

# Quick pace for Health Science Center

Texas A&M working to get new facility completed by late 2009



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Leader Staff

Contractors continue to pick up the pace of construction on the Texas A&M Health Science Center, which has a tentative construction completion date of November 2009.

The campus will be located off FM 1460 and University Boulevard in northeast Round Rock.

"This is definitely a fast pace we are working to getting our students into the building," said vice president of finance and administration for the Texas A&M Health Science Center Dr. Barry Nelson.

Even though construction on the Texas A&M Health Science Center location in Round Rock began in September, A&M will

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Officials at the Texas A&M Health Science Center recently released a rendering of its new Round Rock campus set to open in November 2009. Contractors broke ground on the campus, located in northeast Round Rock on University Boulevard, in September. Texas A&M Health Science Center will have a ground-breaking celebration Nov. 20.

## CAMPUS: A&M planning November '09 completion date for center

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have a celebration ceremony for the site Thursday, Nov. 20 at 9:30 a.m. Construction on the health science center should be completed by November 2009 so students can attend classes in the new facilities, Nelson said.

The Avery family of Round Rock, who have planned the Avery Town Centre development on University Boulevard near the health science center, donated 15 acres of land for the health science center while A&M Health Science Center officials purchased 35 additional acres for the current construction site, Nelson said.

"The donation and purchase enable us to grow as more

resources are made available," Nelson said.

The new permanent health science center facility will include classrooms, a simulation lab to train doctors and nurses and a 30,000-square-foot area of clinic space for Lone Star Child Care, the Round Rock area's private, federally-qualified community health center, Nelson said.

"The main component of this operation is medicine but public health and nursing will be a big part of this operation as well," Nelson said.

Currently, 27 third- and fourth-year medical students are completing their rotations in Round Rock this year, said dean of the College of Medicine for

the Texas A&M Health Science Center Dr. Christopher Colenda. These students began their classes this summer and have completed rotations at St. David's Round Rock Medical Center, Seton Medical Center Williamson, Scott & White and Lone Star Circle of Care.

"We've been establishing formal relationships with hospitals and several practitioners in town for a while now," Colenda said. "We're one of the fastest growing medical schools in U.S. That presents a lot of challenges for us, but we are so thankful to the medical community of Round Rock for all the help."

Along with its state-of-the-art facilities, the Texas A&M Health

Science Center in Round Rock will focus heavily on diabetic care and research. A&M recently recruited Dr. Divish Fonseca, currently a professor of medicine at Rhode University, to the staff, Colenda said. He will begin part-time with A&M Jan. 1, 2009 and full-time by summer 2009.

"Dr. Fonseca will be great at educating our students and will be a resource to doctors and patients in the community," Colenda said.

Other area institutions will also contribute to the medical education in Round Rock. For example, the Texas State University Round Rock Higher Education Center will be home

to the university's School of Nursing beginning in fall 2010.

"The leaders at Texas State, Austin Community College and A&M don't want to compete but want to work together to bring more benefits to the community," Colenda said. "This will be a great experience for all in Round Rock."

In January 2009, the beginning of the next legislative session, Texas A&M Health Science Center officials plan to request tuition revenue bonds to help with future funding of its facilities, Nelson said. In the future, A&M Health Science Center officials plan to build an education building and research center, Nelson said.

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