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Gift puts master plan for high school on fast track

San Antonio Business Journal - by [Tricia Lynn Silva](#)

The Greehey Family Foundation has donated \$3 million to the **Lutheran High School of San Antonio** (LHS) to help the school advance a multimillion-dollar plan for building a campus that could ultimately serve upwards of 500 students each year.

The gift will fund the first phase of LHS' new campus. This leg of development calls for a 40,000-square-foot multipurpose building that will house the school's band and choir rooms; an art room; biology, physics and chemistry labs; classrooms; a cafeteria; weight room; gym; and locker rooms. The building is set to debut next March.

While a master plan for the LHS campus has been in the works for some years, the Greehey Foundation gift is serving as the catalyst to get the dirt turning on the project, says Max Kiesling, chairman of the LHS board.

The Greehey Family Foundation was established in 2003 by Bill Greehey, chairman and CEO of **NuStar Energy LP** — a locally based operator of petroleum product terminals, pipelines and storage facilities.

In honor of Greehey's gift, the school is changing its name to Lutheran High School of San Antonio — The Greehey Campus.

The LHS Greehey Campus will be located on 54 acres of land at 18104 Babcock Road, at Babcock and Camp Bullis roads in Northwest San Antonio. LHS purchased this tract, once home to the Diamondback Golf Academy, back in 2005.

Additional phases of the LHS campus include the construction of new classrooms and administrative space, a 400- to 500-seat auditorium, a state-of-the-art library and media center and athletic fields.

Kiesling puts total development costs for all phases of the LHS campus at approximately \$33 million.

Stephen Eggold, principal of LHS, adds that the donation from Greehey's philanthropic organization has significantly advanced long-term plans for the new campus.

"The gift has pushed (this project) ahead by about a year and a half, maybe two years," Eggold says.

"I wanted to kick start the (building) program," Greehey says. "I wanted to show the Lutheran community that (LHS) was a viable operation, and (encourage) other Lutherans to contribute."

Out of the question

Since the 2006-2007 academic year, LHS has operated on its 54 acres on Babcock — albeit with modular buildings for classroom space. A former golf pro shop on the site is serving, on a temporary basis, as the administrative offices for the school.

Before moving to the Babcock Road land, LHS had been temporarily based at two other addresses in the city.

From its inception in 1995 to the year 2004, LHS was located on the former grounds of the Concordia Lutheran Church campus on Basse Road in North Central San Antonio. After LHS sold the church land, the school moved to temporary quarters on the campus of the Methodist Mission Home on Whitby Road on the Northwest Side.

These moves — and a lack of any permanent structure on the Babcock land — cost LHS some credibility, and some students, Eggold says.

For the 2008-09 school year, enrollment stands at 62 students — quite a dip from the 100 or so students that school has served in past academic years.

The gift from the Greehey Foundation has finally enabled LHS to begin construction on the first permanent building on the Babcock tract, and thus begin the work to create a lasting legacy for the school, Kiesling says.

“It removes the question mark of the school,” adds Eggold of Greehey’s donation. “It had become very difficult to recruit students, and tuition was the main source of our operating income. (Greehey’s gift) will turn that trend around.