

**The Oregonian**  
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**"PSU park will honor inspiring women"**

For several years, a small paper sign covered by a plastic sheet heralded a Walk of the Heroines on the Portland State campus.

Each year, weather took a greater toll on the sign, along a pedestrian route in front of Hoffman Hall. "We finally had to take it down," says Jan Haaken, a PSU psychology professor.

But plans for the "education park" didn't die. Nearly five years after the city approved a \$4.7 million plan, construction will begin this fall on a slightly modified, less-costly version.

The park's goal is unchanged: to celebrate women famous, not-so-famous and downright obscure whose lives and deeds inspired others.

"We've been able to withstand and weather many obstacles," says Haaken, who along with Johanna Brenner, chair of the women's studies department, came up with the idea in 1998. "We are proud we have been able to walk forward and keep on our feet."

A nonprofit board has raised \$1.1 million to launch the first of two construction phases. Haaken says an additional \$600,000 would complete the revised plan. If the nonprofit can meet that goal by December, the walk will be finished in one phase, Haaken says.

The design retains its curving walls and paving pattern. To cut costs, it's a little smaller at about 200 feet by 50 feet, and materials --primarily pavers --have been simplified.

"We have tried very hard to keep the continuity of the project alive," says Carol Mayer-Reed, the Portland landscape architect who led the design team. Key elements include a water fountain at the west end, a small stage and gathering spot in the center, and a kiosk with interactive video screens that will provide information about honorees.

Organizers have chosen 100 prominent women from fields including politics, business and the arts to be honored around the stage. A garden will be named for Maurine Neuberger, who served in the U.S. Senate from 1960 to 1967. There's room for another 1,600 or so names to be inscribed on the stone walls.

Relatives and friends can honor their mothers, sisters and daughters, alive or deceased, for \$200. Once wall space is gone, lists of honorees will be found via the Internet at the kiosk.

No names will be placed on the ground or on benches --meaning no woman will be walked or sat upon, Mayer-Reed says.

The walk is bounded on the south by the Stott athletic practice field. Tentative plans call for a new technology center and library near the east end.

"This is a very busy place on campus," Mayer-Reed says. "It is sunny and open all through the seasons."

Charlene Levesque, who graduated from PSU and worked there until her retirement, says the university has done little to honor women. "Even Neuberger Hall wasn't named for Maurine but for her husband," she says.

As for the Walk of the Heroines, Levesque says, "I want to live long enough to see this thing done."

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