A Gateway to Knowledge

USM's Portland Campus Library, a building which in the early years of this century housed state-of-the-art bakery technology, now contains the latest in information technology as well as space for precious maps and artifacts dating back five centuries.

The facility we're opening today replaces an existing 27,000 square-foot campus library in need of expansion and technological upgrade. The first four floors have been renovated to incorporate not only conventional book stacks but also compact disc data bases and the advanced computer technology and fiber optics needed to provide access to information through the world.

Specifically, the first floor houses circulation and reserve books. It also will accommodate the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education, which will feature rare maps, atlases, and globes from the Smith and Osher Cartographic Collections. (Please see information on the Osher Map Library elsewhere in this program.) The second floor holds reference materials, interlibrary loans, and data base searching. The third floor features periodicals, archives, and book stacks, while the fourth contains additional stack, administrative offices, and conference areas.

In all, USM's new Portland library contains more than 200,000 bound volumes, 1,500 subscriptions, and nearly 3/4 million pieces of microfilm.

The library was designed to symbolize a gateway to USM, and to serve as a tangible reminder of USM's presence in the community. As such, any citizen has the right to use the facilities, and adults may acquire borrowing privileges, which are available at a nominal charge.