



PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Megan Kidd, director of the Salvation Army's new emergency women's shelter, and Sonja Hultsman, the shelter's business manager, welcome guests and clients to the mission's new downtown resource dedicated solely to women.

New Shelter, New Hope

Advocates grow emergency services for women

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With a new building just blocks away from the old one, both residents and staff of the Salvation Army's downtown

women's emergency shelter are hoping for a fresh start.

The shelter is the only such facility in Portland dedicated solely to women. A high demand means that the waiting list is never without the names of at least 100 women seeking assistance. A larger space will allow the Salvation Army to increase basic services like hot showers, bathrooms, and resting places.

Shelter director Megan Kidd said staff tried to overcome obstacles at the old facility, but the site proved to have too many barriers.

"It was too small, we didn't have the capacity for the services we need to provide the community," Kidd said.

The new facility provides a much greater ability to meet

the needs of future and current clients. Upgrades include a brand new commercial washer and dryer versus the residential machines the shelter had been using to clean hundreds of women's wardrobes each month.

The seemingly minor improvements are one of the many things that keep the new shelter's small nine-person staff grateful, saving them valuable time to act as advocates for current clients and those on the wait lists.

Even with the move, the shelter's dorm program will continue to make available a maximum of 50 beds. The Salvation Army's ultimate goal is to reduce people's need

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