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can complete her thesis much sooner than originally planned.

In a larger context, Cavendor says she believes that as new technology expands the realm of possibilities for people with disabilities, society's unfair attitudes will be exposed.

Cavendor explained America's perceptions of people with disabilities create a strange paradox.

"Many see disabled people as 'incomplete,'" she says. "But on the other hand, when disabled people are able to function 'normally,' they are seen as 'super-people.'"

"There is no in-between," she says.

Miller says the terms "super-crip" and "disabled saint" are used laughingly by people with disabilities when talking about this paradox.

But these attitudes are being exposed as people with disabilities become more active in schools, in the workplace and in all areas of society, Cavendor says.

"It makes us as individuals and as a university ask ourselves, 'What are our hidden prejudices about disabled people?'" she says.

Plugging the cracks

The new equipment and services are intended primarily for those students who Cavendor says "fall through the cracks" of the governmental support system.

The Oregon Commission for the Blind provides special services for students with severe visual impairments and the state's Vocational Rehabilitation Division supports hearing impaired students.

But there are students who are visually or hearing impaired, or who are learning disabled who may not qualify for state-funded note takers, test readers, or tutors, Cavendor says.

Because the Oregon Commission for the Blind only supports undergraduate students, the ASUO and administration grants also target disabled graduate students.

Students in emergency situations — someone with a broken arm who cannot take notes, for example — make up another group the funds were intended to support. A tape recorder for recording lectures would be a possible solution now available through the student services office.

Statewide response

As the roar of the adaptive technology boom has begun to rumble from the heights of big business onto the plateaus of higher education, Oregon's colleges and universities have reacted.

The state's four-year public institutions have moved to get in on the act, some haltingly and others in a headlong rush.

A lack of awareness and

funding are the most common problems, several representatives from disabled student groups say.

For this school year, the state allotted \$90,000 to support disabled students at Oregon's eight colleges and universities, Cavendor said.

"\$50,000 of that was used up in fall term alone," she said.

PSU lags behind

John Rumler, co-director of the Disabled Students' Union at Portland State University, says he believes PSU lags behind in providing for disabled students.

"I don't think enough services are provided at PSU," he says. "There hasn't been a strong enough effort to upgrade in this area."

Sue Reggiani, administrative assistant at PSU's Handicapped Students' Office, says her office's efforts are limited because the office does not have a budget.

In order to pick up the slack, Portland-area groups have combined funds to install a Kurzweil Reader at PSU, Reggiani says.

However, even after funding came through, some students complained of simply not knowing the equipment was available.

Clinton Lindgren, a blind student at PSU, says that although the Kurzweil Reader

has been available for over a year, he just recently found out about it.

"And now that I want to use it, there's no one to show me how it works," he says.

OSU irony

Disabled students at Oregon State University face their own problems, says Larry Smith, president of OSU's Disabled Students' Organization.

Miller says the terms "super-crip" and "disabled saint" are used laughingly by people with disabilities.

A blind student's threat to sue OSU last year if adequate services weren't provided prompted a \$20,000 grant this school year for adaptive computer equipment, Smith says.

Ironically, now that new equipment is available, "some of it is on the third floor of a building that has no elevator," he says.

Lita Verts, head of the third-floor Special Services Project, says counselors will meet physically disabled students on the building's first floor, and other computers also are available elsewhere on campus.

Nevertheless, Smith says he believes it is not fair to locate a program for the disabled in an inaccessible building.

Despite the problems disabled students face, a raffle of excitement can be detected in many students' voices when asked about new possibilities.

Cavendor says she hopes the University's Student Services Office can continue to provide reasons for this excitement, despite an air of uncertainty that surrounds the issue of future funding.

The past grants that purchased the most recent equipment and services were one-time allotments made each year. The student services office will make a proposal to the ASUO and the administration for next year's funds after assessing changes in the student population and needs that may arise.

But at this point, Cavendor says she has no idea how much money will be given.

Overall, though, Cavendor is optimistic. Having seen a slough of new equipment and computers arrive on campus, she links the past with the future in one simple statement.

"These are all just beginnings," she says.

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Signature appeal

Eugene's most prominent novelist, Ken Kesey (left), and student co-authors sign copies of *Caverns*, the book Kesey and 14 students wrote in a novel writing class last year, at the University Bookstore. Some waited in line for two hours Saturday to get a signature.

Photo by Steve Card

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