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## **PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM AT SUGAR LAND AND WHARTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE SAVES STUDENTS MORE THAN HALF ON TUITION WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER TEXAS UNIVERSITIES**

*Quality education supports area's economic development and quality of life*

**(Fort Bend County, TX) June 9, 2010** – A partnership between the University of Houston System at Sugar Land (UHSSL) and Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) provides area students a quality education at a more affordable price. The partnership allows students to obtain a bachelor's degree by attending their first two years at WCJC and their latter two years at UHSSL -- all in one location.

In addition, UH and WCJC have an articulation agreement that all of the students course work transfers into the UH system, as long as they stay within the same major.

“As college tuition continues to rise, it has become increasingly difficult for students to find the money to go to college, particularly in these challenging economic times,” said Richard Phillips, Associate Vice Chancellor, University of Houston System at Sugar Land & Cinco Ranch. “This program gives students a break on tuition, but still ensures they receive a quality education.”

According to collegeboard.com, similar programs at the University of Texas and Texas A&M University would cost a student at least double. According to figures on the report, students who attend the business school at the University of Texas for four years pay \$35,720 for tuition and fees and it costs students approximately \$32,704 to pay for classes at Texas A&M University for four years. Currently, using the same base year, students pay as little as \$14,680 for all four years at the UHSSL campus.

“Students are not the only ones who benefit from a quality education,” Phillips said. “Economic studies have shown that education has a direct impact on the area's quality of life.”

“From an economic development standpoint, education is a positive, highly-desirable quality for businesses and residents considering relocation,” said Tom Wilcox, chairman of the Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council's marketing committee. “Fort Bend County remains at the top of its class when it comes to education and business leaders recognize this.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau-American Community Survey, 38 percent of the population in Fort Bend has attained a bachelor's degree or higher.

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About Fort Bend County

*Fort Bend County is located in the Houston metropolitan area of southeast Texas. Its population is among the fastest growing in the United States and has been recognized among the most educated and diverse counties in the nation. According to the 2008 U.S. Census, Fort Bend County has more than 530,000 residents and is projected to grow to one million by 2017. Fort Bend's vibrant economy has also received national recognition. Fort Bend County is among the top 10 counties in the nation in terms of economic strength, according to Woods & Poole Economics, 2008. Most recently, Forbes ranked Fort Bend County first on its national list of "Places to Get Ahead." For more information about Fort Bend County, including a complete list of accolades, visit [www.fortbendcounty.com](http://www.fortbendcounty.com) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.*