



COURTESY OF NATIONAL COLLEGE OF NATURAL MEDICINE

A new clinic adds to the National College of Natural Medicine's Southwest Portland campus.

Natural medicine college grows through renovation

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As a growing contingent of Americans has learned about the benefits of natural medicine, the number of patients and students at the National College of Natural Medicine has increased as well.

With an eye toward accommodating greater demand on its Southwest Portland campus, the college began a multi-phased expansion through a series of renovation projects. Combined, the renovations including those underway, have doubled the campus's square footage to 123,000 square feet since the first building opened.

Situated in the heart of the North Macadam Urban Renewal District, the college's five-acre campus is shaped like a triangle and bordered by Southwest Kelly Avenue, Naito Parkway and Woods Street. The configuration leaves little space available for new construction.

The college began developing its campus in 1996, when it bought the historic Josiah Failing School on Southwest Porter Street and changed the 60,000-square-foot brick school into a college building that houses classrooms, a library, a bookstore and lecture halls.

Since then, the college has purchased several other properties within the parcel. These include Oregon Public Broadcasting's former building, now a 25,000-square-foot administrative space for the college; a 20,000-square-foot building that became a clinic; and a 5,000-square-foot structure now occupied by the college's Community Clinic and facilities staff.

Workers are now transforming the college's former clinic into the Helfgott Research Institute, a 7,000-square-foot facility dedicated to evidence-based medicine that will open early next year, said Marilyn Considine, the college's director of public relations and communications.

Also, the college recently purchased a 6,000-square-foot building formerly owned by Jobdango and is converting it to an annex that will house an auditorium, conference rooms and multiuse classrooms. Considine said minor work is required there and the

FAST FACTS

ESTABLISHED IN 1956, the National College of Natural Medicine is the oldest accredited, naturopathic medical college in North America.

building will open early next year.

Landscapers are currently preparing The Min Zidell Teaching Garden, an 11,000-square-foot space bordering Water and Woods streets that will serve as a teaching and healing garden near the clinic.

Keith North, the college's facilities and master planning project manager, said one of the complexities of renovating existing buildings, particularly older ones, is that they must be upgraded to meet many new codes, from seismic and life safety codes to the systems operating within the structures.

Another challenge is all the unknown conditions, North said.

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Kelly Pyrch, senior project manager for R&H Construction Co. in Portland, led the \$2 million gutting and renovation of the

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National College of Natural Medicine

college's clinic and likened the process to doing exploratory surgery while simultaneously performing reconstructive surgery. Hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead-based paint often are among the surprises encountered during demolition, he said.

Considine said the college's commitment to environmental sustainability during the renovations complements its mission of improving people's health through natural medicine. As the college continues to develop its master plan and the renovation of properties on its campus, collaboration with those who use the campus as well as those who live and work around it is an essential part of the process, she said.