

## 1978 legislature is administration target, hope

# Will TJC's northeast campus ever become a reality?

By ANDRE HINDS

(Editor's note: Andre Hinds is an advanced journalism student at the University of Tulsa.)

**T**HE ADMINISTRATION of Tulsa Junior College has begun gearing up for the 1978 Oklahoma legislative session, anxiously hoping for sufficient funds to construct a campus in northeast Tulsa.

The 80-acre site, located on the northeast corner of Apache Street and Harvard Avenue, is part of TJC's master plan which calls for the development of a multi-campus college system.

TJC President Al Philips has called on the legislature to "develop the Northeast Campus as rapidly as possible, and to move toward the acquisition of land in southeast Tulsa as soon as possible."

Philips said, "We will make every effort to convince the legislature."

He said the TJC administration would approach the legislators by direct personal contact and through members of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

"We have a very good product to sell," he said, "and our continued growth in enrollment is the best evidence of that."

**THE TJC ADMINISTRATION** plans to ask the legislature for \$10 million to construct the first two phases of the Northeast Campus.

What will happen if no money is appropriated?

"We will proceed as far as we can with the funds that we already have," Philips said.

This will be the TJC administration's third attempt to convince the state legislature to provide enough funds to construct the facility.

The first push for its development was made shortly before the 1976 legislative session.

That campaign was accelerated in the wake of a sudden remodeling of the state educational budget at the beginning of the 1976 session. This became necessary when the Oklahoma Supreme Court rejected Gov. Boren's bid to put \$80.3 million in surplus funds into a bond sinking fund program.

In the January, 1976, TJC Board of Regents meeting, Philips presented an attractive but not detailed conceptual site plan for the Northeast Campus, hoping that the legislators would consider the regents' request for \$20 million to complete the facility.

**PHILIPS SAID** at that meeting that he couldn't think of a better "one shot expenditure" than an investment in the Northeast Campus. "We have proved ourselves," he said. "The opportunity is here and we must move on it."

However, the request was shot down by the Oklahoma State Regents when they recommended to Boren to allocate \$24 million for statewide capital improvements, allowing only \$10 million to be used for new construction.

Only \$1 million was set aside for Northeast Campus planning by the 1976 legislature.

"We have to start somewhere," Philips said upon receiving the allocation, "and I am confident we will get that campus on time."

"On time," according to Philips, is the year 1980, when it is predicted TJC will need facilities for about 16,000 students. The enrollment project by 1985 is 22,000 students on three campuses, the third campus to be located in the southeast quadrant of Tulsa.

**THE 1977 LEGISLATIVE** session proved even less successful than 1976. Only \$700,000 was allocated for development of the facility.

Located on an 80-acre tract at Apache and Harvard, the Northeast Campus has been somewhat of an after thought.

The site was purchased from funds derived from selling two TJC-owned urban renewal blocks in downtown Tulsa.

The downtown land, located between First and Second Streets and Main Street and Boston Avenue, was intended to be used for a new and permanent campus for TJC in the initial college planning.

Lack of funding for its construction in the late '60s forced TJC to seek temporary space in the Sinclair Building at 10th Street and Boston Avenue.

TJC later decided in 1974 it would be more feasible to purchase and remodel the Sinclair Building so it would be possible to concentrate on

funding for a new building on a second campus.

**THE TWO DOWNTOWN** blocks were sold to the Williams Companies for its multi-block Williams Center complex.

Philips told the TJC Regents upon completion of the land transaction in February, 1975: "Dates and schedules for the construction and use of the Northeast Campus will depend on funding and at this time there are no concrete plans."

The site is still undeveloped, except for the temporary facilities constructed by TJC for its horticulture program.

One reason for the lack of adequate funding by the legislature of the Northeast Campus is the nature of the legislators themselves.

**STIFF OPPOSITION** to TJC began even before the college was opened in September, 1970. Former State Rep. Curtis Lawson of Tulsa told Tulsa Magazine in the late '60s, "Oklahoma needs more colleges like it needs more tornadoes."

The late Rep. Ray Fine of Gore suggested in 1970 that instead of eliminating county superintendents, money might better be saved by lowering Philips' salary.

State Rep. Bill Poulos from Tulsa's Dist. 77 objected to the initial opening of classes in 1970 at the Sinclair Building. He felt the college should have been located in his district. The selection of a campus site in northeast Tulsa, even though it is west of his district, has changed Poulos'

views since then and has made him an avid proponent of TJC.

Others, however, were not swayed as easily. The late John Miskelly (D-Choctaw) openly opposed construction of the Northeast Campus facility.

"TJC is a state institution under the budget like everyone else," Miskelly told a Tulsa newspaper in January, 1976. "Their needs are no greater than anybody else's."

**PHILLIPS COUNTERED** Miskelly's argument, saying that only 7,000 persons are served by state-supported colleges in Tulsa, compared with 47,000 in Oklahoma City.

TJC furnishes the Tulsa metropolitan area with its only access to low-cost public higher education. According to the state regents, the Oklahoma City area boasts three public two-year colleges, a lower-division technical institute, a regional university and a comprehensive graduate university — all within commuting distance.

Miskelly predicted a "long, drawn out battle" if TJC were to forge ahead with its request.

To avoid conflicts with Miskelly and other legislators, the TJC administration has tried to do its homework.

Starting with the conceptual site plan presented in 1976, TJC has provided the legislators informational material on the Northeast Campus, including a recently-completed master plan.

**MUCH OF THE** initial \$1.7 million that has been allocated for the campus went for the preparation of the master plan, according to Eric Mikel, director of planning and development.

"Some of it, though, has been used for site preparation," Mikel said. "That included elevation adjustment and utilities installation."

According to Mikel, there is still about \$700,000 left. "We're going to use that to start the first phase of building out there," he said.

Another tool used by the TJC administration to convince legislators to allocate funds is the use of statistics — especially enrollment figures.

Enrollment at TJC has increased each year since its inception, from 2,800 students in 1970 to 8,398 for the Fall 1977 semester. An additional 2,599 are enrolled in non-credit Special Programs classes, of which 1,200 attend class at the TJC building.

According to Phillips in a recent press conference, TJC should now rank fourth or fifth in the state in enrollment size:

**ENROLLMENT WAS** limited the first year that TJC was operating, due to cramped quarters in the first three floors of the seven-story building, also being used then by the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO); Sinclair, the original owner of the building at 10th and Boston, merged with ARCO a few years earlier.

Just after the beginning of classes in September, 1970, Phillips commented on the limited enrollment situation, saying, "We believe there are at least 1,000 students who are not now enrolled at TJC because at enrollment time they could not get a complete program they wanted."

At that time, he was probably correct, but he unknowingly unleashed the now-abused "turnaway" figure — the number of students who should have, but didn't enroll in classes at TJC.

The TJC administration soon found that it could effectively use the turnaway figure to its advantage for public relations.

For example, in August, 1971, Bob Melott, vice-president for computer services and data systems at TJC, told a Tulsa newspaper that 2,000 students had been turned away from classes.

Yet, just two paragraphs above that statement, Melott had announced that TJC was planning to have "late enrollment" for anyone who wasn't able to enroll at the regular time.

**BY 1973, THE** the turnaway figure was up to 3,000 students and TJC bought the Sinclair building to use as a permanent campus.

The turnaway figure grew to 4,000 by 1975 when state funding was received to remodel the building.

The method of determining the turnaway figure has varied through the years.

*At first the figure was merely a guess by Phillips.*

Then, in late 1972, the figure was estimated by subtracting the enrollment number from the total number of student applications.

A more complex method was derived even later. "We take the number of non-students advised, the number of people that schedule a time for advisement and the number of telephone calls in which people ask if they can still enroll, add them together and multiply that number times two, figuring that for every person that calls or comes in, there is one other out there that figures he has no chance to enroll."

**PHILLIPS, AFTER** giving that explanation in November, 1975, added that TJC encountered 1,500 such cases in 1975.

"The staff personnel in several offices, such as Admissions and Financial Aids, keep track of phone inquiries," Phillips added.

A check with members of the staff in those offices found no such phone count was ever recorded and they were never asked about information pertaining to the enrollment of potential students.

*"I don't think the turnaway figure is applicable anymore," said Dean VanTrease, TJC executive vice-president.*

He admitted that the formula for determining such figures, as had been used by TJC, wasn't very accurate. "It's just not consistent."

No more than a few hundred students were probably turned away from TJC prior to the beginning of the Fall 1977 semester, VanTrease estimated. "They probably tried to get into a class with a limited enrollment," he said. "Many Technical-Occupational Program classes are like that."

The T-O Programs comprise nearly half of TJC's student body. Far different than the college-parallel courses offered at TJC, the T-O Program courses are practical, rather than theory classes.

**THESE PROGRAMS** also, unlike college-parallel courses, know no single building. While many are held in the TJC building, there are other classes held at the old Fred Jones Ford Truck Center at 1202 S. Boston Ave., in the newly completed Student Center (formerly the Central High School Industrial Arts building) and even the Northeast Campus itself, which houses the horticulture program in a small interim building.

And for many reasons the multi-campus concept was envisioned because of the T-O Programs. Rather than remodel existing buildings, TJC will be able to custom build permanent facilities for horticulture, electronics technology, welding technology and machinist technology on the Northeast Campus.

*"The lack of adequate funding is going to limit the construction of facilities for the T-O Programs," VanTrease said. "It could cost more than \$100,000 for one lab alone."*

Compared with the cost of T-O Program labs, regular classrooms are inexpensive. "And that may be what we have to put up there first," VanTrease added.

The construction of regular classrooms on the Northeast Campus would eliminate the need to rent space in the State Office Complex at Seventh Street and Houston Avenue, according to Mikel.

TJC began renting classroom space in the state building in August, 1976, as an interim facility. More than 2,000 students enrolled for classes there for the Fall 1977 semester.

Mikel, however, will be glad to end TJC's relationship with the complex. "We've had a lot of problems over there," he said, "problems with food service and parking."

**ENROLLMENT** may have been affected as a result of these and other similar problems that have plagued TJC.

For instance, it has been more than a year since the remodeling of the TJC building was completed, yet fall enrollment is about 1,000 students short of capacity. (There are 8,398 students currently enrolled at TJC. The total capacity of the two buildings has been estimated at 10,000 students: 8,000 at the main building, 2,000 at the State Offices.)

Wondering about the low enrollment, the administration mailed a questionnaire to former TJC students in September, 1976, and again

last September, asking why they didn't return.

Among the choices offered as a reason for withdrawal from the college in the questionnaire was "the remodeling of TJC."

The almost constant sound of jackhammers and periodic power failures invaded both the classrooms and administrative offices during the 22 month-long overhaul of the main building that ended in October, 1976. Prior to this questionnaire, the administration never admitted that remodeling may have caused students to withdraw from TJC.

Another possible reason for withdrawal from TJC suggested by the questionnaire was "lack of parking."

"What we do," Philips told Insight, a north Tulsa based magazine, in an interview in May, 1976, "is provide each student a map of the parking areas within about six blocks of TJC."

"Most people don't realize sometimes that if they park in a lot say five blocks away and walk to campus, they're walking a shorter distance than if they walked across the campus at Oklahoma State University," he said.

However, the security of students in a contained campus, such as OSU, can be more easily assured than a campus in an open downtown area, commonly the meeting place of tramps and other undesirables.

**THIS LACK OF** effective security has affected TJC twice. The first time was in March, 1975, when Geraldine Ann Martin, a Special Programs student, was kidnapped following a class at TJC and later murdered.

The day after Mrs. Martin's body was found, a TJC secretary was attacked in a parking lot near TJC. Her assailant fled after she fought back and screamed.

Establishment within the past year of a community treatment center for first offender convicts in the old Horace Mann Junior High building two blocks south of TJC has caused additional uneasiness about security in the area.

The TJC administration has continued to work hard to increase enrollment with several promotions to make it more convenient for students to get information about the college and enroll for classes.

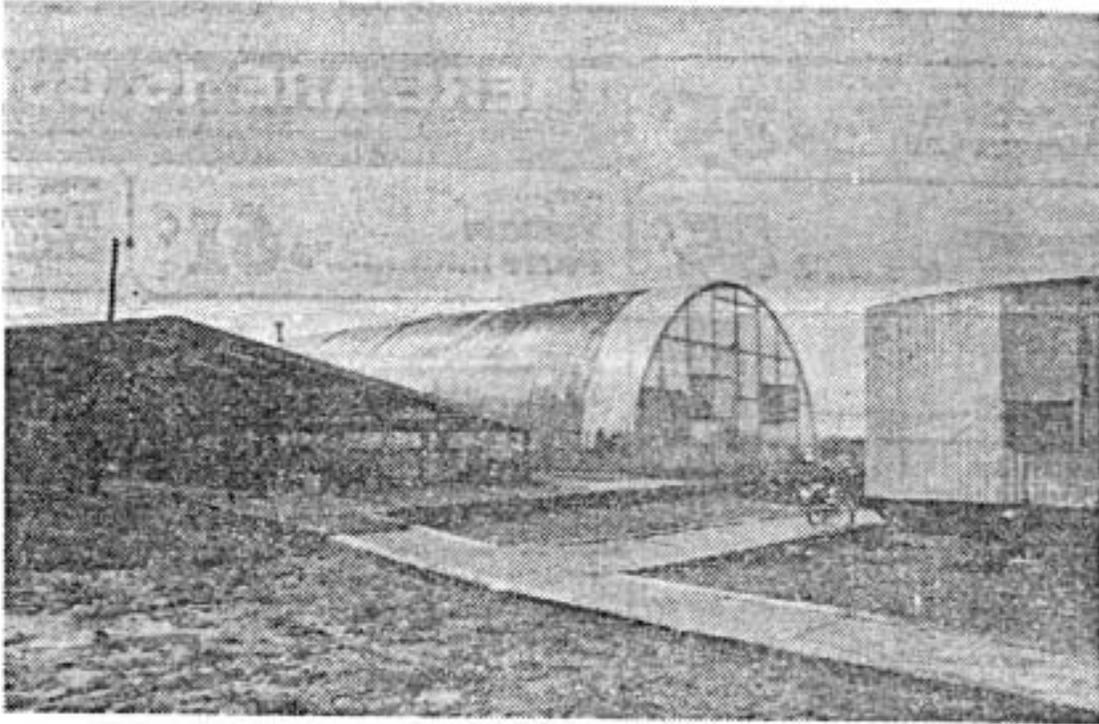
**"INFORMATION Centers"** were set up by the Admissions Office during the summer of 1976 in shopping centers and banks around Tulsa. However, their success was minimal and they were discontinued.

During last summer the TJC administration experimented with "telephone registration," a system that would allow students to enroll by telephone in 11 or less hours, without having to stand in the long lines of regular enrollment.

"It was very successful," Melott said. "It is one of the major reasons enrollment went up this semester." He also said telephone registration would be used again.

Jerry Carroll, director of admis-

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**TJC 'CAMPUS' TODAY** — This motley collection of structures northeast of Apache Street and Harvard Avenue comprises the Tulsa Junior College northeast campus today. They house a hor-

ticulture division. Site preparation and utility work has been advanced. Long range plans call for a \$20 million facility. (Tribune photo).

## TJC to seek campus funds . . .

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sions, was even more enthusiastic about the success of telephone registration. He told *The Horizon*, "Telephone registration is the greatest thing that's happened to college registration."

According to Carroll, about 4,000 of the 8,398 in Fall 1977 classes enrolled by phone.

**NOT EVERYONE** was pleased with telephone registration, though. Kay Turnbaugh, associate editor of *The Horizon*, viewed it as "two steps forward, one back."

In an editorial in the Sept. 14 issue of *The Horizon*, Ms. Turnbaugh asked, "If part-time students can phone in, why can't full-time people enroll in the same way? Just because a person takes 12 hours for credit instead of 11 does not necessarily mean he needs extra guidance.

"Some students apparently used the phone to enroll in nine or 10 hours and then added three hours later for a full-time schedule," she added.

In the outline for the future, though, Melott was adamant. "There's no plan to open it up for the full-time student," he said.

**CURRENTLY, ALL** full-time students enroll at the main campus building. When a permanent facility is constructed at the Northeast Campus, however, students will be able to enroll at either facility and will have the opportunity to attend classes at both campuses.

"People think of us sometimes as just being interested in building numbers, but we're not," Phillips said in an interview in May, 1976.

But as can be seen, the building of numbers has been a very important

factor in convincing the state legislature to allocate money for TJC projects.

**Does TJC need the Northeast Campus?**

"I think we've demonstrated our need in the terms of the number of students we've served," VanTrease said.

However, VanTrease later admitted, "Sometimes I get caught up in my own propaganda."

*That's what the process of getting money from the legislature boils down to — propaganda.*

And for the upcoming legislative session, TJC hopes it can present the most effective propaganda so it can build a permanent college on the Northeast Campus.