



gwinnettdailypost.com

Tuesday, September 30, 2008

International Education Center opens at Gwinnett Place Mall

By Heather Darenberg
Staff Writer

Tuesday, September 30, 2008



Staff Photo: Heather Darenberg
Gwinnett Technical College officials, along with civic, business and community leaders, prepare to cut the ribbon at the college's new International Education Center, which opened Monday inside Gwinnett Place Mall.

mall for the opening of the auxiliary campus, which occupies more than 32,600 square feet on two levels.

DULUTH - When Patricia Pinzon immigrated in 2006 to the United States from Colombia, she was often frustrated by the difficulty she had communicating with others in English.

She remembers ordering a hamburger one day and the confusion that followed when she was asked if she wanted cheese on the sandwich. Pinzon did not understand this word - cheese - and was only able to answer the question after the person taking her order showed her a slice.

A year after she moved here, Pinzon enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at Gwinnett Technical College. After four quarters of study, she said she can now converse with new friends, order food in a restaurant and watch movies.

"I now can do more things than I could imagine," she said.

Gwinnett Technical College's new International Education Center, located inside Gwinnett Place Mall, will offer students like Pinzon an array of lifelong learning opportunities, officials said. Dozens of business and community leaders on Monday gathered at the Duluth

Nearly 400 students have registered to take classes at the center, said Dave McCulloch, the college's vice president of recruitment and marketing. ESL classes begin Monday, and several computer, construction and business training courses are scheduled to begin this fall.

Gwinnett Tech President Sharon Bartels said the continuing education center is located "in the heart of Gwinnett County."

"We live in an increasingly global environment. ... Our International Education Center was created to provide the progressive education and training that students of all ages will need to be successful in an international world and work place," Bartels said. "The International Education Center brings Gwinnett Tech's specialized courses into the heart of the community where they are needed most. Technical colleges play a vital role in the economic development of our community, and we're pleased to contribute positively to the economic growth and vibrancy of the Gwinnett Place area."

Joe Allen, the executive director of the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District, said the center will serve as a pillar of economic resurgence.

"We are pleased we could work together with Gwinnett Tech and Gwinnett Place to bring this opportunity to area residents and businesses," Allen said. "The more quality of life and business enhancements that come to the greater Gwinnett Place area, the more resilient our community becomes for the next generation."

Bucky Johnson, the mayor of Norcross and a member of the Gwinnett Tech Foundation board of directors, said he hopes the college will one day open such a center in his city.

"As an educator, I really appreciate taking education to the people," he said.

McCulloch said prospective students can continue to register this week for classes at the International Education Center. For more information on course offerings at the center, located at 2100 Pleasant Hill Road

in Duluth, call 770-995-9697 or visit www.GwinnettTech.edu/ce.

Related Links

Content © 2008
Software © 1998-2008 1up! Software, All Rights Reserved