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## Groundbreaking set for VC's Emerging Technology Center

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A growing demand for technical training takes another step forward as construction begins on the new Victoria College learning facility.

Community and college leaders will gather Tuesday morning for the groundbreaking of VC's Emerging Technology Center.

A stone's throw from Caterpillar Inc. on Lone Tree Road, the center's site is ideal, said VC trustee Robby Burdge.

"It's the perfect location because of the industrial park," Burdge said. "It'll transform technical training and take the Victoria area to another level we can't even imagine today."

The college plans to offer training for the development of industrial systems mechanics, machinists, oil and gas technicians, and logistics and operations management at the new center.

The aim is to retrain and educate workers who are already here, said Ron Walker, VC board president.

"Victoria is at a very unique and advantageous position," Walker said.

A lot of the demand for training is because of the success of the Eagle Ford Shale oil and gas activity, he said.

In May 2012, voters approved a \$22 million bond project for the construction of the center. The measure was approved by 66 percent of voters.

The 16-and-a-half-acre plot of land, estimated to be worth \$240,000, was purchased and donated to the college by the city of Victoria.

The M.G. and Lillie A. Johnson Foundation provided a \$1.9 million grant to support training equipment and instructional technology.

"Two of the different programs they are wanting to support are for machining and industrial maintenance," said Jennifer Yancey, VC vice president for college advancement and external affairs. "That was our request to them. Those address the needs of our current partners in the community."

INVISTA donated an additional \$30,000 to help supply the new center with additional equipment.

The three-story building will have facilities for industrial training and corporate meetings, including a banquet hall with capacity for up to 400 people.

A second-story walkway will connect the conference and industrial training areas into one center.

New technical training and internship opportunities for area high school students will also emerge with the center, said Lauri Voss, the Victoria school district's Career and Technical Education coordinator.

Before finalizing buildings for the center, VC President Tom Butler said representatives from the college went to North Carolina and South Carolina to study other industry-focused facilities.

"This structure will be the first of its kind in the state of Texas," Butler said. "We're very pleased with the strong community support and contributions that have been made to the project."

Victoria College's new Emerging Technology Center to offer a variety of workforce training.

- 112,000 square-foot
- 11 classrooms
- 3 skills labs
- 4 computer labs
- 3 meeting rooms
- 1 banquet hall (capacity: 400)
- 3 conference breakout rooms

- 1 corporate training room
- 1 executive board room
- 1 catering kitchen

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