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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™
EL PASO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TTUHSC El Paso Receives \$45,000 Gift from El Paso Electric for Dental School, Clinic and University Initiatives

Majority of funds for Hunt School of Dental Medicine, Texas Tech Dental Oral Health Clinic

EL PASO, Texas — Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso received a generous grant from El Paso Electric (EPE) that will go toward the education of future students and support university events and programs that benefit the El Paso community.

El Paso Electric donated \$45,000 to TTUHSC El Paso, with the majority of funds going toward the Woody L. Hunt School of Dental Medicine and the Texas Tech Dental Oral Health Clinic, both set to open in 2021. The dental school will be the first to open in Texas in nearly 50 years, and the clinic will be where dental students gain real-world experience treating patients under the supervision of faculty, beginning with next year's inaugural class.

“Our care and respect for our community that we have proudly served for over 100 years reverberates beyond measure as we help support TTUHSC El Paso and its exciting initiatives like the establishment of our region's first dental school,” said El Paso Electric CEO Kelly A. Tomblin. “We understand what it means to be part of our community's DNA and share in the philosophy of developing a highly skilled workforce that will drive economic prosperity for our community. We are proud to call TTUHSC El Paso a community partner.”

The funding will provide critical support for patient labs, specialized equipment, student scholarships and treatments for uninsured patients at the dental clinic. In honor of the donation, TTUHSC El Paso will name a dental suite in the clinic and a simulation station in the Medical Sciences Building II after El Paso Electric. MSB II is the newest building on campus and will house the Hunt School of Dental Medicine.

“We want to thank El Paso Electric for supporting the new dental school and its mission,” said Richard Black, D.D.S., M.S., dean of the Hunt School of Dental Medicine. “We are proud to partner with El Paso Electric as they have believed in our mission and provided crucial inaugural support to help establish the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine and Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing. This recent donation will help the school and the El Paso community as our future students provide vital dental care to local residents at the clinic. Our hope is that in the future, those students go on to practice in our community, which would address an urgent need in our area.”

The new 38,000-square-foot clinic will be equipped with 130 treatment chairs and is expected to be the top dental-care destination, not only for the public, but for faculty, staff, students and their families. The mission of the dental clinic is to improve the accessibility of oral health care in the community and offer reduced-cost dental care to the public.

The Hunt School of Dental Medicine and the dental clinic will address a major need in West Texas, where many residents suffer from poor oral health due to a lack of access to affordable care. In 2017, only 50% of El Paso residents visited a dentist. In El Paso County, there is one dentist for every 5,482 residents, compared to the national average of one dentist for every 2,075. Studies have found most graduating dentists establish their practices in proximity to their dental school, which is why the Hunt School of Dental Medicine is vital to the region, as it will be the first dental school in West Texas.

Interviews are underway for the inaugural class of the Hunt School of Dental Medicine. The school will welcome its first class of 40 students in 2021 and 60 students per year subsequently.

The donation from El Paso Electric also will help fund other TTUHSC El Paso programs and events, including:

- Cancer Awareness Month virtual seminars.
- Medventure for Your Future, an annual one-day health sciences fair for middle school students.
- Personal protective equipment and hand washing stations for the Foster School of Medicine’s Medical Student Run Clinic.
- Sponsorship for Cookies, Cocoa and Holiday Cheer, an El Paso community-wide event.

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