

HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE

College of the Mainland (COM) was a beckoning vision in the minds of community leaders as far back as the early 1960s. The first concrete step was taken in October 1966 when the College of the Mainland Junior College District was formed. The area of the College District encompasses 237 square miles, and its boundaries are coterminous with the five independent school districts of Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe and Texas City.

The second step toward realization of the “impossible dream” was taken on December 10, 1966 when the voters of the College District approved a bond issue of \$2,850,000 and supporting taxes for debt service and operation. In quick succession, the Board of Trustees selected a president, hired faculty members and staff, located temporary facilities, and COM came into existence. The first class of 414 students enrolled for classes in September 1967.

Students attended classes in temporary quarters until the first phase of construction was completed on 120 acres bound by Palmer Highway and Amburn Road in Texas City. On February 27, 1970, the college moved to its beautiful new campus that consisted of an Administration Building, Learning Resources Center, Math-Science Building, Technical-Vocational Building and a Central Utilities Building.

On May 16, 1970, the citizens of the Junior College District approved a second bond issue of \$4,750,000 and supporting taxes for operation and debt service of the second phase of construction. The second building phase included a Fine Arts Building, a Physical Education Complex, a Student Center, and an increase of 100 percent in the Technical-Vocational facilities and 60 percent expansion of the Math-Science facilities. The second construction phase was completed in September 1972, followed by a print shop building and a firing range.

A 20,000-foot addition to the Technical-Vocational building was completed in the fall of 1985 that included computer labs, classrooms, and offices. A Child Development Lab School was also added to provide training opportunities for students enrolled in the Child Development program.

In 1991, two Industrial Education buildings were completed to house the Auto Mechanics Technology, Diesel Mechanics Technology, and Welding programs. The well-equipped facilities added 25,335 square feet of building space to the campus, for a grand total of 300,745 square feet.

In 1999, a new 10,800 square-foot Public Service Careers building was opened across the esplanade from the Fine Arts Building. The new facility housed faculty offices, classrooms and labs for four major public service career fields—law enforcement, emergency medical services, pharmacy technician and fire protection.

In 2003, the College opened a 7,500-square foot Learning Center in League City to address the growing education and training needs of COM’s North Galveston County service area. The Learning Center offers college credit as well as continuing education classes.

COM’s Gulf Coast Safety Institute was established in 2007 to provide safety and health training and education to workers and employers.

In 2016, COM’s 50 Plus Program, which has more than 1,200 students, opened a facility at Gulfway Plaza in La Marque.

The following year COM leased a second learning location in League City to house more dual credit and academic classes to keep up with demand in the area.