

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Central Texas Colleges Partner to Expand Student Success through Caring Campus Regions

LONG BEACH, CA – Texas A&M University – Central Texas (TAMUCT) and Temple College are forging a groundbreaking partnership that will allow students to earn an associate’s and bachelor’s degree from Temple College and TAMUCT while remaining on Temple College’s campus. This initiative strengthens the bond between the two institutions and supports Caring Campus Regions, a new effort designed to connect community colleges and universities in Texas to enhance student success.

Funded by the Greater Texas Foundation (GTF), this regional approach aims to link and unify institutions across the state. Texas A&M universities and feeder community colleges in the three designated regions – Central, Kingsville, and San Antonio – will support the work, ensuring students experience a seamless transition between community colleges and universities.

“This is exactly what should happen between community colleges and universities,” TAMUCT President Dr. Richard Rhodes said. “This partnership will make sure it’s as easy as possible for students to succeed and transition into the workforce.”

A key component of this partnership is Temple College’s new University Center, set to open in June. The new center will serve as a hub where TAMUCT staff and faculty will be on-site to assist students with academic advising, enrollment, and in-person instruction.

“The staff and faculty are committed to being easily accessible to our Temple College students, and that really is the heart of the Caring Campus model,” Temple College president Dr. Christy Ponce said. “Temple College is fortunate to have already gone through the Caring Campus training, and we look forward to taking that work to the next level with TAMUCT, supporting students through a seamless transfer and successful completion of their bachelor’s degree.”

Previously, Temple College and TAMUCT also collaborated on a joint music bachelor’s degree program. Through the new University Center, however, the two institutions will broaden their academic offerings. The first program to launch will be a Bachelor of Arts and Applied Science in Engineering Technology with a concentration in Semiconductors, with many additional degree programs to follow, all of which will be tailored to workforce demands in the region.

“Our two institutions are both so eager to help make a difference in students’ lives, and we’ve already seen success with our joint music degree,” Ponce said. “This new work through Caring Campus is really a game-changer. Students will see they can earn an affordable bachelor’s degree without having to leave the region, opening doors for those who otherwise might not have considered pursuing a four-year degree.”

The partnership builds on a history of successful collaboration between Ponce and Rhodes, who worked together at El Paso Community College to build a strong transfer partnership, co-enrollment opportunities, college readiness activities, and shared scholarships between the college and the University of Texas, El Paso.

The Caring Campus Regional approach will incorporate data-sharing initiatives to help both institutions track students' progress, identify potential challenges, and provide targeted interventions to support student success. The institutions also plan to explore new paid internships, apprenticeships, and undergraduate research opportunities that will allow students to gain real-world experiences while earning degrees simultaneously.

As the Caring Campus regional approach progresses, TAMUCT aims to extend these efforts to additional community colleges in the region, building on its existing online offerings to provide even more opportunities for students.

"I think success breeds success," Dr. Rhodes said. "Our goal is to have this relationship we're developing with Temple College stand as a success model for other community colleges in the region to show what we can achieve together."

Ponce and Rhodes both said they look forward to the intentional time the GTF grant will provide them to meet, work together, and eliminate barriers that exist for students.

"Texas A&M University - Central Texas and Temple College are both outstanding institutions poised to elevate our new Caring Campus Regions approach," said Dr. Brad Phillips, CEO and founder of Caring Campus. "We are grateful to GTF for their partnership in this vital work, and we can't wait to see our Texas regions continue to flourish."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

IEBC_REGIONS1: Texas A&M University – Central Texas (TAMUCT) and Temple College are forging a groundbreaking partnership that will allow students to earn an associate's and bachelor's degree from Temple College and TAMUCT while remaining on Temple College's campus.

IEBC_REGIONS2: Temple College's new University Center, set to open in June, will serve as a hub where Texas A&M University – Central Texas staff and faculty can be on-site to assist students with academic advising, enrollment, and in-person instruction.

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