



REGIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EXCELLENCE

RCPSE

NEWSLETTER



June 2019

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SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE REGIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EXCELLENCE

FACT SHEET

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South Texas College's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) is meeting the demand for careers in the fields of public safety, law enforcement, fire science, and Homeland Security. South Texas College is the first border community college in the nation to establish local, state, and federal education partnerships for integrative training along the US/Mexico border. The \$71 million master plan is slated to transform the RCPSE into a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science and Homeland Security campus by the year 2030. The facility is located on a 64-acre site with an additional 180 acres available for future expansion. The master plan includes 534,385 square feet of buildings and training facilities in three phases over the next decade.

CAREER AND EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Professional Training Programs to South Texas College Credit Programs

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) Training Academy

South Texas College developed an Educational Pathway to provide college credits to graduates from Law Enforcement Professional Academies in the state of Texas. Graduates are able to earn escrow credits towards a South Texas College Certificate, Associate Degree, and Bachelor's Degrees:

- Basic Peace Officer Certificate

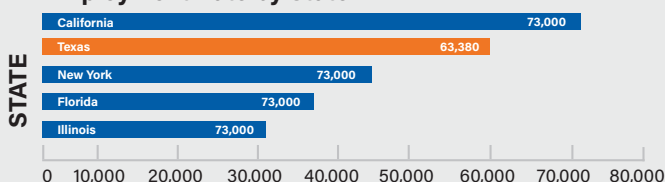
Federal Law Enforcement Professionals

South Texas College has established partnerships with federal agencies to provide educational pathways for individuals completing specific programs. South Texas College has developed a process to assess the courses taken as part of state, federal, and U.S. training programs and has established Educational Pathways from non-credit coursework toward the College's credit courses. Upon successful completion of specific academic courses, students receive a set number of escrow credits toward the College's Associate and Bachelor's Degree Programs:

- CBP Border Patrol
- CBP Field Operations
- FLETC Criminal Investigator
- FLETC Land Management Training
- FLETC Uniform Police Training

NATIONAL AND STATE JOB OUTLOOK

Employment Rate by State



Texas ranks 2nd
in highest employment
of police and sheriff's
patrol officers

RCPSE 20 YEAR MASTERPLAN

PHASE I

Opened in the Fall of 2018

- \$9.9-million investment
- Spacious training center for law enforcement, public safety & criminal justice students
- Driving Skills/Skid Pad
- Shooting Simulation Lab
- Driving Simulation Lab

PHASE II

- \$10.6-million investment in Fire Science & Homeland Security.
- Multi-story fire training structure, two story residential training structure and a confined space/search and rescue training area, flashover training and a flammable liquid and gas training pad
- Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), a cityscape with non-lethal simulation training capacity, and a covered shooting range with a firearm training classroom.

PHASE III

- \$50.6-million investment in Integrative Homeland Security
- Physical Plant and expansive growth with the addition of several education and student services buildings.

Upon completion, the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence will be unlike anything ever seen in South Texas & the border region. This is where world class instruction will meet world class training facilities!

South Texas College is working closely with local, state and federal officials to invest funds and implement the long-range plan. Local, state, and federal partners will have access to highly specialized training in a real world setting in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear scenarios, integrative models of communication such as NIMS (or National Incident Management System), joint and combined exercise training, border operational training, and much more.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

2013	November Voters of Hidalgo and Starr Counties approve South Texas College's Bond Election, which included funding for the first phase of RCPSE Construction.
2015	June Texas HB 1887 signed into law, establishing the RCPSE
2016	August South Texas College (STC) Board of Trustees approved and adopted the 20 Year Master Plan for the RCPSE September MOU Signing Ceremony with South Texas College, City of Pharr, and Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) ISD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City of Pharr contributed 59 acres of land worth \$2.5M ▪ PSJA ISD contributed 10 acres of land and an additional \$1M toward construction of four classrooms ▪ STC committed to the development and operation of public safety programs, and a long-term lease of classrooms for PSJA ISD dual credit students in criminal justice and public safety programs.
2017	March Groundbreaking Ceremony for Phase I Construction at RCPSE
2018	June Needs Assessment was conducted with Federal, State, County, Municipal and School District law enforcement agencies requesting identification of training needs at the RCPSE August Inaugural President's Advisory Council Retreat. The council provides advice and recommendations to South Texas College on matters related to the workforce and professional training needs of public safety and homeland security. First training program offered through the RCPSE for U.S. Border Patrol Leadership September RCPSE Dedication Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Texas Governor Greg Abbott dedicated the RCPSE to local, state, and federal law enforcement, public safety, and fire science professionals. September First Cohort of PSJA Criminal Justice Dual Credit Students
2019	April MOU Signing Ceremony with STC and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), U.S. Field Operations Academy, and the U.S. Border Patrol Academy to provide educational pathways for individuals to receive college credit for completion of their agency's specialized training programs.

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) President's Advisory Council provides advice and recommendations to South Texas College on matters related to the workforce and professional training needs of public safety and homeland security. Workforce and professional advanced training programs at the center will benefit from the interagency collaboration, expertise, and professional guidance on the curriculum, facility, program standards, and other needs of public safety agencies and professional development of the region.

The President's Advisory Council is tasked with:

- Assisting in the identification and development of law enforcement education training programs that best serve current and future public safety workforce needs.
- Recommending appropriate facilities, resources, and curricula to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for employment in the law enforcement and public safety sector.
- Assisting the RCPSE in staying current with developing technology, best practices in public safety professions, and the needs of interagency cooperation.
- Identifying and pursuing funding opportunities in partnership with South Texas College that supports the role of RCPSE in meeting the needs of public safety agencies that serve the region on a local, state and national basis.

The council members include law enforcement and homeland security leaders in Hidalgo and Starr Counties representing

- local cities
- local school districts
- higher education institutions
- state agencies
- federal agencies such as Department of Justice, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Members of the President's Advisory Council are asked to advocate for the workforce training needs of their agencies and to represent the professional standards appropriate to their public service community.

ABOUT SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE

Founded in 1993, South Texas College (STC) is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate and associate degrees. More than 31,000 students attend South Texas College, and a faculty and staff of more than 1,600 serve the college's five state of the art campuses, two Higher Education Centers, and one virtual campus.

South Texas College was created on September 1, 1993, by Texas Senate Bill 251 to serve Hidalgo and Starr counties. A confirmation election, held on August 12, 1995, established a taxing district for the college. Seven districts, based on population, were also approved for single-member representation on the Board of Trustees. A community leader from each of the seven districts was originally appointed by Governor Ann Richards to serve on the founding Board of Trustees. Since then, an election process has been established, and all board members are elected for six year terms.

PRESIDENT
Shirley A. Reed
M.B.A., Ed.D

RCPSE CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR
Paul Varville

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Dr. Alejo Salinas, Jr.
Member



South Texas College Officially Opens New Regional Center For Public Safety Excellence



MCALLEN, TEXAS (Sept. 19, 2018) – As a new cadet at South Texas College's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence Daniel Longoria says he looks forward to one day serving the community and protecting the public.

Entering the police academy fulfills a lifelong dream of a career in law enforcement, according to Longoria, who is part of the first group of 24 cadets to utilize the new Regional Center, a master plan that consists of 534,385 square feet of buildings, structures, and driving track to be completed in three phases over the next decade.

Longoria began his law enforcement training at the center in July, and after graduating in December plans to apply with the Hidalgo Sheriff's Department as a deputy.

"I feel honored that we get to represent South Texas College, and I know all of the cadets are really proud of that," Longoria said.

South Texas College held a grand opening and building dedication ceremony for its highly anticipated Regional Center for Public Excellence Sept. 18.

Special guests at the event included Sens. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, D-McAllen and Eddie Lucio, D-Brownsville; state Reps. Bobby Guerra, D-McAllen, Terry Canales, D-

Edinburg and Sergio Munoz, D-Palmview; Pharr Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez; PSJA ISD Superintendent Dr. Daniel King; and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Vice Chair Dr. Fred Farias.

"Going back to Dr. Reed and South Texas College, I want to thank you for your genuine commitment to both higher education as well as to public safety (and) the reality is both are essential for our future," Gov. Abbott told attendees. "Keeping communities safe must be our top priority if we are going to have the safety and security to be able to educate our kids, or safety and security to have the vibrant economy that we have."

"Combatting dangerous threats like those you have to deal with requires superior training for law enforcement professionals, and it's now more important than it has ever been," Abbott said. "You have to deal with issues like human trafficking, gangs and drug smuggling and to do that, it requires collaboration at all levels of law enforcement as well as first responders. Law enforcement officers, firefighters, public safety professionals are essential to that top priority of ensuring security in our state."

The new Regional Center intends to make STC the first border community college in the nation to establish integrative training along the US/Mexico border while meeting the demand for professionals seeking careers in public safety, law enforcement, fire science, and Homeland Security.



New Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence puts STC at the forefront of training the next generation of border security professionals

At the event, STC officially launched Phase 1 of its \$71 million master plan that will transform the center by 2030. Phase 1 is a 19,500 square-foot investment that consists of a training center, driving skills/skid pad, and shooting and driving simulation labs.

The center also consists of 180 additional acres for future expansion.

Phase Two includes a \$10.6 million investment for fire science and Homeland

Security. It includes a multi-story fire training structure, two story residential training structure and confined space/search and rescue training area. Phase 2 also includes the EVOC, a cityscape with non-lethal training capacity, and a covered shooting range with firearm training classroom.

Phase Three is a \$50.6 million investment in Integrative Homeland Security, which will add a physical plant and expansive growth with new education and student services buildings.

"This center is really the culmination of our \$159 million bond issue, which was originally approved in Oct. 2013. This is the last of those projects, and represents the only new campus in the entire program," said STC Board of Trustees chairman Paul Rodriguez. "This is truly a special project, and through the tremendous involvement, leadership and vision of Dr. Reed, Mayor Hernandez and Dr. King, we have a whole different project in our hands, and it's one to be excited about."

Pharr contributed 59 acres of land worth \$2.5 million, and the Basic Peace Office Certification Program is operated in part with the Pharr Police Academy.

PSJA ISD contributed 10 acres of land and an additional \$1 million for the construction of four classrooms to serve dual enrollment students in criminal justice and other public safety programs.

"This is about public safety," said PSJA ISD Superintendent Dr. Daniel King. "The quality and caliber of public safety will increase tremendously along the border. It is about education. This represents the first public higher education institute with a permanent presence in the tri-city community."



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STC President's Advisory Committee Selects RCPSE Goals For 2019



McAllen Police Chief Victor Rodriguez participated in STC's third President's Advisory Council State Local Law Enforcement Committee meeting on Dec. 13.

MCALLEN, TEXAS (Dec. 14, 2018) – A working partnership to develop South Texas College's Regional Center for Public Safety (RCPSE) is a first in Texas, and will serve as a model for future law enforcement to follow, according to Kim Vickers, Executive Director for the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE).

Vickers facilitated STC's third President's Advisory Council State Local Law Enforcement Committee meeting for the first time on Dec. 13. The committee meeting was organized to identify strategies that will be used in the development of the college's 2020 RCPSE implementation plan.

TCOLE, which serves as the regulatory agency for peace officers in Texas facilitated the retreat and reviewed the three goals decided upon by law enforcement at the committee meeting.

Goals include developing and delivering 10 specialized skills courses that meet the unmet needs of state, local and federal law enforcement by Aug. 31, 2019; building a partnership with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) and law enforcement agencies by 2020; and having the RCPSE assist agencies in recruiting and developing skilled individuals in the field of public safety.

"You have an opportunity here because of the number of federal officers, which makes it available, but I have not seen this anywhere else, maybe in other parts of the country there may be, but I know there is nothing like this in the state," Vickers told committee members. "The partnership between the locals which also includes state and federal components is very unique and very positive for the Valley. I think it's a great idea."

Vickers was in attendance along with representatives from federal agencies including Laredo Field Operations Director of Southern Operations Carlos Rodriguez; Chief Superior for Hidalgo, Pharr and Anzalduas Efrain De Los Santos; Acting Chief Patrol Agent Raul L. Ortiz; and Acting Deputy Chief Lloyd M. Easterling.

Representing local police departments on the Council was McAllen Chief Victor Rodriguez; Mercedes Chief Olga Maldonado; Mission Chief Robert Dominguez; Pharr Training Coordinator Sgt. Miguel Reyes; and Assistant Weslaco Chief Raul Lopez.

Law enforcement professionals are coordinating with STC to develop a functioning action plan as the STC RCPSE gets underway. The college held an official ribbon cutting announcing the opening of the facility in September 2018.

The Council now serves as the principal means to develop advanced training programs at the RCPSE, and to ensure that those programs remain current despite changing conditions.

"This particular meeting was a committee meeting, which was then broken up among federal, state, county and local law enforcement," said STC RCPSE chief administrator Paul Varville. "We discussed moving forward. We have a lot of ideas and conducted a survey where we asked both federal and state entities what kind of training they wanted. They ended up submitting 6,732 requests for training slots just among the members of our advisory board.

"During the committee meeting today, we were able to identify the specific types of training including mandatory training required by the state," Varville said. "We need to help all of the officers in the Valley to be trained, and address the more advanced courses including cyber technology."

Earlier this year, STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed extended an invitation to leaders of the law enforcement community for inclusion on the Advisory Council. The Council was created to provide regular input and recommendations for professional continuing education and degree programs.

The \$71.28 million dollar long-range master plan—that will transform the regional center to a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science, and Homeland Security Campus by 2030—is on a 64-acre site, in Pharr, Texas with 180 additional acres available for future expansion. The Master Plan will include 534,385 square feet of buildings, structures and driving track, and will be completed in three phases over the next decade.

Dr. Reed said STC has made incredible progress with the RCPSE even though it has taken more than a decade to establish.

"We have an agreement on an MOU with FLETC in that their basic training can be articulated into continuing education credits," Dr. Reed told committee members at the meeting. "This is a way for anyone who has been through the FLETC training to go through the process of evaluating some of the training they have experienced and actually earn college credit for it.

"They were very excited about this opportunity, and it's a great way for officers to be on the path for additional college credit," Dr. Reed said. "We were surprised how excited and eager they were to move in this direction."



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South Texas College To Partner With Texas Parks And Wildlife Department For Target Range Program Grant

AUSTIN, TEXAS (Nov. 30, 2018) South Texas College (STC) is partnering with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to construct an indoor target range at the College's new Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence in Pharr, TX.

During a press conference held November 29 at the Texas State Capitol, South Texas College was awarded \$307,219 for the planning phase of a 13,300 sq. ft. indoor 12-lane target range through TPWD's Target Range Grant Program.

Upon completion of the planning phase and environmental compliance grant requirements, South Texas College is eligible to receive a grant for the construction of the range in the amount of \$2,447,382, totaling to \$2,754,601 in grant funds. This grant funding is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, supported by sportsmen's dollars derived from the sale of hunting licenses and by federal excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition as authorized by the Pittman-Robertson Act.

South Texas College also plans to contribute \$1,280,775 toward this project. The total combined funds for this project amount to \$4,035,376.

The target range will be open to the public for firearms safety training, practice shooting, and skills development. In addition to the target range, the College will also provide educational opportunities, including face-to-face Hunter Education courses approved by TPWD and led by certified Texas Hunter Education instructors.

TPWD's Target Range Grant Program Coordinator Renan Zambrano explains why the Target Range Program is important.

"The goal of the program is to create public access for recreational shooting opportunities and to enhance educational resources by promoting firearm and hunting safety," said Zambrano. "We accomplish this by partnering on target range stewardship projects with nonprofit, private, and civic organizations with common objectives for providing safe, responsible and ethical firearm education and target range facilities for the general welfare



of the community. We believe this project in particular is uniquely suited to serve the needs across several Rio Grande Valley communities.”

The College’s Law Enforcement Academy and the College Department of Public Safety will also benefit from access to this state-of-the art target range facility.

South Texas College’s Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence center is dedicated to all local, state, and federal law enforcement, public safety, and fire science professionals.

South Texas College Chairman of the Board of Trustees Paul Rodriguez says this unique collaboration will benefit the region.

“Our board of trustees is pleased to pursue the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s Target Range Program as it aligns extremely well with the type of training and educational programs we envisioned for our Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence,” said Rodriguez. “The prospect of having this type of facility for the general public as well as law enforcement agencies is ideal.”

The college will be seeking additional funds to expand the target range to the law enforcement community in the future; STC President, Dr. Shirley A. Reed, says access to the covered target range will assist law enforcement professionals in receiving first-rate firearm training.

“South Texas College is excited to partner with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This target range will not only provide hunter education and general public education opportunities, but will also lay the groundwork for an expanded facility to provide state-of-the-art firearms training and qualification opportunities for our many law enforcement and public safety partners.”

Texas Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, D-McAllen stated the significance of the Target Range Grant Program during the press conference in Austin.

“I appreciate Texas Parks and Wildlife for working with our local, state, and federal partners to make this investment possible. This grant would not have been awarded without the dedication, cooperation, and commitment from all those involved,” said Hinojosa. “The educational and training opportunities provided for the public and law enforcement will further enhance the public safety of our region.”

The estimated completion date for the target range is February 2021.



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South Texas College Hosts First President's Advisory Council Meeting with Law Enforcement

By: TBB Staff - May 4, 2018

McAllen, Texas – Law enforcement professionals have begun offering their recommendations for identifying and developing training programs as the new Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) gets underway.

Law enforcement from across the region offered their input at the first President's Advisory Council Luncheon on April 27.

"Two key words are critical in the name," said STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed. "One is regional. Two is that it will be built on excellence. We want to maintain that focus on regional activity, and doing it with excellence. This is a concept that Dean Mario Reyna and I have been talking about for probably 20 years.

"Why can't we put together a training facility that can meet the needs of all of our local public safety law enforcement professionals, state, and federal level?" Dr. Reed said. "It's finally getting some traction."

President Reed recently extended an invitation to leaders of the law enforcement community for inclusion on the Advisory Council. The Council will now provide regular input and recommendations for professional continuing education and degree programs.

State Sens. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, D-McAllen, and Eddie Lucio Jr., D-Brownsville, made opening remarks at the luncheon. Representatives from federal agencies in attendance included Laredo Field Operations Director David Higerson; and RGV Customs and Border Protection Sector Chief Manuel Padilla.

Representing local police departments on the Council are McAllen Chief Victor Rodriguez; Mercedes Chief Olga Maldonado; Mission Chief Robert Dominguez; Pharr Interim Chief Jose Luengo; Rio Grande City Chief Noe Castillo, and Weslaco Chief Joel Rivera.

"There are challenges that law enforcement has that the public doesn't quite grasp. One of those challenges is training," Sen. Hinojosa said. "As we grow our law enforcement, we need to find ways to train them adequately not only to protect themselves but to defend the public.

"In addition, we don't want our law enforcement professionals to leave the Valley for training," Hinojosa said. "We want to provide that here, and provide everything that is needed to have excellence in understanding the responsibilities of our law enforcement."

Together with its partners, including Valley cities and law enforcement agencies, STC has developed a \$71.28 million long-range master plan for building its RCPSE in three phases.

Located at 4300 S. Cage Blvd. in Pharr, the RCPSE will make STC the first border community college in the nation to establish integrative training for local, state and

federal professionals in law enforcement, public safety, fire safety and Homeland Security along the US/Mexico border.



Law enforcement from across the region offered their input at the first President's Advisory Council Luncheon on April 27.

"I'm really honored to join so many of our local, county, and state leaders to work with the improvement of the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence. I feel like I am at home here in your presence because my dad was in law enforcement for 30 years. Law enforcement has a very special place in my heart," Sen. Lucio said. "At the opening of the Regional Center last year, I was pleased to join the stakeholders from the education and law enforcement and economic development fields who all share an interest in the safety of the region and its residents.

"I said then that leveraging our shared resources to achieve shared goals would be an effective strategy for nourishing a safe and vibrant community, which I think we have at this time," Lucio said.

The \$71 million master plan is slated to transform the RCPSE into a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science and Homeland Security campus by 2030. The facility is located on a 64-acre site in Pharr with 180 additional acres available for future expansion. The master plan includes 534,385 square feet of buildings, structures, and a driving track to be completed in three phases over the next decade.

Phase One includes a \$9.9 million investment. Set for completion this fall, it includes a training center, driving/skills pad, shooting simulation lab and a driving simulation lab.

Phase Two includes \$10.6 million investment for fire science and Homeland Security. It includes a multistory fire training structure, two-story residential training structure and confined space/search and rescue training area. This phase also includes the EVOC, a cityscape with non-lethal training capacity, and a covered shooting range with firearm training classroom.

Phase Three is a \$50.6 million investment in Integrative Homeland Security, which will add a physical plant and expansive growth with new education and student services buildings.



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Press Release

South Texas College Seeking Partnership with Department of Homeland Security Agencies Ahead of Center Opening

MCALLEN, TEXAS (Nov. 21, 2017) – Maintaining security on the border requires the highest level of advanced specialized training.

South Texas College has begun a series of law enforcement stakeholder meetings with Hidalgo and Starr County mayors, city managers, police chiefs, and Texas Department of Public Safety Commissioner Cynthia Leon as part of Phase II for its Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE). The latest phase includes the expansion and development of professional continuing education training for federal agencies within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

To accomplish this, STC in conjunction with the City of Pharr is pursuing a partnership with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), which is reviewing the College's master plan for the upcoming Regional Center Public for Safety Excellence in Pharr, slated to open June 2018.

Based in Glynco, GA, FLETC is the name of the interagency law enforcement training body for 91 federal law enforcement agencies. With an annual budget of \$272 million, it also provides tuition-free and low-cost training to state, local, campus and tribal law enforcement agencies through its Rural Policing Institute (RPI) and the Office of State and Local Training.

STC and the City of Pharr are now moving on to Phase II, which includes site visits with officials at the federal level who stand to benefit from the services of the RCPSE. Meetings are currently taking place with federal stakeholders, including FLETC, RGV Sector Border Patrol, Laredo Field Operations, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed is extending an invitation to leaders of the law enforcement community to become members of the President's Advisory Council for the RCPSE. The Council will regularly provide input and recommendations for professional continuing education and degree programs.

Continued on Next Page. . .

“Everybody agreed that this is absolutely needed, and it will be a benefit for all law enforcement officials, local, state and federal,” said Dr. Reed. “When we did the master plan, law enforcement professionals identified for us what their priorities were. We incorporated these priorities into the master plan, and when you’re developing a master plan you do some dreaming and some visioning but we are now in the reality phase.”

Meetings are currently being spearheaded by the offices of U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28).

Representatives from STC, along with Pharr mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, briefed officials at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Laredo Field Office, a border agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, during a recent meeting in Laredo, who were then informed on the RCPSE masterplan. There are currently 1,000 agents based in the Rio Grande Valley needing Advanced Professional Skills training.

In attendance at the meeting in Laredo was David Higgeson, Director of the Office of Field Operations for CBP; Anna Garcia, Deputy Regional Director for U.S. Sen. John Cornyn; Francis Atwell, representative from the Office of Congressman Henry Cuellar; Wanda Garza, Executive Officer for External Affairs at South Texas College; Mario Reyna, Dean of Business, Technology and Public Safety at South Texas College; Eugene Crawford, Assistant Director (Mission Support), CBP; and Bradd Skinner, Assistant Director (Trade), CBP.

Representatives from STC will now travel to FLETC headquarters in Glynco, GA on Nov. 30.

Through a potential partnership, STC seeks to be the first community college FLETC provider along the Southern Border to offer Advanced Professional Continuing Education Training.

“I congratulate South Texas College for your commitment to bringing this high level of law enforcement training to South Texas,” said U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28), “By combining the expertise of our local, state and federal law enforcement, fire safety, and public safety officers, we will have a better trained police workforce.”

Located at 4300 S. Cage Blvd. in Pharr, the RCPSE will make STC the first border community college in the nation to establish integrative training for local, state and federal professionals in law enforcement, public safety, fire science and Homeland Security along the US/Mexico border.

The \$71 million master plan is slated to transform the RCPSE into a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science and Homeland Security campus by 2030. The facility is located on a 64 acre site in Pharr with 180 additional acres available for future expansion. The master plan includes 534,385 square feet of buildings, structures and a driving track to be completed in three phases over the next decade.

“We need more advanced specialized training. At the end of the day, it’s about having access to that training for law enforcement officers as well as fire departments,” said Mario Reyna, Dean of Public Safety at STC. “They need continuous training, and that’s something that will only better serve the residents in our communities across the Valley. Whether it’s Rio Grande City, McAllen, Edinburg or Pharr; it’s all about having highly skilled trained public safety officers.”



STC held its first business consortium meeting in August 2017 with city leaders, as well as with law enforcement professionals to discuss the proposed development of its \$4 million Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) and \$3.2 million Covered Shooting Range as Phase II of the RCPSE gets underway. Together with its partners, including Valley cities and law enforcement agencies, STC has developed a \$71.28 million long-range master plan for building its regional center in three phases.

Phase One includes a \$9.9 million investment. Set for completion in Fall 2018, it includes a training center, driving/skills pad, shooting simulation lab and a driving simulation lab.

Phase Two includes \$10.6 million investment for fire science and Homeland Security. It includes a multi-story fire training structure, two story residential training structure and a confined space/search and rescue training area. This phase also includes the EVOC, a cityscape with non-lethal training capacity, and a covered shooting range with firearm training classrooms.

Phase Three is a \$50.6 million investment in Integrative Homeland Security, which will add a physical plant and expansive growth with new education and student services buildings.

“Over the course of several meetings with our congressional leaders, federal agency heads, and regional partners, we have impressed upon our federal partners the significance of our regional efforts to enhance public safety and border security with our South Texas College campus in Pharr,” said Pharr Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez. “Thanks to our joint efforts between South Texas College, PSJA ISD and the City of Pharr, we are proud to have attracted the interest of CBP and other federal agencies to further augment the public safety education and training opportunities that will be available at the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence.”

Key to that development is the EVOC that will enable sheriff’s departments, police departments, fire departments, federal agencies and DPS to use the facility for a wide variety of vehicle training including driving skills practice and collision avoidance.

“We thank our regional and federal partners for their continued support,” said Mayor Hernandez. “We look forward to the enhanced security that will develop out of this collaborative partnership and benefit the safety of the entire region.”



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Press Release

STC Brings Together Municipal Leaders and Law Enforcement Professionals for the First Regional Consortium Meeting

*Brainstorm session includes update of RCPSE and key phases of facility
as it begins to open its doors this fall*

MCALLEN, TX (Aug. 14, 2017) - South Texas College held its first business consortium meeting on Aug. 10 with city leaders, as well as law enforcement professionals to discuss the proposed development of its \$4 million Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) and \$3.2 million Covered Shooting Range as Phase II of the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) gets underway.

Together with its partners, including Valley cities and law enforcement agencies, STC has developed a \$71.28 million long range master plan for building its RCPSE in three phases.

Key to that development is the EVOC that will enable sheriff's departments, police departments, fire departments, federal agencies and DPS to use the facility for a wide variety of vehicle training including driving skills practice and collision avoidance.

The luncheon on Aug. 10 was the first regional meeting of city leaders and law enforcement from at least 10 different cities in the Valley.

"Everybody agreed that this is absolutely needed, and it will be a benefit for all law enforcement officials, local, state and federal," said STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed. "This was critical. We have the cities and the counties all involved. When we did the master plan, they identified for us what their priorities were. We incorporated it into the master plan, and when you're doing a master plan you do some dreaming and some visioning but we are now in the reality phase."



Located at 4300 S. Cage Blvd. in Pharr, the RCPSE will make STC the first border community college in the nation to establish integrative training for local, state and federal professionals in law enforcement, public safety, fire safety and Homeland Security along the US/Mexico border.

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“This has been an operation between STC, the City of Pharr and PSJA ISD. We donated the land and money. Now obviously it’s in our borders but at the end of the day, what we want is a regional project,” said Pharr Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez, who was in attendance at the consortium meeting. “We don’t want a project designed specifically for the boundaries of Pharr.

“This is not Pharr’s project, it is STC’s project because the college represents the entire Rio Grande Valley. This is a regional project enabling all communities to come together and contribute to educate law enforcement. It is a national project because the entire nation benefits from this.”

The \$71 million master plan is slated to transform the RCPSE into a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science and Homeland Security campus by 2030. The facility is located on a 64 acre site in Pharr with 180 additional acres available for future expansion. The master plan includes 534,385 square feet of buildings, structures and a driving track to be completed in three phases over the next decade.

“Obviously, South Texas College is a huge part of our community and the entire Rio Grande Valley. McAllen has partnered with STC since its inception,” said McAllen City Manager Roy Rodriguez, who also attended the EVOC luncheon.

“Dr. Reed, STC and City Hall have been synonymous with success as far as what STC has been able to accomplish. When you have an expansion of this magnitude that could possibly touch so many lives and so many organizations, it’s important that we get everybody together and start getting opinions about how to move forward. It’s exciting to be here.”



Continued on Next Page. . .

CONTINUED: STC Brings Together Municipal Leaders and Law Enforcement Professionals for the First Regional Consortium Meeting

Phase One includes a \$9.9 million investment. Set for completion this fall, it includes a training center, driving/skills pad, shooting simulation lab and a driving simulation lab.

Phase Two includes \$10.6 million investment for fire science and Homeland Security. It includes a multi-story fire training structure, two story residential training structure and confined space/search and rescue training area. This phase also includes the EVOC, a cityscape with non-lethal training capacity, and a covered shooting range with firearm training classroom.



Phase Three is a \$50.6 million investment in Integrative Homeland Security, which will add a physical plant and expansive growth with new education and student services buildings.

"My initial impression was that I feel it's going to be a great asset to the community and to the region. We are looking at training law enforcement officers, and not just officers but firefighters as well. I think this is going to be great for our region," said Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal, who was also in attendance at the meeting.

"We need better training. At the end of the day, it's about having access to that training for law enforcement officers as well as fire departments," Villarreal said. "They need continuous training, and that's something that will only better serve the residents in our communities across the Valley. Whether it's Rio Grande City, McAllen, Edinburg or Pharr; it's all about having better trained public safety officers."

For more information please visit southtexascollege.edu/regionalcenter



Vision for STC's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence Taking Shape

Master plan includes an all encompassing center for law enforcement training over the next decade

MCALLEN, TX (June 8, 2017)

– The demand for highly skilled professionals in public safety, law enforcement, fire science and homeland security is increasing rapidly and South Texas College is poised and ready to meet the demand, now!



Construction is currently underway for the highly anticipated Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) to be located at 4300 S. Cage Blvd in Pharr.

The new RCPSE will make South Texas College the first border community college in the nation to establish integrative training for local, state and federal professionals in law enforcement, public safety, fire science and homeland security along the US/Mexico border. Current and prospective agents or officers will be exposed to real-world scenarios by professionals with experience on the front lines of border security.

“The spectrum of courses offered will cover all the needs of our region,” said Mario Reyna, Dean for Business and Technology at STC. “Traveling to College Station or San Antonio for specialized training will be a thing of the past.”

The **\$71.28 million dollar long-range master plan**—which will transform the regional center to a Public Safety, Law Enforcement, Fire Science, and Homeland Security Campus by 2030—is on a 64-acre site, in Pharr, Texas with 180 additional acres available for future expansion.

The Master Plan will include **534,385 square feet of buildings, structures & driving track**, and will be completed in three phases over the next decade. Upon completion, the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence will be unlike anything ever seen in South Texas & the border region. This is where world class instruction will meet world class training facilities!

Phase One is a \$9.9 million dollar investment, set for completion in the Fall of 2018. It includes a spacious training center for Law Enforcement, Public Safety & Criminal Justice students, a driving skills/skid pad, a shooting simulation lab and a driving simulation lab.



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Phase Two is a \$10.6 million dollar investment in Fire Science & Homeland Security. Planned in this Phase are a multi-story fire training structure, two story residential training structure and a confined space/search and rescue training area, flashover training and a flammable liquid and gas training pad. Phase Two also includes an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), a city scape with non-lethal simulation training capacity, and a covered shooting range with a firearm training classroom.

Phase Three is a \$50.6 million dollar investment in Integrative Homeland Security and will add a Physical Plant and expansive growth with the addition of several education and student services buildings.

South Texas College is working closely with local, state and federal officials to invest funds and implement the long-range plan. "We all came together to acquire the funds. The City of Pharr donated the land, PSJA donated a million dollars and additional acreage, the taxpayers contributed 4 million dollars from the bond issue... so we got the start up funding to have an absolutely first class training facility, not only for our local law enforcement professionals but also state, DPS, federal, US Customs, US Border Patrol and FBI," said STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed.

Local, state and federal partners will have access to highly specialized training in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear scenarios, integrative models of communication such as NIMS (or National Incident Management System), joint & combined exercise training, border operational training and muchmore, in a real world setting.

The Rio Grande Valley Fire Safety and Law Enforcement jobs have experienced a 41.7% growth since 2001. The RGV Border Patrol Sector and Customs will be adding approximately 5,000 new jobs along the border. The jobs in Fire Safety and Law Enforcement in the Rio Grande Valley average \$25.67 an hour, which is high economic impact to the region.

South Texas College remains the only location where police cadets can receive college credit during their training, and the new facilities will allow for increased opportunities for Continuing Education credit for current police officers in agencies across the Valley.

The new building will house classrooms, administration spaces and offices, computer lab, shower/locker rooms, support spaces, a workout room & simulation room. Three classrooms will be able to convert to a larger lecture hall by the use of folding partition walls. The interior of the facility will have plenty of natural lighting with the design of clerestory windows above and will be using a chilled water system to cool the facility.

"Public safety is number one for most governments. City government is no different," said Pharr Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez. "We want public safety for our citizens but also we want to protect the people providing the public safety. What better way to do that than to have a strong education foundation."

To learn more about this project and to download photos and videos go to
<https://www.southtexascollege.edu/RCPSE>



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THE MONITOR

EDITORIAL: How RGV Leaders Are Serving the Public

THE MONITOR EDITORIAL BOARD - Mar 5, 2017 Updated Mar 6, 2017

In the fall of 2013, a contingency from South Texas College, which included President Shirley Reed and Board Trustee Gary Gurwitz, met with The Monitor's Editorial Board to advocate for support of the college's proposed \$159 million bond package. This package included the construction of several new STC buildings throughout our Valley, along with \$4.2 million to establish a Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence in Pharr, where law enforcement officers could hone their skills and new recruits could receive vital tactical training.



At the time, these STC leaders could not have known that the following summer would begin a wave of immigrant apprehensions in South Texas unlike anything we've ever experienced. They could not have known the number of additional law enforcement agents would be needed here as our population swelled (which is expected to be 2,000 more by 2021). Nor could they have known that the state government would send a cadre of DPS agents to our border, along with the National Guard, and that all law enforcement agents in our area would ultimately be involved, in some way or another, in border security enforcement.



Of course, we all know now that asking for \$4 million from voters at the time was precisely the right course to take. And that our community was wise to approve the measure, which The Monitor heartily endorsed.

We say all this because sometimes our leaders are too often faulted for what they didn't do, rather than what they did, or what they took a chance on trying to do. So we recognize the efforts of Reed and the STC board, who so wisely anticipated our community's future needs.

And we're not the only ones to do so. Several powerful officials from Austin and throughout the Rio Grande Valley came to Pharr on Friday morning for the long-awaited ground breaking of the new Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence, which is being built at 4300 S. Cage Blvd. ,in Pharr. Many reiterated how prescient it was in 2013 to lay the foundation then to develop such a center.

Most also recognized how it has taken the collaboration of several entities — STC, the City of Pharr and the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District — in order to see this \$10 million facility come to fruition.

The City of Pharr has contributed 59 acres worth \$2.5 million; PSJA ISD has contributed 10 acres and \$1 million toward the project for construction of four classrooms to serve dual enrollment students in criminal justice and public safety courses.

“This is very important for our community, for our region,” PSJA ISD Superintendent Daniel King said Friday. “We’re in the perfect position here for border security, homeland security issues. Our goal is for this to become a premiere site and a premiere campus not only for our area, but nationally for dealing with all these issues.”

King then told the crowd of elected officials, businessmen and law enforcement agents what is often unfairly thought about our area, which some believe to be a lawless region, full of crime and dangers.

“With our location on the border, with everybody working together this area is so safe and it’s not often perceived as such from those who are viewing it from afar, but it’s so safe because of the work you do. And with this center we can take it to the next level,” King said.

Undoubtedly the construction of this 19,375-square-foot facility — which will include an STC police academy and the only law enforcement training vehicle driving track south of San Antonio — will be the site for the beginning of many law enforcement career, and the place where our officers can take continuing education credits without having to leave our region.

It also is expected to bring in officers from Mexico and other communities who wish to experience the unique skills needed to upholding law on the border.

As state Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa said on Friday: “It is important that we as a community, we as a state provide the resources, the training the support they need to protect themselves and also the public ... and that is what this center is all about — public safety excellence.”



Federal Law Enforcement Partnerships with South Texas College; First of Their Kind in Texas

STC announces official partnership with Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers and two U.S. Homeland Security agencies at a college credit agreement ceremony on April 24.

MCALLEN, TX (April 26, 2019) - The college announced its official partnership with FLETC and two U.S. Homeland Security agencies at a college credit agreement ceremony on April 24.

The agreement marks the first federal partnership training agreement in the state of Texas. The ceremony formalized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements with FLETC as well as the U.S. Field Operations Academy, and the U.S. Border Patrol Academy, which are all under U.S. Homeland Security. These agreements outline how much college credit South Texas College will grant federal agents for training they have already completed through federal programs.

These new federal partnerships at the college's Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence (RCPSE) are poised to enhance the ability of future and current federal law enforcement officers to expand their horizons and their careers, according to USCBP agent Hector Escamilla, Division Chief for Law Enforcement Operations in the Rio Grande Valley Sector.

The issue of training and awareness is one that Escamilla is intently familiar with; after all, he has been educating citizens about Border Patrol operations for at least two decades. In the late 1990s, Escamilla said he organized the first Border Patrol Citizens Academy, which enabled the public to participate in a six to eight week class in an attempt to give them an up close and personal view of the border. Escamilla said he has trained hundreds of citizens over the years, which included municipal leaders, educators, and students. Classes included accompanying Border Patrol agents on the river or in helicopters to boost awareness of life on the job, he said.

"I think what STC has established here is wonderful," Escamilla said. "I was here for the groundbreaking ceremony with Dr. Reed, and although I know it hasn't fully come to fruition, I believe this is an outstanding endeavor, and it's definitely going to enhance the ability of our young people, here in the community, to expand their horizons and their careers."

"There is incredible potential with South Texas College, so I have to hand it to them; they accomplished all this in about a year, which is truly amazing," Cuellar said.

"This will be the model and the foundation for other places," Cuellar said. "South Texas College is setting the foundation so we can do this, and not only for the credit classes that they are



expecting, but for those trainees I want to bring in so they can become future CBP officers and Border Patrol agents.”

STC’s Regional Center, in particular, is working to meet the demand of careers in the fields of public safety, law enforcement, fire science, and Homeland Security. In alignment with its institutional mission to provide career and academic pathways for students of the South Texas region, STC is collaborating with federal law enforcement agencies to provide college credit for completion of federal training programs.

Graduates from the five Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) training programs will be eligible to claim between six to 17 hours of college credit at STC upon completion of two requisite courses.

Specialized FLETC training programs eligible for college credit at STC include criminal investigation, land management, and uniform police. USCBP programs eligible for college credit include Border Patrol and Field Operations. All course credit will count towards the Applied Associate of Science in Law Enforcement.

“Something has to be done to expand educational opportunities for all the agents working for U.S. Customs and Border Patrol,” said STC President Dr. Shirley A. Reed. “It has taken 15 to 20 years, but here we are today in this beautiful facility that was only possible with the support of the City of Pharr, PSJA school district, the taxpayers of Hidalgo and Starr County, the state legislature, and we are optimistic that we will now receive federal funding.

“This truly has been a collaborative commitment to improve the preparation of all law enforcement officers: local, state, and federal,” Dr. Reed said. “We are committed to doing this collaboratively.”

STC initiated this process after visiting the FLETC training center in Glynco, Ga. in late 2017. Since then, college staff along with leaders from FLETC and USCBP have aligned the specialized training program outcomes with college coursework to allow federal agents and officers to be eligible to receive college credit.

STC pursued the partnership with FLETC, which is the name of the interagency law enforcement training body for 91 federal law enforcement agencies that provides tuition-free and low-cost training to state, local, campus and tribal law enforcement agencies through its Rural Policing Institute (RPI) and the Office of State and Local Training.

“This is our first foray into Texas and the first agreement of its kind,” said FLETC Director Walters. “It has great promise for here and now, and even greater promise for the future as we give our students who graduate from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center the opportunity to gain some credit for their professional careers, and we look forward to being able to outreach even better not just with Texas but other states in the union.”

Students seeking information about programs available at the RCPSE can visit <https://www.southtexascollege.edu/rcpse/> for more information. Those looking for information about the Law Enforcement or Fire Science programs can call 956-872-4200. Students who are seeking to earn an associate degree in Criminal Justice can call 956-872-6724.



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83rd Texas Legislature

House of Representatives Concurrent Resolution 219

H.C.R. No. 219

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Border safety is a matter of vital importance, and South Texas has a growing need for highly trained law enforcement professionals to ensure the security of the citizens of the Lone Star State; and

WHEREAS, Studies derived from Texas Workforce Commission data indicate that the need for law enforcement personnel such as police and sheriff's officers, detectives, and criminal investigators will see a 21 percent increase between 2012 and 2021; accordingly, approximately 2,000 new law enforcement positions will be required in Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Willacy, and Zapata Counties; and

WHEREAS, In order to prepare for the law enforcement challenges ahead, the City of Pharr, South Texas College, the Pharr Police Department, and the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District have united to work for the development of a state-of-the-art training complex, the proposed Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence, in Hidalgo County; this complex will benefit the entire region by launching innovative programs_ in public safety and security, providing initial and continuing Education of law enforcement personnel in the Rio Grande Valley; individuals will be able to attain basic peace officer certification and credit toward an associate of applied science degree, or to work toward a wide range of certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees; and

WHEREAS, The City of Pharr has committed 40 acres for construction of the center, which would be funded by local community college bond proceeds; the RCPSE would be administered by South Texas College in partnership with political subdivisions and participating school districts in the Rio Grande Valley, and through a memorandum of understanding with the city, the police department, and the school district; currently, PSJA ISD offers academic and workforce programs leading to certificates and degrees in public safety and criminal justice; the Pharr Police Department is licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education to offer a police academy, and the department will ensure that RCPSE programs and course curricula satisfy any TCLEOSE requirements for approved training providers; and

WHEREAS, Establishment of a center for public safety excellence received overwhelming support in the Texas house, which passed House Bill 2883, 83rd Regular Session, with 145 aye votes; and

WHEREAS, All those who are working on this important endeavor are making a valuable and lasting contribution to public safety, and it is most fitting to recognize them for their commitment to a strong and safe Texas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 83rd Texas Legislature hereby commend the City of Pharr, South Texas College, the Pharr Police Department, and the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District for their outstanding collaborative efforts to develop the Regional Center for Public Safety Excellence and to address the critical and growing need for highly trained law enforcement personnel in the South Texas border region; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That official copies of this resolution be prepared for the city, the college, the police department, and the school district as an expression of high regard by the 83rd Texas Legislature.

Munoz, Jr.

David Dewhurst

President of the Senate

Joe Straus

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.C.R. No. 219 was adopted by the House on May 27, 2013, by a non-record vote.

Robert Haney

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.C.R. No. 219 was adopted by the Senate on May 27, 2013, by a viva-voce vote.

Daisy Spaw

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: 14 JUNE '13

Date

Rick Perry

Governor

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

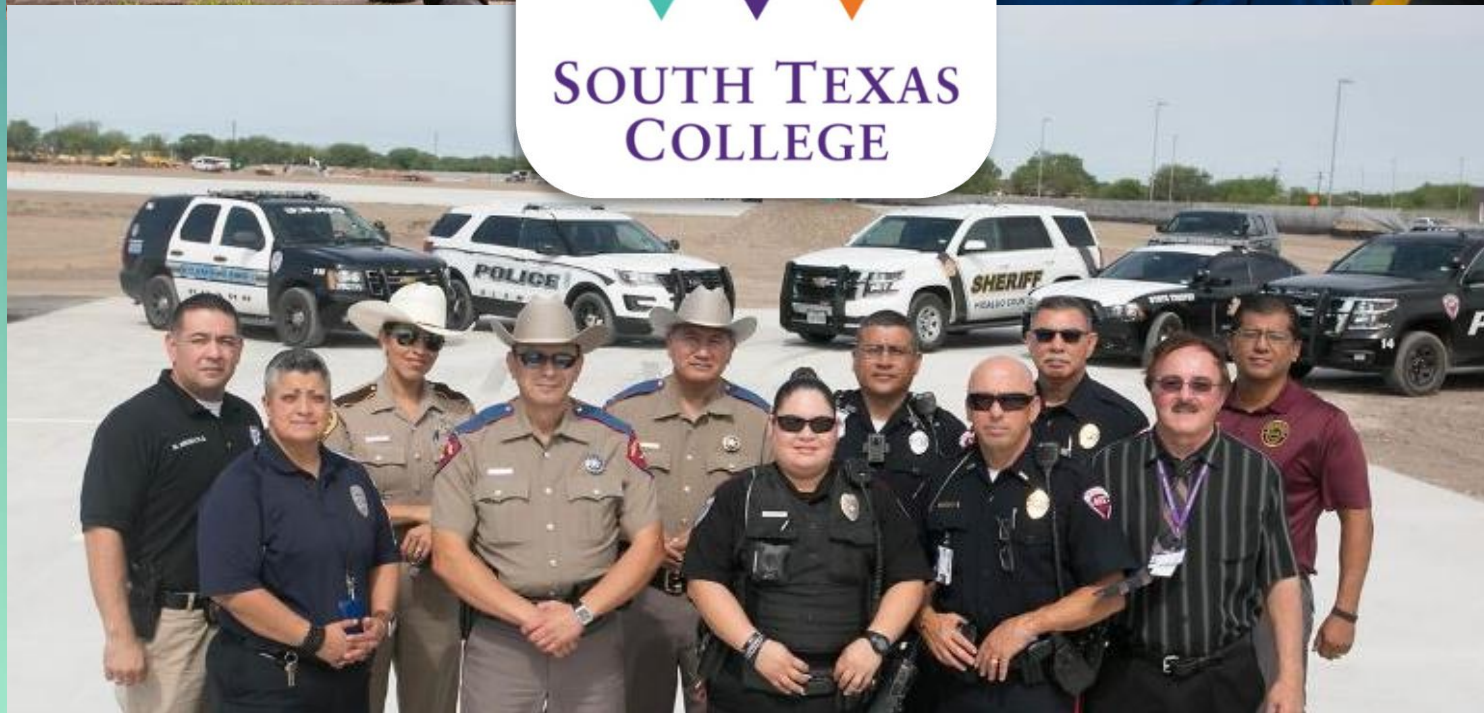
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JUN 14 2013

[Signature]
Secretary of State



**SOUTH TEXAS
COLLEGE**



southtexascollege.edu/RCPSE

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