Hartnell breaks ground

Construction begins on new Soledad campus

SOLEDAD — Hartnell College has broken ground on its new Soledad Education Center and celebrated the start of construction this month with a groundbreaking ceremony that was attended by more than 100 community members, local students and elected officials.

Scheduled to open in spring 2021, the 16,750-square-foot multipurpose educational center is being built on 3.7 acres at the northeast corner of Metz Road and Orchard Lane in Soledad.

The building will include four classrooms and both wet and dry science laboratories to support STEM, health care and agriculture training, in addition to a Student Success Center, courtyard and community rooms.

About 95 percent of the center’s electrical needs will be met through solar panels installed on the facility.

(See COLLEGE, page A12)

Foundation recognizes Gonzales for health care

❖ City chosen from nearly 200 communities for national award

Gonzales has been named one of five winners of the 2019 RWJF Culture of Health Prize, awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), which honors communities for working at the forefront of advancing health, opportunity and equity.

Chosen from nearly 200 applicant communities across the country, Gonzales is being nationally recognized for pursuing innovative ideas and bringing partners together to rally around a shared vision of health.

(See AWARD, page A12)

Memorial garden to honor Belva Lockwood

Public ceremony set for Saturday at Lockwood Post Office

The new memorial garden’s stone begins its journey from Davis Canyon to the Lockwood Post Office, with Ken Wilkinson operating the tractor.

The garden was planned and installed by the Lockwood PerSisters. It surrounds a bronze plaque mounted on a large rock donated by Jesus and Rosa Pacheco. Ken Wilkinson helped move the stone from Davis Canyon to the post office site.

The plaque is the gift of local organizations, including the Southern Monterey County Rural Coalition, San Antonio Valley Historical Association, Southern Monterey County Retirement Association, NAGITONE and the Hesperia Hall Foundation.

As part of the Wings of Knowledge initiative, Gonzales students (from left) Veronica Rodriguez, Leslie Hernandez, Mario Lopez and Andres Hernandez work on engineering projects on local farms.

(See LOCKWOOD, page A12)
Colleges continued from A1

Auntie Salazar Jr., president of the Board of Trustees for the Hartnell Community College District, welcomed everyone in attendance and followed by remarks from Hartnell Superintendent-President Patricia Houston. "We are here to collaborate together to offer our students the opportunity to start their higher education," said Houston, adding that the new Soledad facility and other upcoming projects have been a true collaborative effort between the college and the respective communities.

Hartnell recently hosted public forums in King City, Soledad, Gonzales and Castroville to seek input from residents and employees about how the new centers can best meet the long-term needs of the valley and Salinas Valley communities.

"We want to make sure our students will get good pay and very rewarding professional careers eventually, and that is our goal," Houston said. "We want to encourage many of them with available job opportunities in the local community to stay here to give back all they learned to these wonderful communities and support them where they grow up." Soledad Mayor Fredudodo gave special recognition to former Hartnell Superintendent-President Dr. Diesela-Chavez, who spoke during the ceremony. "I just want to thank you. We're excited to be having the Soledad ceremony as well, and her husband Pusha-Chavez, who spoke during the ceremony. "I just want to thank you. We're excited to be having the Soledad ceremony as well, " Diesela-Chavez said.

Gonzales Mayor Maria Orozco, who graduated with honors from Hartnell's re-entry program, proudly spoke about her achievement through the college and says the new Soledad campus will benefit all South Monterey County residents. "We would like to thank Hartnell for a continued partnership with the City of Gonzales, especially in making sure that our students have an opportunity to achieve and further their education goals," Orozco said. "... A South County campus here in Soledad will be a great benefit not only to Gonzales residents, but to other South County residents who also want to attend classes to achieve their goals." Greenfield Mayor Pro Tem Yandy Martinez then spoke on behalf of Greenfield Mayor Lance Walker, who was unable to attend the ceremony. "This is huge," Martinez said. "This is access for our students more than anything, for my children. I have four kids myself and I just think of them, but not only my children, my community and South County. This is a moment for South County." Martinez shared her speaking time with fellow Greenfield resident, Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez. "Congratulations to the entire community and the city council here for your wise investment," Lopez said. "... The kids here know that the investment is in them, and you all made that happen. Thank you for making that investment in our kids. Hartnell student Angelita Conealso received a city-backed low interest business loan to create a city-backed low interest business loan to create a small business venture. Other South County residents who also want to attend classes to achieve their goals.

The city's award-winning public relations group, Partners in Health, also talked Hartnell District 8 Board Trustee Erica Pa- diales Cruz spoke during the ceremony as well, and her husband.

AWARD

The city’s award-winning efforts include implementing initiatives and programs over the past decade that are resulting in real progress in Gonzales on youth engagement, economic development, health care access and sustainability.

"The City Council and staff are committed to working collaboratively to provide the best possible environment to bring excellent services that enhance the quality of life for our diverse community," said Gonzales Mayor Maria Orozco. "We are honored to be recognized by RWJF for our years of hard work by many of our residents and results partners who have contributed to the city’s goals of improving the overall health of all residents.

Gonzales will receive a $25,000 prize, a youth award, recognition of their leadership and making community commitments that will help the city’s health and wellness goals," said Mayor Mendez. "You have a fair opportunity for health and well-being," said Richard Besser, M.D., president and CEO of RWJF. "These communities show us that solutions that are within our grasp when we use data to identify chal- lenges and work together to implement solutions brought forward by residents." Gonzales now joins Santa Cruz County, San Monica and San Pablo as the fourth California community to win the distinguished prize. To become an RWJF Cul- ture of Health Prize winner, Gonzales had to demonstrate how it excelled at the following: commitment to creating healthier communities; creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health; and measuring and sharing progress and improving outcomes.

"The Gonzales community is truly deserving of recognition for the ongoing efforts by the community and the conditions to the city’s health and wellness goals," said City Manager Mendez. "We look forward to celebrating this award with our partners and community and continuing to look for ways to engage residents and partners in improving health, opportunity and equity for all.

A delegation of six community leaders from Gonzales, along with representatives from the other 2019 prize-winning communities, attended an award ceremony last week at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation headquarters in Princeton, N.J. Prize winners were presented with certificates and participated in a panel discussion on strategies for achieving success, among other activities.

LOCKWOOD

Belva Lockwood was in the national limelight at that time for being … the first woman nominated for president of the United States. It is documented that Belva Lockwood was the first female to argue a case before the Supreme Court of the United States.

After the brief ceremony, the public is invited to gather at the nearby cafe, where “Belva Burgers” and “Belva Burgers” and “Belva Burgers” and “Belva Burgers” and “Belva Burgers” will be served, along with all the regular menu items. A Belva Lockwood memorial bench will also be on display for viewing.