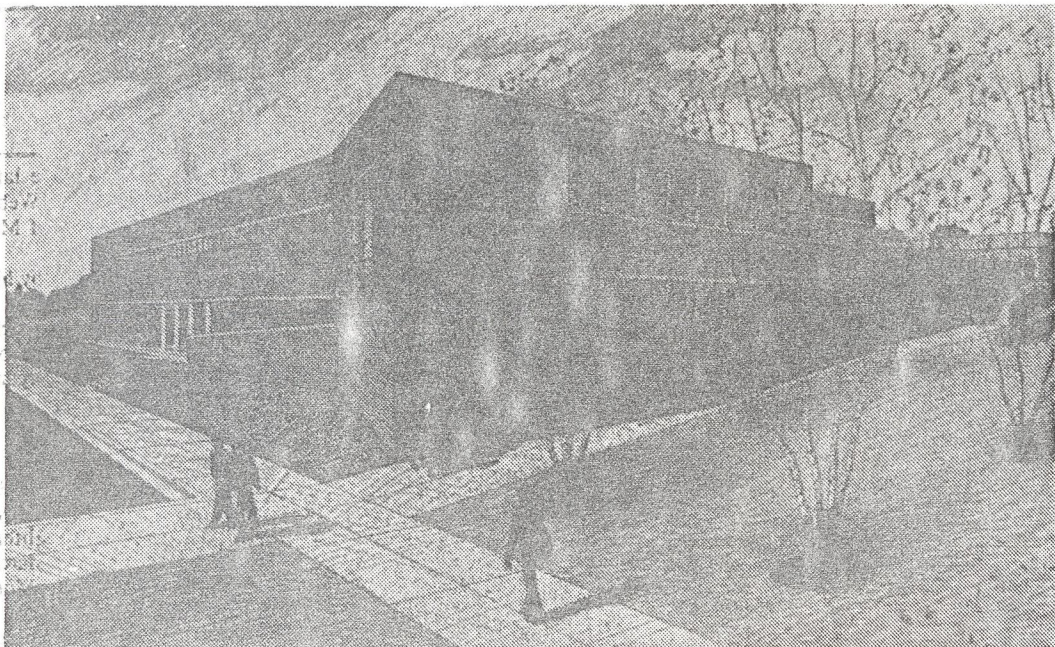




WPCC will break ground for the new Business Technologies Building on March 29.

WPCC to break ground for new building

From Staff Reports

In an effort to meet the needs of its growing enrollment, Western Piedmont Community College will soon begin construction on a new Business Technology Center.

A formal ground breaking ceremony to initiate the construction will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, March 29, with State Senator Dan K. Simpson as speaker.

Simpson, a longtime advocate of the community college system, has represented the 27th district as a N.C. Senator for the past 12 years.

The addition of the new classroom building comes at a time when college officials say Western Piedmont desperately needs additional instructional space. Due to rapid enrollment growth over the past decade, the College's assigned instructional space has declined to 50th lowest in the N.C. Community College System.

The new center, designed by

Charlotte Architectural Firm J.N. Pease Associates, will be built by Hickory Construction company.

Construction will begin April 1 and is scheduled to be completed within 12 months.

The Center will be a 41,888 square foot building containing 12 instructional labs, seven of which will be dedicated computer labs; 7 classrooms; 4 seminar rooms; and 18 faculty offices. The facility will support more than 20 programs designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in businesses and industries within the region, and provide new skills for current employees.

The Business Technology Center will "provide the college with new and expanded educational training opportunities," according to Western Piedmont Community College President Dr. Jim A. Richardson.

"The addition of the new center will allow the college to offer new training opportunities to students,

businesses and industries as we move into the 21st Century," he added.

The total cost of the new building will be \$4.2 million. Funding for the building was made possible by the passage in 1993 of a statewide community college bond which provided the College with \$3.7 million for new construction. The remaining funds needed for construction were provided by the Burke County Commissioners and private contributors.

Western Piedmont Community College, founded in 1964, is a fully accredited, comprehensive community college offering over 80 educational and training programs in the areas college transfer, technical, vocational and continuing education.

The College now serves more than 12,000 students in curriculum and extension classes each academic year.