

# Paulding donates buildings for GHC-Kennesaw venture

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From staff reports

Officials from Paulding County on Tuesday presented the Board of Regents with a gift of two buildings in Dallas for use as an instructional site by Georgia Highlands College and Kennesaw State University.

The two institutions have submitted academic plans to the Board of Regents for review at their March meeting, and anticipate ultimately offering three degree levels.

Classes could begin as early as this fall, but that depends on the economy and possible budget cuts, said Dana Davis, a spokeswoman for GHC.

GHC will serve as the lead institution managing the site and seeks to provide core curriculum courses leading to an associate's degree. Kennesaw State is seeking the regents' approval to offer upper-level undergraduate business classes for juniors and seniors and graduate classes in educational leadership.

The buildings are located on the square in downtown Dallas. The Henry Winn Building will be renovated first. Plans are to create six classrooms and several offices for faculty and staff in the nearly 11,000-square-foot

facility. There are more than two acres surrounding the building to accommodate parking and landscaping. Renovation plans are currently being developed for the site.

The second building, the George Bagby Courthouse Annex, comprises almost 31,000-square feet and lies across the square from the Winn Building. Renovation on that structure will be completed at a later date, as enrollment grows.

"We have had such enthusiastic interest from community members in Paulding that we feel confident the site will grow quickly to meet the needs of Paulding County," GHC President Randy Pierce said. "When we open, we plan to offer about 15 courses to a conservative estimate of 300 students."

Students in the Dallas and Paulding County area, which is expected to almost double in population by 2020, presently have to travel more than 35 miles to the nearest associate degree-granting institution and more than 20 miles to access undergraduate and graduate programs.

Daniel S. Papp, president of Kennesaw State, said, "We are extremely appreciative of the generosity and support this partnership has received from Dallas' city officials and Paulding County commissioners, which will go a long way in allowing this project to move forward. This site will allow us to extend our programs to an underserved area of the state to improve higher education access for a fast growing community."