

## New Oregon Center to Benefit Cats, Community, Students

### **OHS new medical and learning center will provide on-demand care for shelter animals and expand educational programs.**

The Oregon Humane Society says it has plans to build the first Animal Medical and Learning Center in the United States that incorporates a university veterinary program with on-site, 24-hour animal care for OHS shelter animals.

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Animals will receive the critical care that is lacking for them now, said Sharon Harmon, OHS executive director. Animals will also spend less time at the shelter before adoption resulting in more space for animals from other Oregon shelters, she said.

The new medical and learning center will also have room for its Animal Assisted Therapy Prep School, which trains pets to become certified therapists. Currently OHS can only fill 20 percent of the demand for this service.

No caring pet lover should be deprived of animal companionship in their time of greatest need, Harmon said.

The new facility will also allow educational programs, such as Youth Service Learning, Childrens Camp and monthly clubs to expand.

Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine faculty will be based on-site and students will live in dormitories.

Up to 48 students a year will gain a better understanding of homeless animals and their plight, Harmon said.

The new 22,000-square-foot facility, which will include two examination rooms, three surgery suites, a multi-station treatment room, radiology and laboratory and pharmacy facilities, will adjoin the west end of the current OHS building which was constructed in 2000. This will result in a total of 68,000 square feet.

Ground breaking is scheduled to take place in June 2006, provided that the final \$1 million of the \$6.4 million needed for the project is raised. OHS expects completion in early 2007.

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