FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News Media Contact:
William H. Boyer, Director of Communications, (213) 891-2247 office | (213) 317-6691 cell | boyerwh@email.laccd.edu

NEW SATELLITE CAMPUS FOR EAST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE TO RISE WHERE MASSIVE TIRE FACTORY ONCE STOOD; FIRST ALL-NEW DISTRICT FACILITY SINCE 2014

LOS ANGELES—The former site of one of the nation’s largest automotive tire manufacturing factories will now be used to help educate thousands of future professionals and certificated workers as the location for the new, $65 million South Gate Educational Center, a satellite campus of the Los Angeles Community College District’s (LACCD) East Los Angeles College (ELAC).

LACCD officials, plus state, federal and local elected leaders, community representatives and others gathered together on Friday, March 22, 2019 at the former Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. factory near Firestone Boulevard and Santa Fe Avenue to celebrate the historic groundbreaking for the permanent new home of the ELAC South Gate Educational Center.

“Thank you to everyone who has supported the project and worked hard to get us to this groundbreaking milestone,” LACCD Board of Trustees President Mike Fong said. “This campus will embrace the hopes and aspirations of students in South Gate and throughout the cities and communities of Southeast Los Angeles. In addition, this project will provide hundreds of construction jobs and its impact will be felt for years to come as thousands of students use this state-of-the-art campus in their journey of higher education and professional workforce training.”

-MORE-
Fong was joined by California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, 63rd District, (D-Lakewood); U.S. Rep. Nanette Diaz Barragán, 44th Congressional District; LACCD Chancellor Francisco Rodriguez, Ph.D.; South Gate Mayor M. Belén Bernal; ELAC President Marvin Martinez, plus many others for the ceremony noting a new chapter of educational and economic opportunity for the site and the residents of South Gate and Southeast Los Angeles.

“The importance of this particular factory site deeply resonates with our District’s mission of offering quality higher education opportunities to all regardless of immigration status or education background. Where a factory once stood that provided union-wage jobs for thousands, a new community college campus will rise up to take its place providing the educational tools and resources for thousands of new Angelinos seeking certificated workplace career training or the foundation to transfer for a bachelor’s degree,” Chancellor Rodriguez said.

The South Gate Educational Center site covers about 18.5 acres of the former 40-acre Firestone tire factory complex where union workers turned out millions of tires during operations there from 1928 until it closed in 1980. In its place, a three-story, 105,000-square-foot, LEED-certified building will anchor the community college satellite campus operated by ELAC, https://www.elac.edu. The District’s last, all-new college facility, built from the ground up, was Los Angeles Mission College, http://www.lamission.edu, initially completed in its current location in 1991, which then expanded with new facilities completed in 2014.

The South Gate building will have a modern library, 28 classrooms, offices, lecture hall and lab space for use in career technology education, liberal arts and science programs. The construction is estimated to cost about $65 million and will take about three years to complete. (See companion Fact Sheet.)

“Community colleges are special to me because they are what lit the spark in me of wanting to learn. I want all students to experience that spark, and the groundbreaking of this permanent East LA College facility in South Gate means more students in this community will have that opportunity,” California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood) said.

Water-efficient landscaping, plus inviting open public spaces will be incorporated along with dozens of bicycle racks, easy access to public transit and charging ports for electric vehicles. The new educational center will replace the older, temporary facilities about a block away that have been used for more than 20 years when the satellite campus began operations there in 1997. https://www.elac.edu/southgate/

“We at East Los Angeles College are proudly student-focused and this new, state-of-the-art campus is evidence of our commitment to providing the best for our students. This campus will provide enhanced educational opportunities to the South Gate community and will help future generations to achieve their higher education and professional training goals,” ELAC President Marvin Martinez said.

Other speakers scheduled for the event included Evelyn Escatiola, current Dean for the South Gate campus; Ric Loya; former Mayor and Councilmember of the City of Huntington Park, who played a key role in bringing ELAC to the Southeast L.A. community in the early 1990s; Dr. Daniel Castro, the first Dean for the South Gate campus, 1997-1999; ELAC Faculty Speaker Mel Stevenson, from the Administration of Justice Department; and Alexis Diaz, ASU Vice President of South Gate campus.
Construction oversite is managed by BuildLACCD, http://www.build-laccd.org/, the capital improvement program for LACCD. Next steps for the project are to remove the remains of the old factory buildings and other site preparation work. Construction on the new facilities is expected to begin later in 2019 with tentative completion in 2022.

In 1927, Harvey Firestone purchased about 40 acres of farmland in what would become the City of South Gate to use as his anchor West Coast tire manufacturing facility south of Downtown Los Angeles. In December of that year, a large crowd gathered for the Firestone groundbreaking. Now, 92 years later, another important groundbreaking for the land has occurred.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in present South Gate, December 16, 1927. The photo, left, from the Homestead’s collection, shows a crowd of onlookers and a wooden stage filled with dignitaries with a large backdrop rendering of the plant, completed in June 1928. https://homesteadmuseum.wordpress.com/

Below, right, a bird’s-eye view of the plant from this early aerial photograph shows its size and location in 1928 shortly after completion. From the University of Southern California (USC), California Historical Society Collection, 1860-1960, digital photography library online, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/

Photo, above, left, shows current aerial view outline of 18.5-acre project site, including old, abandoned factory buildings that will be removed to make way for the new South Gate Educational Center, artist rendering, below.
Groundbreaking for New South Gate Educational Center Celebrated | March 22, 2018

Additional LACCD News Media Contacts:
Kevin Jimenez, Public Information Officer, ELAC, (323) 265-8807, jimeneka@elac.edu
Maricela Gomez, Communications Manager, BuildLACCD, (323) 981-7253, maricela.gomez@build-laccd.org

About the Los Angeles Community College District
LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation’s largest community college district, educating about 230,000 full- and part-time students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing important learning pathways for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities, two-year degrees and/or professional certificated training. Follow us on Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/LACCD, @LACCD; on Twitter, https://twitter.com/laccd and Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/, laccd.edu.

Members of the Board
Mike Fong, President | Andra Hoffman, Vice President | Steven F. Veres, Second Vice President | Gabriel Buelna, Ph.D. | Ernest H. Moreno | Scott J. Svonkin | David Vela | Kellie N. Williams, Student Trustee
**East Los Angeles College**  
**South Gate Educational Center**  
2525 Firestone Blvd., South Gate, CA 90280

**Phase 2 - Construction**  
The new, 105,000-square-foot South Gate Educational Center will replace the current leased facility. The new building will include 28 classrooms and four labs to support the Career Technology Education, Liberal Arts and Science programs. In addition, the building will house one library, a gym/multipurpose room, 100-seat lecture hall and specialized space for student support services. Support services to be available will include a health center, bookstore, counseling and transfer center, admissions and records office, financial aid office, faculty and staff center and a student lounge.

The 18.5-acre campus will transform the former tire manufacturing site into a state-of-the-art learning facility integrated with cutting edge sustainability features. LED lighting and sensor controls will be installed throughout the building and the exterior walls will incorporate fiberglass insulation between studs and foam insulation on the outside of the studs. The campus will provide over 100 bike racks, electric vehicle charging stations and easy access to public transportation. The Central Courtyard includes permeable pavers and water-efficient landscaping that will reduce water irrigation use by 50% with no impact on aesthetics.

The East Los Angeles College South Gate Campus is an extension of ELAC located in Monterey Park. The South Gate campus was created to extend ELAC’s academic services to the southeast corridor of Los Angeles. The new campus creates a vibrant, sustainable learning center in the heart of South Gate.