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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HILL COUNTRY UNIVERSITY CENTER ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION OF ACADEMIC BUILDING

The Hill Country University Center (HCUC) has announced that construction groundbreaking for the first building on its Fredericksburg-based campus will be held June 23 at 10. a.m. The 28,500 square foot academic building will give HCUC a much anticipated bricks and mortar presence and open the door for expansion of course offering.

The campus, on which the building will be constructed, lies just east of Fredericksburg and serves the fifteen county area defined as the Texas Hill Country. Prior to the creation of the HCUC, this area was the largest in Texas not served by a public institution of higher learning.

D. Wilson Construction Company, in McAllen, Texas, has been awarded the contract to build the new facility. Construction is expected to take approximately eight months. D. Wilson brings more than 50 years of commercial construction experience to the project and has an extensive portfolio of projects including schools, government buildings, hotels and corporate warehouses. "We are thrilled to be selected for this project," said the company's President & CEO Bill Wilson. "We recently opened a new office in Kerrville and are so excited to be a part of the Hill Country."

"The design of the building is based on the early school houses in the area, including a cupola-type bell tower," said Brandon Weinheimer with Stehling Klein Thomas Architects in Fredericksburg. "This phase of construction will also include a chapel in the courtyard of the academic building," he said.

The new academic building will include six video conference classrooms, a computer lab, administrative offices, and two large classrooms, separated by a removable wall. "With the wall removed, the room will serve as a large meeting space for community events," said Weinheimer.

"We are deeply gratified to see the first structure on the immediate horizon," said HCUC Executive Director Jimmy Sparks. "The building is completely funded and will serve as yet another milestone in the journey of bringing higher education to the Hill Country. Our next focus will be on raising funds to equip, landscape and furnish the building and provide scholarships for our students."

More than 1,000 students currently enroll in courses offered by HCUC's five academic partners – Angelo State University, Austin Community College, Concordia University, and Texas Tech University. It is projected that first year enrollment after the completion of the academic building will increase 38 percent.

"The HCUC currently offers a broad range of undergraduate courses as well as eight master's level programs and two doctoral programs," said Sparks. "The benefit of students being able to pursue education closer to home is just one of the many advantages of our growing campus. Our surveys indicate that 77 percent of Hill Country business owners expect their need for employees to increase in the next five years. The HCUC will feed that that employment pipeline with a local, trained workforce."

For information on the HCUC, including how to enroll, please visit www.hcuc.org or call 830.990.4948.