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## Ed board boosts high tech

By Doug Nash  
Of the Emerald

Oregon's future in high technology was given a firm push Friday as the group responsible for high tech planning released its strategies for the upcoming year.

In his report to the State Board of Higher Education, Clifford Smith of the Council for Advanced Science and Engineering Education/Research for Industry

emphasized the need for enhancing the state's schools of engineering, engineering technology and computer science.

"I'm sure it wouldn't surprise you to know today we really have a problem because of the demand for courses in this area," Smith said.

Smith's group has been sending out questionnaires and talking with high tech firms in Oregon to determine the industry's manpower needs. Because most high tech firms are located in the Portland metropolitan area, CASEERI proposed that Portland State University develop a Ph.D. program in Electrical and Computer engineering.

"The establishment of such a program would make the Portland metropolitan area more attractive to high tech firms who are looking at Portland as a potential place in which to locate," the report stated.

The report also urged universities to increase efforts at attracting faculty in engineering and computer science. Teaching salaries are too low, Smith says. A

person with a bachelor's degree in computer science who graduates in the top 25 percent of the class routinely receives a starting salary of \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year, Smith said, while an assistant professor's salary is in "the low twenties."

Board Vice Pres. Loran Wyss, however, reminded board members not to lose sight of the financial reality.

"In order to bring our institutions up to average, we'd need something like \$8 to \$9 million and that's clearly an impossibility," he said.

Smith conceded the success of the planned improvements depends directly on existing financial resources.

"I'm hopeful that the legislature will get on the ball," he said. "We could be much more successful if this whole situation were solved."

Reports on specific university programs and resource needs are expected before the first of the year.

In other action, the board allowed Southern Oregon State College to negotiate extendable three-year contracts with untenured faculty. The college argued the contracts provide professors with more job security than those who must face review each year.

But John Bonine, a representative of the American Association of University Professors and law professor at the University, charged the board's allowance marks an unprecedented "erosion" of tenure, long recognized by the board as the best protection of academic freedom.

"These freedoms can be whittled away just as easily as they can be repealed outright," Bonine said. "Indeed, gradual erosion is a greater likelihood than outright repeal."

Board members disagreed, saying the college's faculty democratically voted on the issue and is entitled to its own decision.

The board also voted the Yaquina Bay Marine Science Center be renamed the Mark Hatfield Marine Science Center. The board pointed to the senator's "vigorous and enthusiastic" support in the facility as the reason for its decision.

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