

CUESTA COLLEGE NORTH COUNTY CAMPUS

(September 2008 update)

Setting

The North County is geographically, economically and culturally distinct from the balance of San Luis Obispo County. Historically a rural agricultural community, North County retains and promotes its country flavor and small town atmosphere. Generally, home prices are more affordable, making the North County a family and commuter community. Leading industries, in order of revenues generated are agriculture, tourism, light manufacturing, service (finance, real estate and insurance) and retail. Leading the list of agricultural crops is wine grapes. Vineyards, as well as horse and cattle ranches are prevalent on the outskirts of town.

The three largest communities are Atascadero, Templeton and Paso Robles. Founded in 1913 and incorporated in 1979 with a current population of nearly 28,000 residents, Atascadero is now the second largest city in North County and is the most distant from the North County Campus. The college site is within the Paso Robles city limits, now the largest city in North County with a population of 29,500. Paso Robles gained city status when incorporated back in 1889. Templeton, a smaller but growing community, is located along highway 101 and the Salinas River between Atascadero and Paso Robles.

There are six public school districts in North County. According to the 2007 report from the County Schools Office, Atascadero Unified School District has approximately 5,038 students, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District reports 6,906 students, Templeton Unified School District has 2,563 students, Shandon Unified School District has grown to 382 students, San Miguel, Joint Unified Elementary School District is now at 460 students and the Pleasant Valley Joint Unified Elementary School District reports 137 students.

The Community Builds the North County Campus

Shortly after the completion of the 1991 Master Plan, state bond measures for community college capital construction failed in 1992-1994. When it became apparent that state funding could not be relied upon to start a center in a timely manner, concerned citizens organized to support their interest in a new campus. Due to the extraordinary efforts of the Cuesta College Foundation, Cuesta College administration, faculty and staff, North County leaders and many highly motivated community donors, a capital campaign was undertaken. The Campaign for Cuesta, North County Campus, ended successfully in October 1998, having exceeded its goal of two million dollars. Total funds raised included \$2.3 million in cash and pledges and \$1.8 million in deferred gifts.

The center was constructed with modular buildings on a carefully selected 82-acre site on Buena Vista Drive in Paso Robles. An additional adjacent 23-acre parcel was subsequently donated giving the North County Campus a total of 105 acres. The North County Campus is currently a comfortable commute from all areas of North County. More importantly, the chosen location appears optimal in light of Census 2000, which reflects that North County, specifically north of Paso Robles, is experiencing some of the fastest growth in the county. The campus opened in fall 1998 with three modular buildings.

A second campaign entitled Building on Success: Campaign 2000, successfully ended in the spring of 2001, securing \$500,000 in funding for two additional modular buildings (buildings #5000 and #6000). Total project cost were over \$1,200,000 with additional funds coming from district allocations, PG&E settlement funds, and the College Foundation. As has become the tradition in North County, the community once again “stepped up to the plate”.

Campus statistics reflect that since the opening semester, course sections have increased from 88 to over 240 with new courses enhancing both breadth and depth of offerings. The number of faculty teaching at the North County site has increased from 58 to over 110. Two dozen of the faculty teaching on the North County Campus are full-time tenured instructors. The level of available technology for teaching labs, faculty offices and student support areas has also increased, primarily with the addition of the first permanent building – the Fox Building – Allied Health, Math and Science.

Math/Science Allied Health Building

The initial permanent building added significant capacity for instruction in the sciences, math and allied health by providing specialized laboratories as well as general classroom and computer labs. Prior to bringing this building on board, a glaring deficiency was the absence of science lab classes. Although Building N6000 (portable) provided limited opportunity to offer lower level biology and physical science lab courses, additional science and health preparation are needed for students to progress in their majors and career fields.

North County Campus Science/Math/Allied Health Building
Completed – Funding provided through Proposition 47, passed in November 2002 statewide election.
Timeline: Completion = Spring 2005 Instructional Use = Summer 2005
Assignable square footage (24,640) includes: ✓ 2 Biology Labs ✓ 1 Audio Tutorial Lab ✓ 1 Lecture Hall ✓ 1 Chemistry Lab ✓ 1 Physics/Electronics Lab ✓ 1 Allied Health Lab ✓ 1 Computer Applications Lab ✓ 1 Open Math Lab ✓ 3 Math Classrooms ✓ 3 General Classrooms ✓ Faculty Offices ✓ Student Lobby

Student Profile

As documented in the annual enrollment reports, community response to the new campus has met and surpassed expectations. Since opening day in August 1998, enrollment has grown from 1290 students

the initial semester to over 3200 in fall 2008. Unlike the San Luis Obispo Campus who enroll a significant number of new students who move to San Luis Obispo from outside the county, the North County Campus enrolls, almost exclusively, students who report a permanent address in northern San Luis Obispo county. Over 90% of the students attending the North County Campus, report a north county zip code. The greatest share of students reside in Paso Robles, followed by Atascadero and Templeton, however it is gratifying to note that significant participation is also reflected from the small rural areas of Creston, Shandon and San Miguel.

Demographically, the North County Campus student profile is distinct as well. Proportionately, the North County Campus Students tend to be older (average age of 28 years vs. 24 years on the SLO campus), more diverse ethnically (24.2 Latino) and a higher percentage is female (63%). Educationally, a larger proportion of students report vocational/job skills educational goals (14.3% vs. 9.6% on SLO campus). In the early years, the most popular educational goal for north county students was the attainment of an associate degree. In Fall 2004, there was a shift, with the goal of transferring to a four year college edging ahead of an associate degree. In 2007, 35.6% reported a degree goal and 35.8% reported a transfer goal. North County Campus students are much more heavily enrolled in evening courses than students on the SLO Campus. In fall 2007, 42% of the North County Campus students attended only in the evening, as contrasted to 16% of the San Luis Obispo students. Overall, the percentages of enrollment for North County are 36% day, 22% day/evening combination, and 42% evening only.

Academic Programs

Predominate themes have emerged that relate to curriculum development in North County, as a result of listening to the pulse of the community.

- Optimize the opportunity for students to achieve their degree or certificate goals at one site.
- Maximize opportunities for concurrent enrollment of high school students.
- Respond to local workforce needs and economic forces in identifying specialized programs such as health care, agri-business, and viticulture/hospitality.
- Pursue partnerships and community collaborative ventures for the use of facilities such as the Culinary Arts program.
- Recognize the shifting demographics and the respond in areas such as expansion of English as a Second Language and Spanish.

In line with these themes, two new Cuesta College programs have emerged with the North County Campus designated as the primary instructional site. A Culinary Arts Program began in Fall 2005 in partnership with the Paso Robles School District and their Culinary Institute. The college teaches courses in the morning and afternoon/evenings, before and after the high school program. Beginning this program without the use of the school district's facility and equipment would have been cost prohibitive. A second program offered solely on the North County site is Licensed Vocational Nursing. The program began in summer 2006 through partnership with Compass Health. Now in it's third year, the L.V.N. program is in high demand and the graduates are visible in the community. In concert with the development of the Trades and Technology Center, viticulture, ornamental welding, small engine repair and construction with an emphasis on solar and green building are planned as new

programs.

Degrees and Certificates achievable solely through coursework offered in North County.

DESIGNATED ASSOCIATE DEGREES

- Addiction Studies
- Business Administration
- ECE Teacher
- Computer Applications/Office Administration
- Criminal Justice
- Culinary Arts
- Family Studies/Human Services
- Hospitality
- Marketing
- Psychology

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT

- Administrative Assistant
- Basic Skills
- Business Administration
- Child Care and Development Teacher
- Computer Support Specialist
- Culinary Arts
- Hospitality
- Licensed Vocational Nurse
- Office Professional
- Psychiatric Technician
- Word Processing

CERTIFICATES OF SPECIALIZATION

- Accounting Clerk/Bookkeeper
- Acute Care Nursing Assistant
- Business Communications
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Child Care and Development Associate Teacher
- Customer Service
- EKG Monitor Observer
- Early Childhood Education
- Emergency Medical Technician I
- English as a Second Language, Intermediate
- English as a Second Language, Advanced
- Microcomputer Applications
- Office Operations
- Phlebotomy
- Word Processing

Facility Development

In line with the North County Campus Master Plan, Cuesta College included permanent buildings for the North County Campus on the Capital Construction Plan. Conservative enrollment estimates suggested that, with buildings on site, almost 3,300 students would enroll by academic year 2006/07 and over 4,000 by 2015.

Library/Learning Resource Center

This second permanent building in combination the Fox Building will serve as the nucleus for the establishment of the permanent campus. The proposed LRC will provide student access to library resources needed to survive academically and solve problems as well as extend the learning experience of students beyond the classroom to help them prepare to become life long learners and improve their capacity for personal and career growth.

North County Campus Library/Learning Resource Center
Final Project Proposal (F.P.P.) - submitted Spring 2001. Funding provided through Proposition 55, passed in March 2004.
Timeline: Construction = 2009-2011 Instructional Use = Spring 2011
Assignable square footage (27,930) includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Large Library with Stacks & Study Areas✓ Large Open Computer Lab✓ Office space for Disabled Students Programs and Services✓ Tutorial Center✓ Writing Lab✓ Academic Skills Computer Lab✓ General Classrooms✓ Large Lecture Hall with Stage✓ Faculty Offices✓ Art Gallery✓ Special Collections Room

Trades and Technology Complex

The Trades and Technology Complex will provide an opportunity to respond to expressed need for specialized training in line with economic forecasts for the region. As reflected in the program list that follows, the proposed programs include general Business Education and Engineering as well as multiple varied vocational programs offered with an emphasis on agribusiness and related technology.

North County Campus

Technology and Trades Complex
Final Project Proposal (F.P.P.) - submitted Spring 2002. Funded through Proposition 55, passed in March 2004
Timeline: Construction = 2009-2011 Instructional Use = Spring 2010
Assignable square footage (15,880) includes: ✓ Welding ✓ Agricultural Technology ✓ Automotive/Small Engine Technology ✓ Industrial Power ✓ Carpentry ✓ Electronics ✓ Computer Technology ✓ Business Education ✓ Engineering Technology ✓ Viticulture

Early Childhood Education Center

The proposed Early Childhood Education Center will enable the North County Campus to offer the required advanced courses and accompanying lab experience, for students to complete certificate and degree programs and meet transfer requirements in this discipline. This means that the community will be able to look to their local community college for trained individuals to fill the need for quality childhood education employees and early childhood program providers.

North County Campus Early Childhood Education Center
Final Project Proposal (F.P.P.) - submitted Spring 2005. Funding TBD
Timeline: Completion = TBD Instructional Use = TBD
Assignable square footage (9,120) includes: ✓ Toddler Rooms ✓ Preschool Rooms ✓ Demonstration Lab ✓ Conference Room ✓ ECE Classroom ✓ Observation Area ✓ Family Reception area

Performing Arts Complex

A community organization, Project Theatre, has gained non-profit status with the goal of raising funds for the Performing Arts Complex on the North County Campus. Members of Project Theatre are working cooperatively with the college to promote the arts through cultivating an audience and

donor base as well as enhancing learning opportunities for students. Included in the “dream” is a facility with over 46,000 square feet of space devoted to a large Auditorium with stage, orchestra pit and lobby, a museum/gallery, a small experimental theatre, a rehearsal room, an art studio, a dance room, a large shop, storage space and offices. The concept is best phrased in the Project Theatre vision statement. “Envision a theatre complex that is both performer and audience friendly with an art gallery, museum, and flexibility to accommodate all forms of the arts coupled with education, and available to the community.”

It is acknowledged that in order to achieve such a Performing Arts Center, private funds or a combination of state and private funds would be required as the conceptual drawing extends well beyond the allowable square footage for a state funded educational facility. If private funds are not available to the extent needed, the college will need to adjust the scope of the project accordingly.

A Look to the Future

The North County Campus looks forward to growing with the community. In the few short years of its existence the landscape “just outside the window” has changed radically. Where there were open fields along Buena Vista Drive in 1998, the campus now sits directly across from a residential development that includes over 500 units of single-family homes, a golf course and restaurant. Kermit King Elementary School nested in that housing development opened fall 2001. Slightly to the north, Paso Robles Hot Springs has opened its first phase and just to the south, at the corner of Buena Vista and highway 46, MartinWeyrich Winery has undergone a face-lift and added villa style condominiums. Directly across the Street from the winery is a La Quinta Inn. Dallons Drive has been built, running the full length of the campus, linking Buena Vista Drive to Golden Hill Road. Along the Eastern portion of Dallons Drive, a new retail center with Lowe’s as the anchor is under construction and beyond the intersection of Golden Hill Road is a new industrial park.

As is evidenced in all of this change, there is tremendous potential in North County and Cuesta College looks forward to an active role in that change.

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