

History of Juan Diego Academy

The families of the upper Rio Grande Valley have long dreamed of being able to send their children to a Catholic high school. In 2003-2004, a market feasibility study was conducted by the Office of Center Operations and Community (CoSERVE) of the University of Texas-Pan American. The report concluded that the community wanted a Catholic high school and that the school would be viable. A Steering Committee comprised of community and church leaders was established to prepare the groundwork, establish the expenses and projected costs to construct the school and to come up with a plan to fund the project. The Committee also commissioned a financial feasibility study. That report supported the market feasibility findings and the Committee began planning for a Capital Campaign.



A milestone was reached in 2006, when 40 acres of land in Edinburg was donated to the project for the construction of a Catholic High School in a new residential and business community. With the land in place, the Capital Campaign was launched in spring 2007. A Board of Trustees was established in November 2007 to provide leadership and governance and to oversee the construction and establishment of the school, named San Juan Diego Catholic Regional High School.

The Capital Campaign successfully raised \$2.6 million in pledges, however fund raising efforts were measurably slowed as the U.S. economy experienced decline. The donation of land in Edinburg contained a requirement that construction must begin by July 1, 2010. To do this more funds were needed.

In Feb. 2010, the Most Rev. Daniel E. Flores was installed as Bishop of Brownsville. Bishop Flores has stated a priority for the evangelization of youth and a strong commitment to Catholic schools. After consulting both his finance council and priests, the Bishop pledged \$1 million to the High School project. He also offered, as an alternative site for the school, the valuable and historic property located in Mission, which served as the site of St. Joseph and St. Peter Seminary. This offer included 40 acres of land and the use of the four buildings making up the seminary campus.

The Board accepted the generous offer of the Bishop. Monies raised from the capital campaign were used to renovate existing buildings and construct a new Science & Math building. With the help of many volunteers, the campus was ready for the opening of school in August 2011. Teachers were hired and the school opened its doors to its first freshman class on August 22, 2011.



In August 2012, a second class was added and the school began its second year of operation. Additional teachers were hired, courses added, and the number of athletic and extracurricular activities increased. A nearby gymnasium (Granjeno Community Center) was rented to accommodate the sports program. A major gift campaign was initiated to raise funds for the completion of the next phase of the Master Plan.



On November 8, 2012, Juan Diego Academy held a ground breaking for the new multi-purpose/gymnasium. A new fire lane surrounding the campus consisting of five (5) additional fire hydrants was completed. Work began on the new gymnasium on January 25, 2013. The building was blessed by Bishop Flores on September 5, 2013. Additional classrooms were added to the building during the summer 2014, and additional parking added for students and guests in summer 2015. A capital campaign is currently underway to help fund the next phase of campus expansion.