

PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A children's library with an assortment of books and other materials is part of the collection at Concordia University's new George R. White Library and Learning Center, a resource available for free to the public. Welcoming neighborhood residents to the northeast Portland facility are Concordia University executives Gary Withers (left) and Madeline Turnock, along with Concordia Librarian Brent Mai.

Open University

continued A from front

wanted to come to, so that ing tuition or you were a neightheir way between the library bor who lived across the street, shelves. The library and campus you felt like it was your library." is just one block away from says Gary Withers, Concordia's Faubion Elementary School, executive vice president for ex- Concordia's educational partner ternal affairs.

Before a 2009 renovation, the library was tucked deep into the sends 150 students over to help second floor of another building on campus. However after investing nearly \$14 million into skills. the new space, the library was placed in a much more accessible part of the campus.

Since opening its doors to nonstudents, the school has issued thousands of free library cards; conflicts over race, education, almost 2,300 were distributed last year alone with community card holders checking out 6,928 striving to be a positive agent items.

Besides the occasional over- nity projects. due book, and the slightly more frequent unattended minors, for people over the decades, and Concordia Librarian Brent Mai says the biggest downside to the increased access is that "Every- ers. "It's the right thing to do, body wants to use it at the same and hopefully we do it in a way time." He deduces the demand that's modest."

for use as being "typical" for any public library.

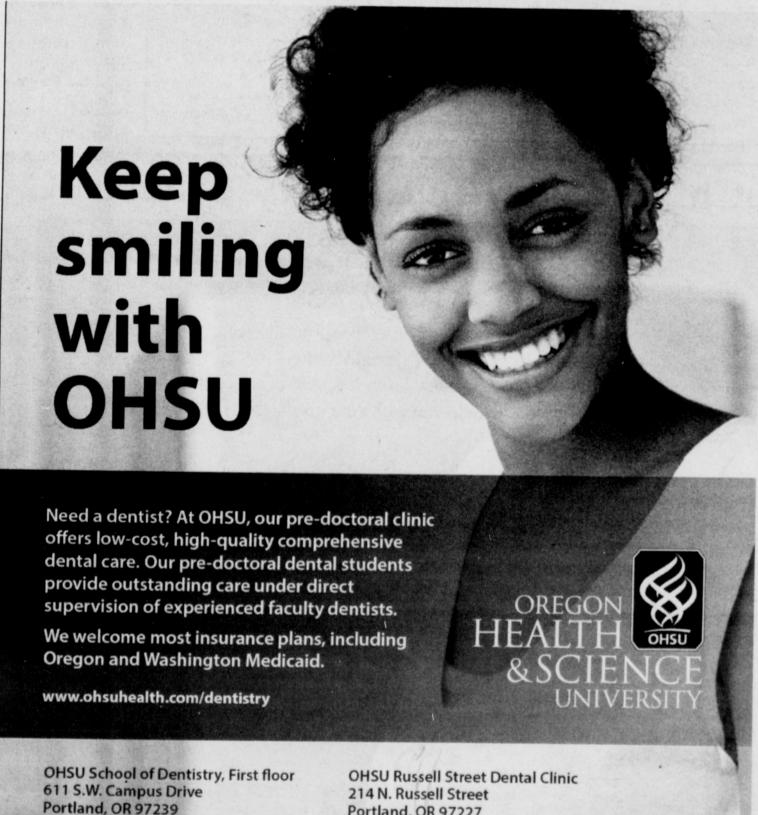
There is always a steady whether you were a student pay- stream of young kids weaving with Portland Public Schools.

Every semester the university Faubion students with homework, tutoring, and build literacy

"We really like to think of ourselves as a resource for the community in the very broadest sense." Withers says.

With local issues ranging from gentrification, faith, and more, the 108-year-old university is with its open doors and commu-

"We understand the challenges we want to open our arms and welcome folks in." says With-



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