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New Construction Heralds University’s Future Greatness

Break a Leg: Theatre Program Launches Film, Stage Careers
Land Donation Opens Doors For Future Growth and Enrollment

In Spring 2008 the City of Corpus Christi donated 137 acres of city land for the future expansion of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The gifted land will allow the University to significantly increase its student population by moving many non-academic facilities off the Ward Island campus which cannot accommodate the strong growth in University enrollment.

In just the past year, University enrollment has increased from just over 8,500 to more than 9,000 students. With the newly-acquired property, the University’s enrollment will be able to increase its enrollment capacity from 10,000 to 16,000 students.

Expansion is one of the centerpiece visions of our strategic plan,” says University President Flavius Killebrew. “With the current student population growing rapidly, the ability to increase enrollment will allow the University to serve a greater portion of students from the South Texas region and beyond.”

The land, bordered by Ennis Joslin Drive on the east, the Oso Golf Course on the north and west, and the Pharaoh Valley neighborhood on the south, includes portions of South Guth Park. Of the 137 acres donated, about 90 are suitable for construction due to flood zone restrictions, city easements and setbacks. Although the site is not directly adjacent to the main campus, it is close in proximity and visible across the Oso Bay from Ward Island.

The Campus Expansion Master Plan calls for moving the University’s athletic facilities to the South Guth Park area. The site will include tennis courts, a track and field area, and baseball, softball and soccer fields as well as practice facilities, a parking garage, a boat storage area and training grounds for the Islander ROTC Battalion. Another section will be utilized for construction of affordable married and graduate student housing, facilities not currently offered by the University due to its limited space.

Future plans call for research office facilities, a convocation center for conferences and graduation ceremonies, and community-focused business development including a hotel and hospitality center.
CENTER WILL WELCOME VISITORS TO CAMPUS

A gift from a distinguished graduate and long-time benefactor will soon serve as a focal point for the University’s alumni operations and provide a starting point for prospective students and other visitors to campus.

In December 2007, Woo Sung Lee, a member of the University of Corpus Christi class of 1959, donated funds to construct Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Welcome Center, which will bear his name. The Welcome Center will be built on South Alameda Street near the campus entry. When it opens, the facility will house alumni relations and some development functions.

Lee came to the United States from Korea as a foreign student in 1955 and, following graduation, went into the restaurant business. After creating a special seafood batter recipe, he turned his one fast-food establishment into a highly-successful chain of Boat-N-Net Restaurants.

This is not the first major gift Lee has given to the University. In 2001 he gave the resources for the creation of Lee Plaza, a garden spot where students study or just relax between classes. The sanctuary is a testament to Lee’s memories of his University days as well as a memorial to his late son, Yongnam Lee.

In 1999 Lee established a scholarship fund at the University, and in 2004 he received the Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of his volunteer efforts and financial contributions to A&M-Corpus Christi. He has also been honored by the President’s Council and his photograph is on the Donor Wall of Honor Silver Inner Circle of Excellence for his gifts to the University’s scholarship and building funds.

DR. JACK AND SUSIE DUGAN WELLNESS CENTER

When it opens in spring 2009, the Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center will provide the campus with a much-needed health and exercise facility that will also serve as an enticement for future students considering attending the Island University.

The 67,000-square-foot complex will include two regulation NCAA basketball courts, weight and cardio areas, locker rooms, including two for those with special needs, and group exercise rooms. Other support areas include laundry facilities, offices for Athletics and Recreational Sports personnel and separate public restrooms near the entrance to the building.

The facility was made possible by a $1 million private gift from Dr. Jack Dugan and his family, who are longtime contributors to the University. The remaining construction costs will be financed by student fees.

When completed in 2010, the $45 million; 140,000-square-foot building that will be home to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Education’s Kinesiology Program, will include a simulated hospital ward, patient simulator laboratories, a cardiovascular training area and specialized labs for exercise physiology, biomechanics, and motor evaluation and development.