

# The Virginian-Pilot

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NORFOLK | COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## STUDENT CENTER AT TCC TO OFFER A PLACE TO HANG OUT

*Facility  
a first of  
its kind  
for state's  
two-year  
colleges*

By Denise Watson Batts  
*The Virginian-Pilot*

### NORFOLK

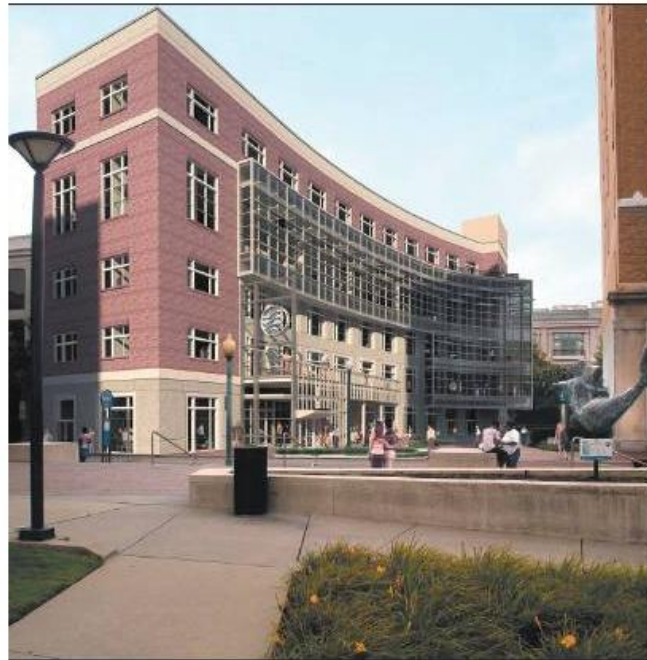
Darryl Thornton's hangout spots at the Tidewater Community College campus tend to be wherever the student can find a clear piece of wall outside one of the buildings.

That could soon change, as school officials on Monday announced plans to build a new student center to house child care, eateries, lounge areas and a fitness center.

"It is our version of Webb Center, Godwin Center," said TCC President Deborah DiCroce, referring to student hubs at Old Dominion and Norfolk State universities, during a groundbreaking ceremony. "Dare I say, only better. TCC style. A room of their own."

TCC's stand-alone student

See TCC. PAGE 3



RENDERING COURTESY OF TCC

### the plan

The Norfolk center, expected to open next summer, will be one of four student centers on the Tidewater Community College campuses. The centers will serve the needs of a student body that has grown nearly 50 percent since 1998.

### the features

With five levels and 57,000 square feet, the Norfolk center will have a cafe, study rooms, lounges, fitness space, and a game room. It also will offer a "child-minding" area, meant for short periods for kids from infants to age 12.

## TCC | *Norfolk student center* to cost about \$17.6 million

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centers, which will eventually be added to the other three local campuses, are the first of their kind for Virginia's community colleges.

The Norfolk center, expected to open next summer, will be five levels and 57,000 square feet. It will be located in the plaza area next to TCC's Martin Building at 300 Granby St.

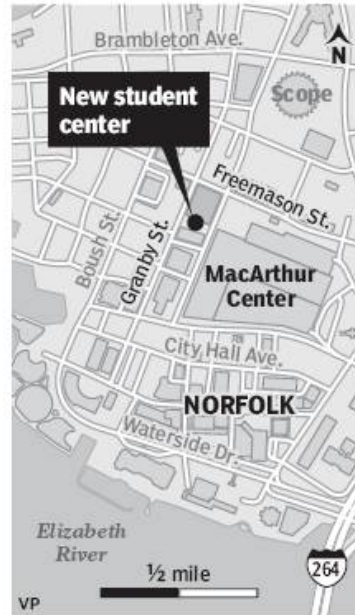
The main facade will be heavily glassed and face the courtyard. The plaza area will be reduced in size but will have an outdoor dining area and will continue to serve as a walkway between Granby and Monticello Avenue.

The center will include a kitchen and dining area, a cafe for students and the public, student organization meeting and work areas, fitness and multipurpose physical activity space, and a game room. The center also will offer a "child-minding" area, meant for short periods for kids from infants to age 12. The student center also will have study rooms and lounges.

DiCroce said students have repeatedly asked for places to hang out between classes and to hold club meetings.

The school's population has grown nearly 50 percent since 1998, to more than 40,000 students. More of those students are going to school full time and spending all day on campus but have no place at school to mingle, DiCroce said. In addition, the population is getting younger; 50 percent of the students are 18 to 24 years old. In 1998, 22 percent of students fell into this age group.

Work on centers at the Chesapeake, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach campuses will begin soon. Virginia Beach, the largest campus, will be next in line



and will have the largest center at 89,500 square feet. The others will be similar in size to Norfolk's. All are expected to open by 2011-12.

The estimated cost of all four centers is \$82.6 million, with the Norfolk center costing about \$17.6 million. All will be paid with student fees and contributions from the cities to cover site development.

Thornton said he'll definitely take advantage of the new center. He said he often drives back to his Chesapeake home to kill time between classes or he'll sit with friends at the library.

"But you can only talk so loud in the library."

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