North America
WACOM
Jama Software
Dialsmith
Umpqua Bank
McClenahanBruer
Matter Communication
Inspiration Software
The Pittock Mansion
Heritage Consulting
Cambia Health
HMH Agency
Thorn Run Partner



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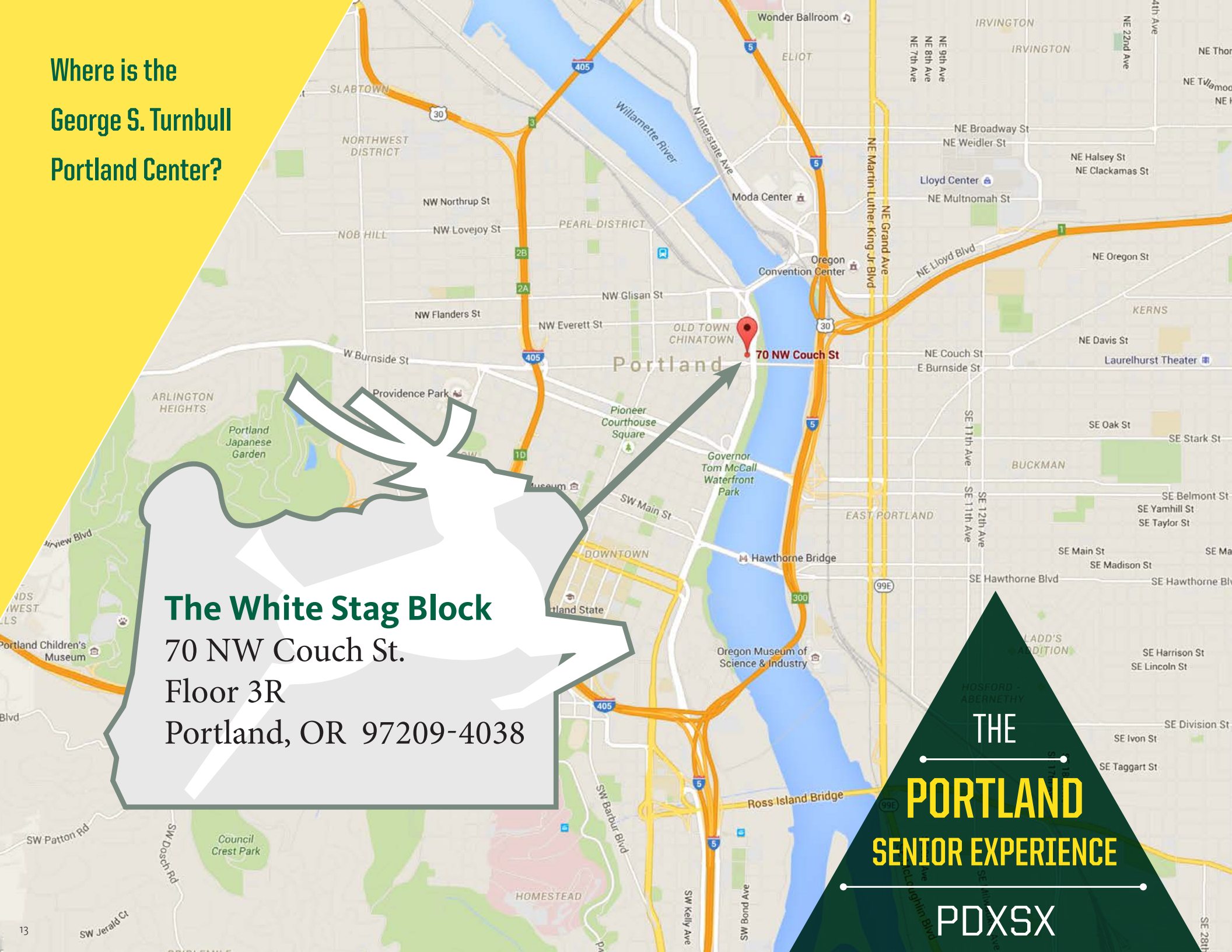
Where is the
George S. Turnbull
Portland Center?

The White Stag Block

70 NW Couch St.

Floor 3R

Portland, OR 97209-4038



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