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Building Libraries for Higher Education

In the case of the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE), funding academic libraries begins with funds from the state of Oregon, but it certainly doesn't end there, as the names of the two largest OSSHE libraries vividly illustrate. Community colleges generally use bond measures to build their libraries. — the editor

Knight Library Expansion and Renovation Project

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Knight Library is the flagship of University of Oregon's six-branch library system. Standing alone, it is the largest library in the state, holding collections with a replacement value exceeding \$100 million. Approximately 1.6 million of the library system's 2.1 million volumes are housed in Knight Library, along with microforms, government documents, sound recordings, films, and videotapes. Special collections contain more than 40,000 rare books and 14,000 linear feet of manuscript holdings. The building is named in honor of the family of Philip Knight, president and chief executive officer of Nike, Inc., a graduate of the university and a major donor to the building project.

Right: Knight Library, Oregon's largest library, houses 1.6 million volumes.

Before the recent expansion, the Knight Library consisted of three parts. The original 1937 building (80,000 square feet) was designed by Ellis F. Lawrence and constructed by the PWA and WPA. The 1937 building and the facing Memorial Quadrangle are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Subsequent expansions occurred in 1950 (57,000 square feet) and 1966 (100,000 square feet).

The need for further expansion and renovation of Knight Library was studied by two campus committees (1978-79 and 1986-87) and documented for eight years before project funding became available. When planning funds became available in 1987, President Paul Olum appointed a 19-member user group of students, faculty, and staff to develop project goals, select an architectural team, and work with designers throughout the project. In 1988, the university selected TBG Architects and Planners of Eugene as project architects in association with Shepley Bulfinch Richardson Abbott of Boston as design consultants. The User Group identified four major project goals:

1. To integrate three separate building components into one functioning library building.
2. To construct as much square footage as possible for reader space and materials storage.
3. To create a flexible building able to respond to change and capable of serving its community well into the 21st century.
4. To develop the building in a manner that recognizes its historic and symbolic role on the campus.

The total project budget was \$27.4 million. The state of Oregon originally provided \$18 million. When Measure 5 passed in 1990, \$306,000 was eliminated from the state portion of the budget, for a revised state of Oregon budget component of \$17,694,000. The



project balance, \$9.706 million, was funded by private gifts and corporate and federal grants. More than 60 foundations, corporations, graduating classes, and private individuals contributed \$5,000 or more to the project. Hundreds of others provided smaller gifts.

Because of the project's complex phasing and scheduling requirements, the university had intended to award a single contract for the entire project. The uncertainties of Ballot Measure 5 led the campus to accelerate the design work for the new addition and get it under contract as soon as possible. Phase 1, new construction, began in April 1991 and reached substantial completion in December 1992. L. D. Mattson, Inc., of Salem was general contractor. The new addition has three major components, the South Lawn Addition (85,505 square feet), the Rooftop Addition to the 1966 building (29,438 square feet), and the Kincaid Addition (20,195 square feet).

During the 1992-93 fall-winter intersession, many collections and service points were shifted to new or temporary locations in the new addition. The building was closed while this move took place and reopened at the beginning of winter term 1993, prior to the beginning of renovation. A few words about moving books: By the end of the project, every book in the building had been shifted at least once and some two or three times. All book shifts were meticulously planned by university stacks supervisors; library staff and student assistants provided the labor. We estimate that this strategy saved as much as \$300,000 over the cost of specialized library moving services, but the strenuous work took its toll; later shifts were broken into shorter schedule increments and used greater numbers of student assistants.

Renovation began in March 1993 and was completed in October 1994. General contractor was S.D. Deacon, Inc., of Portland. In order to maintain services and access to collections, the renovation was conducted in two stages of approximately nine months each. The Knight Library was re-dedicated with a full academic ceremony on October 14, 1994. The keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Berdahl, president of the University of Texas, Austin.

What will the future bring? If it is any indication, a new service was being developed in the building even before the renovation was complete: the Knight Library Information Technology Center. ITC is a 92-station networked microcomputer access facility funded by a new \$50 per term student technology fee. Fast-track design and construction allowed the new service to open in January 1995. Preliminary discussions are now underway for a 60,000-square-foot vertical expansion over the South Lawn addition. Approximately 30,000 square feet would be dedicated to technology access and digital media production — up to 500 individual workstations, plus rooms for technology-dependent study groups and interdisciplinary research teams. An additional 30,000 square feet would provide for patron seating and future growth of print collections.

We are proud of the Knight Library facility and are happy to provide individual or group tours. For further information, call (541) 346-3056 or send e-mail to bonamici@oregon.uoregon.edu.