

# The Phoenix Gazette

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## GROUND BROKEN ON \$8 MILLION PROJECT

# College Hailed Spark To S. Phoenix Revival

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Gazette Education Reporter

Ground was broken today for Maricopa County's seventh community college, a project hailed as part of the revitalization of South Phoenix.

South Mountain Community College, scheduled to open next fall, "has been

a dream for many, many years," Sen. Alfredo Gutierrez, D-Phoenix, said at ceremonies this morning.

**CONSTRUCTION OF** the \$8.4 million complex represents a commitment to education and neighborhood stability on the city's south side, he said.

"The waters of the Salt River for too long have separated South Phoenix from the rest of the Valley," both literally and symbolically, added Barbara Hitchcock, a member of the Maricopa County Community College District governing board.

Bridges must be built across that gap, she said. "The most important of all these bridges is education . . . Today we begin to build the foundation of that bridge."

**ABOUT 100 PERSONS**, including dozens of state and local officials, attended groundbreaking ceremonies held at the college site. The site, now a cotton field, is a 104-acre tract bounded by 20th and 24th streets and Western Canal and Vineyard Road.

The new college will "usher in what I think is a new era for the south county, South Phoenix area," district Chancellor Paul Eisner said.

Raul Cardenas, president of the college-to-be, said he hopes to have the campus in partial operation next fall and full operation in the fall of 1981.

The college is being designed for about 4,000 full-time and part-time students, he said.

Bennie Gonzales, nationally recognized architect assigned to the project, said he intends to present preliminary construction plans within a month to the district board. The campus will be made up primarily of relocatable buildings, he said.

The Heard Investment Corp., as a "philanthropic gesture," sold the college site to the district for \$595,000, regarded as about half its market value.