

## **DOL Working for You**

### **Job Corps Student Making Waves in Pacific Northwest**

Shameqwa McDowell has made quite a name for herself at the Tongue Point Job Corps Center in Astoria, Ore. The 23-year old native of Norfolk, Va., earned her maritime training aboard a retired Coast Guard cutter on the chilly, choppy waters off Oregon's coast, just south of an infamous area known as the "graveyard of the Pacific." McDowell is one of only 35 African American females to earn a certificate for Qualified Member of the Engineering Department, a distinction that makes her an unlicensed junior engineer qualified to work on engines, steering and other mechanical operations at sea. "Tongue Point has made me the person I never thought I'd become," says McDowell. Tongue Point is the only Job Corps center in the country that boasts a "floating classroom." There, many of her female classmates gave up or decided a life at sea wasn't for them. Not McDowell, she hunkered down, studying every day and learning the ins and outs of the machinery aboard the Ironwood, a World War II-era buoy tender. When she graduates from Tongue Point this spring, McDowell hopes to work in an engine room for the military sealift command or find a similar job in Louisiana where the weather is a little milder than the Pacific Northwest.

