

## **Texas A&M launches \$2 Million *Pioneer Scholars* initiative for Higher Education Center at McAllen**

Texas A&M University has announced a \$2M scholarship initiative to provide 4 Year scholarships for the inaugural class of students who will pursue degrees at the recently approved Texas A&M University Higher Education Center (HEC) at McAllen.

Texas A&M's efforts to establish the HEC continue to proceed as planned with initial student admissions process under way. Earlier this month, the first student to accept an offer to study at the HEC was announced as Mr. Marco Piña of Donna, Texas.

"From its inception, our vision has been to provide students with opportunities to receive their degrees and the famous Aggie Ring by starting and completing their studies in McAllen," said John Sharp, Chancellor. "As *Pioneer Scholars*, these students will embody the Texas A&M commitment to serve the people of the lower Rio Grande Valley."

The *Pioneers Scholarship* will be formally announced as part of an Admissions Briefing event held in Weslaco at the Texas A&M Agrilife facilities, Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Eligible students accepted to Texas A&M University would receive up to \$5,000 per year for 4 years as long as they remain in good standing in the degree program and studying at the HEC.

Currently, Texas A&M is only authorized to offer the bachelor of science in interdisciplinary engineering degree at the HEC. Engineering at Texas A&M University is among the nation's very best with a variety of unique program offerings around the state with a target of meeting the world's engineering needs of tomorrow.

"We are proud to make this commitment for students in the Rio Grande Valley to earn one of the nation's best engineering degrees," said Michael K. Young, President.

Texas A&M is continuing negotiations with higher education officials in the region and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to expand offerings in an additional degree programs and disciplines identified as high need for the region. For Fall of 2017, students will initially attend courses taught by Texas A&M University faculty at classrooms and laboratories leased from South Texas College, until the new HEC facility opens at Tres Lagos in Fall of 2018.

The admissions process for Fall 2017 will utilize the national coalition application with deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup> and an additional review of a pool of students who have applied to Texas A&M University with an indicated interest in engineering degree.

Interested students may contact the Texas A&M – Rio Grande Valley Prospective Student center at 956-683-8647 or <http://admissions.tamu.edu/MHEC> for more information.