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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS



PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Graduate students in the computer lab inside the new Lewis and Clark College Counseling Center on Southwest Barbur Boulevard study under mental health professionals and gain first-hand experience to help them become counselors in the future.

Affordable Mental Health Culturally-sensitive counseling center opens

BY MINDY COOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Portlanders and their families experiencing mental health, addiction and relationship issues now have an affordable place to turn to at the new Lewis and Clark Community Counseling Center, which is dedicated to serve those in need with affordable and culturally sensitive low-cost counseling.

According to Antonia Mueller, the director of the center located at 4445 S.W. Barbur Blvd., counseling services are often too expensive for individuals and their families who are looking for a safe and nurturing environment to be heard.

"With the economic times, people are unable to afford higher levels of therapies and support," she said. "So the graduate school at Lewis

and Clark is responding to the economic needs of the Portland community."

The goal of the new mental health facility, which provides counseling services on a sliding scale from \$10 to \$50, is to serve the underserved, with a special focus on outreach to African-American, Spanish speaking and LGBTQ communities.

Since opening its doors in January, the clinic has already seen dozens of clients, including families, couples and individuals from multiple age groups and walks of life.

"Our goal is to serve the community in any way we can and take as many clients as we can because we know the services are needed," said Mueller. "We believe in providing ease of access to the unemployed,

working poor, immigrant and refugee populations in our neighboring communities."

The new center, which provides services to all social classes, races, sexual orientations, nations of origin, ethnic groups and genders, also provides students within the Graduate School of Education and Counseling the chance to learn from experienced professionals through intensive training and supervised counseling sessions.

"Students learn from the expertise of faculty members who have been in the field for a long time and are sensitive to cultural backgrounds who are onsite providing supervision to students and future generation

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