University funding increased

This year marks the end of a long dry spell a watershed year for the University. It is the first time in this decade that the University has seen real growth in its budget.

According to Dave Quenzer, chief budget officer for the Oregon State System of Higher Education, it is the best overall financial picture he has seen in his 14 years with the state system. After years of budget cutting and treading water. it appears the University is finally on the rebound - thanks to the 1985 Oregon Legislature.

Were it not for the dry years, 1985 might be termed a windfall for the Oregon's higher educational system and the University in particular. However, Dick Hill, University vice president and provost, believes it will take more than a year's infusion of monies to repair the general atrophy that has occurred over the past few years. Still, Hill said he was pleased with the way the University was treated by the 1985 Legislature.

To begin with, the Legislature granted the University a 10 percent increase in general fund allocations over last year. These dollars will be used for badly needed salary increases, instructional equipment and maintenance. In addition, the University will receive:

•\$750,000 in general fund allocations for high tech equipment and purchases.

•\$1.6 million in lottery funds for high tech equipment and purchases.

•\$12 million in lottery funds for a new Science Center and for facilities for the sciences devoted to economic development, and

•\$33 million in federal funds for capital construction for science buildings.

This inflow of money to the University is a result of the realization by state leaders that higher education is critically important to the state's future economic development. Years of recession and slow growth have impressed upon Oregonians the need for economic diversifica-

The University and the rest of the state's universities have become the beneficiaries of this changed attitude in the state capital. The state budget for higher education increased from \$440 million in 1983 to \$541 million in 1985. Hill attributes the increase in funding for the University to the combined efforts of William "Bud" Davis. chancellor of higher education; Gov. Vic Ativeh; University President Paul Olum and the entire state Legislature.

The challenge now before the University and the state system is to maintain the continued support of the Legislature and the taxpayers of the

state. It is an encouraging start to the new year.

And as Quenzer says, "We are going to prove that spending on higher education is an economically sound investment. We welcome the scrutiny of the general public.

By Gary Jimenez



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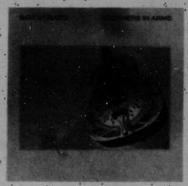
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