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UA and LCCC unveil new center

Open house showcases new Brunswick facility

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The University of Akron and Lorain County Community College plan to hold an open house for their new Midpoint Campus Center in Brunswick from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today.

UA and the community college will offer credit courses on site and through interactive distance learning, or videoconferencing, in which students in the Medina County classroom will "attend" classes by video in Akron or Lorain.

The institutions leased the 10,500-square-foot center in northern Brunswick because they determined the area is underserved in higher education.

The center is part of an "innovation corridor" that UA and LCCC created in 2007 to strengthen economic development and make higher education more affordable.

Center outreach specialist Lena Knight said students have registered for 45 seats in LCCC credit classes and for 30 seats in LCCC noncredit courses.

While students can register for classes offered at both institutions at the same time, no students have registered for UA classes. UA is not offering noncredit classes at the Campus Center.

Part of the attraction for the LCCC classes may be that they only cost \$111 per credit hour for students who do not live in Lorain County and \$92 for those who do. In contrast, the UA per-credit-cost is \$212.

Knight did not know how many students the leased facility could accommodate, but with three classrooms, a classroom with 26 computers, a community lab with 10 computers and two conference rooms there is plenty of room to expand.

"The goal would be that we fill the need so well that we need to expand our space," she said. "I think there are possibilities for that."

The Campus Center may prove to be a magnet for high school students interested in the state's post-secondary enrollment program.

It allows high school students to take courses that count for both high school and college credits at the same time and that are free of charge at the college level.

The center at 50 Pearl Road in the Highland Square Office Building is about seven minutes from Brunswick High, five minutes from Strongsville High and 10 minutes from North Royalton High, Knight pointed out — driveable distances for students seeking that option.

UA and LCCC soon will have more competition as they seek to recruit students from northern Medina County, eastern Lorain County and southern Cuyahoga County.

Cuyahoga Community College is partnering with the city of Brunswick to build a \$10 million facility at the Brunswick Recreation Center.

The Campus Center open house will offer tours of the facility and demonstrations of videoconferencing. Staff will be on hand to answer questions.

UA classes begin Monday and LCCC courses, which are of varying lengths, on Jan. 20, Feb. 24 and March 24.

For details, call Knight at (330) 225-0042 or visit <http://www.midpointcampus.com>.

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