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Bike "Fixit" stations dot UO campus to aid commuters



The [University of Oregon Outdoor Program](http://insideoregon.uoregon.edu) isn't just encouraging more students, staff and faculty to become bicycle commuters – it's looking to help them be their own bike mechanics, as well.

Since last spring, the Outdoor Program has been installing bike "Fixit" stations at various locations on campus. The compact, cylindrical stands – manufactured by Minneapolis-based Dero Co. – house just about everything a cyclist needs to perform basic bicycle maintenance and repair, from changing a flat to adjusting brakes.

The Fixit stations are part of the Outdoor Program's efforts to increase non-motorized transportation at a university that is striving to make itself as sustainable as possible.

"We felt there was a need to increase bike friendliness on campus, so this was a logical step in that direction," says Outdoor Program Office Coordinator Rithy Khut.

The Fixit stations are designed to be free-standing "bicycle service stations" that anyone can drive their two-wheeler up to and start working on it whenever needed, Khut explains. The stations have two metal bars that stick out, allowing the bicyclist to hoist his or her ride onto the station and secure it while working. The stands have an array of

tools, such as a flathead screwdriver, wrenches (regular and allen) and a tire lever used to replace a flat tire tube.

They also have an all-important tire pump, which Khut says is likely to be the most widely-used feature.

Eventually, six stations will be placed around campus by the end of fall term, at a cost of about \$8,100. The University of Oregon is one of only a handful of colleges and universities on the West Coast to have Fixit stations installed for the benefit of the bike-riding community.

Khut says the majority of the funds have come from the Student Sustainability Fund, with added money from a project called the Premier Bike Network. The Outdoor Program worked with the Campus Planning Committee to determine the most appropriate places to put the Fixits.

The Outdoor Program has been making strides to improve the bike infrastructure on campus. With a stronger infrastructure comes higher demand, and the OP's do-it-yourself bike maintenance barn is neither big enough nor open at all times bike commuters may need to repair something that's gone awry with their two-wheel rides.

"With the bike program expanding, we found we can serve a lot of people from the DIY (do-it-yourself) barn, but we're not open 24/7. This was a good opportunity to provide the same service when the barn is closed," Khut explains.

Once the remaining Fixit stands are installed, the Outdoor Program has a plan that should easily integrate the Fixits into our technology-laden lives.

"We're working through the summer and the fall to include resources on the stands themselves, such as QR codes," Khut says. "Say someone's brakes are rubbing. They can (use their smart phone or other mobile device to) scan the code located on the Fixit and get information on how to fix their brakes. If they have a problem and don't necessarily know what to do, the QR code will give them some idea."

The Outdoor Program's ambition doesn't stop there.

Khut explains that they are planning on working with the developers of the official University of Oregon mobile app. This will allow students, faculty and staff to locate the bike-repair stands and stay up-to-date on the latest news from the program.

"We hope to, in the end, have a full network of the Fixit stations," explains Khut. "We have the east and west areas of campus covered, but we feel that there are more places we can install them."

- by Taylor Robertson, UO Office of Communications intern