



**Wharton County
Junior College**

NEWS RELEASE

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CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

WCJC construction projects benefit Cosmetology, Process Technology and Allied Health

WHARTON, TEXAS – Wharton County Junior College will renovate and upgrade two of its four campuses this summer in order to provide more educational opportunities for area students.

More than \$8.2 million in new construction and improvements are planned at the Wharton and Richmond campuses, with the Richmond project expected to be completed by fall 2017 while the Wharton project has an estimated completion date of summer of 2018.

The Richmond project entails renovating 9,000 square feet of space and building a new 3,600 square foot wing in order to expand the Cosmetology and Process Technology programs. Project cost is \$1.75 million, not including equipment and furnishings.

Through the project, Cosmetology will be offered for the first time in years at the Richmond campus. Currently, the program is housed exclusively at the Wharton campus. Cutting-edge equipment, a spacious salon and extra classroom space will allow the program to accommodate 60 new students.

Process Technology is based at the Bay City campus but began offering classes in Richmond last year. Once the expansion project is completed, the program will be able to accommodate more students and offer additional training opportunities. The project includes the construction of a computer lab, an open lab, additional classroom space, a turbine generator, and distillation and neutralization skids.

“Both Cosmetology and Process Technology are popular programs that offer students a variety of career options,” said Wharton County Junior College President Betty McCrohan. “We feel that the project at the Richmond campus will allow us to provide more opportunities for these students while providing the educational and training opportunities necessary to meet community needs.”

At the main campus in Wharton, work this summer will begin on the renovation of 34,000 square feet of the Johnson Health Occupations Center as well as the creation of an 18,000 square foot addition. A groundbreaking ceremony will be announced at a later date. The tentative project completion date is summer of 2018. Project cost is around \$6.5 million, not including equipment and furnishings.

WCJC’s Division of Allied Health contains nine programs, including Associate Degree Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Health Information Technology, Human Services, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology, Vocational Nursing and Pre-baccalaureate Nursing.

WCJC’s Cosmetology program is a one-year certificate program that teaches technical skills in compliance with Texas Cosmetology Commission rules and regulations. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the 2016 mean annual wages for hairdressers, hairstylists and cosmetologists in Texas as \$26,910, though upper end positions can pay as much as \$45,000.

WCJC’s Process Technology program is a two-year degree program that prepares students to work as process operators in petrochemical plants, refining companies and other industries. The U.S. Department of Labor reports the 2016 mean annual wages for chemical plant and system operators in Texas as \$66,910.

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