

Round Rock: "Growth, Growth, and More Growth"

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I Was There!

On Thursday, August 26th, I attended the opening of the Texas State University School of Nursing. The building is a three-story, 77,740 SF modern, brick structure adjacent to the TSU Main Campus (134,000 SF) building. I would guess that several hundred people attended the ceremony.

Ninety-nine (99) students are in the first class. You could say that the school opened at capacity! The building was funded by the Tuition Revenue Bonds passed by the Texas Legislature. After we watched the ribbon cutting we then disbursed for a tour. We viewed the labs where there were hospital beds with mannequins that ranged from \$4,000 to over \$60,000 each. There were approximately 15 hospital beds per lab. Each bed had an overhead camera in the ceiling that recorded the student nurse's technique. Playback was available to study the methods and for correction of mistakes made. What a high-tech place!

Then came Friday, August 27th! Austin Community College-Round Rock opened just a stone's throw from the TSU Campus and just west of the nursing school. The campus is approximately 84 acres with four buildings (approx. 250,000 SF). WOW! The classroom capacity is set for 5,000 students and 4,899 students were signed up! It was announced that this was a first for the nation...a new college opening at nearly 100% student capacity!

The "College District," as it might be called, now has TSU, ACC and last but NOT least, the new Texas A & M Health Science building (approx. 134,000 SF) for a new medical school. We need more doctors and nurses!!

There's more! South University is taking about 60,000 SF in Frontera Vista, the new twin-building complex with parking garage in southwest Round Rock. SU has campuses in Michigan, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida and is now coming to Round Rock. This will be the first Texas location for this university. South University offers Associates, Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral degree levels in the colleges of Arts, Sciences, Business, and Health Professions, (Nursing and Pharmacy).

What this tells me is that the growth of our "College District" is a first in the nation, perhaps in the world for jobs and education. This is all happening in little ole' Round Rock, Texas where I grew up. The same Round Rock where I attended all grades at the same school with a total of around 250 students and a city population of approximately 1,200. Such change! The RRISD now has over 30,000 students and is still growing!

Jobs, jobs, and more jobs! Dell Computer Corp. and Toppan Photomasks Corp. have exciting news as well. The Dell project involves a \$10 million investment for facility repairs, renovation and equipment upgrades over the next five years, with a retention of over 7,700 jobs at the Round Rock campus. Toppan Photomasks' agreement involves new equipment as part of its eCover production line, another \$10 million investment and over 35 jobs.

All of the above happened in ONE WEEK in Round Rock, Texas!! I cannot express my heartfelt feelings of excitement that we, the citizens of Round Rock, are set to see the steady, expanding growth of our city as time moves forward.