The Battalion STATE & LOCAL

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Project trains health experts in three years

HARLINGEN (AP) — A \$4.4 million project over three years to train doctors, nurses and other health professionals in the Lower Rio Grande Valley will be aimed at medical personnel, officials said. More than 200 medical, dental, nursing and allied health students

will complete a portion of their clini-cal training each year through the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) program.

The project, coordinated by the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, will bring the students to an area in dire need of medical workers.

Organizers are hoping that some of the students will choose to work in the Valley after they finish their

"The Valley encompasses the two most poverty-stricken counties in the United States," said Dr. Adela Valdez, director of South Texas Hospital in Harlingen and an organizer of the AHEC project. "Therefore it is difficult to recruit and retain physicians, dentists, nurses and other health care providers. The AHEC can be beneficial not only in retaining our health professionals, but in recruiting new personnel into the Valley as well.'

According to the Texas Depart-ment of Health, in 1987 there were 762 residents per physician in Texas, but in the Valley doctors were much less available. In Cameron County, the resident-physician ratio was 1,022 to 1; in Hidalgo County, 1,373 to 1; in Hidalgo County, 2,755 to 1; and in Starr County, 3,554 to 1.

In 1986, there were 2,131 residents for every dentist in Texas, but 4,176 to 1 in Cameron County, 5,431 to 1 in Hidalgo County, 9,620 to 1 in Willacy County and 34,740 to 1 in Starr County.

Dr. Ciro Sumaya, AHEC program director, said nursing shortages also persist in the Valley with 916 residents for every nurse in Cameron County, for example, compared to 241 residents per nurse state wide, according to a UTHSCSA news re-

Sumaya, associate dean for continuing medical education at UTHSCSA, said similar programs around the nation show that students who train in rural or under served areas are more likely to return after graduation.

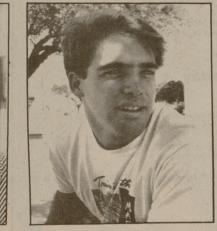
The three-year partnership be-tween the San Antonio school and dozens of health facilities at the southern tip of the state is set to begin Oct. 1.

We asked and here's what you said ... If you had the power to change one thing at Texas A&M, what would it be?



Julie Fleming Senior — Marketing Houston Parking.

I would make sure the freshmen wouldn't have cars up here because I don't think they need them. It would increase the availability of parking on campus.



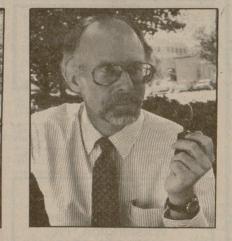
Juan Corta Junior — Industrial Engineering Costa Rica Parking.

It would be parking because it's very crowded. There's no parking at night at the library.



Alecia Biondi Junior — Accounting College Station Parking.

The parking situation is terri-ble. They should use empty lots. I really don't know why the parking is so bad with all the available space.



Jack Harris Associate research economist Houston Parking and Construction.

I would probably cut down on the traffic congestion and not have quite so many torn up streets



Zhendong Yang Ph.D. candidate — Geology China Student Facilities.

I would put new student facilities on campus. The students need more social activities and places to grow. This way we can promote culture and Aggie spirit.



Tim Comer Junior — English Magnolia, Ark. Construction. I would accelerate the construction on campus. It's needed but it's inconvenient at best.



Dr. Prasad Enjeti Associate professor — Electrical Engineering India Parking.

Parking has become a major problem here. If I want to go to the library, it's very difficult be-cause of the poor parking.



Melody Johnson Graduate student — Education Cleveland, Texas Campus policies.

I would change some of the policies on campus regarding stu-dent groups. Atheist groups are allowed on campus but Christian organizations can't speak out as



Susan Dennis Assistant lecturer — Modern Languages Lubbock Student attitudes.

I would like to see students involved in more important activities like saving the economy and not worrying about who's a greek or who's not or what we should do about various traditions



Barbara Schwarz Sophomore — Business San Antonio Buses

I would change the on-campus buses. They should run more often to fit with students' schedules. We go out and try to catch a bus and end up waiting and being late for class.mare

Legislature passes fee and tax increases and budget cuts

AUSTIN (AP) — The Legislature moved quickly Tuesday on a \$528 million school finance reform plan by easily passing the fee and tax increases needed to pay for it - including a quarter-cent state sales tax in-

were sent to the House for consideration. Increases in the state sales tax, mixed drink and tobacco levies, and some state fees were passed by both the House and Senate and sent to Gov. Bill Clements.

The legislative pace should allow law-

am extremely happy because there is light at the end of the tunnel and it's not a freight train this time."

-Gib Lewis, **House Speaker**

The Texas Senate also passed a separate makers to finish their record sixth special bill outlining school finance reforms with a 29-1 vote, and a measure making budget cuts and state budget transfers with a 30-0

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session at the end of this week, said Clements and other state leaders. This is the fourth session on school finance reform. "I am extremely happy because there is

The reform and budget-cutting bills light at the end of the tunnel and it's not a nance reform bill Wednesday, Lewis said.

freight train this time," said House Speaker Gib Lewis, D-Fort Worth.

Republican governor agreed on the school and accountability. finance reform package Friday after a three-month deadlock on how to address a Texas Supreme Court order to make more money available to poor school districts. In the dergarten program to 3-year-olds in the 1991-92 school year, increase testing of students, and give the governor the authority to the senate.

\$13.5 billion-a-year school finance system, the funding package would raise an extra \$100 million to bail out financially strapped

Social service programs. Clements killed two previous school fi-nance reform plans because they each re-quired a half-cent increase in the sales tax. But he compromised at the quarter-cent level Friday, saying he wanted to fend off court intervention in the school system.

The House could take up the school fi-

bill would make a number of changes de-Democratic legislative leaders and the signed to improve education performance bill, which was approved 117-23 by the

Besides pumping extra money into the to appoint the state education commisby the State Board of Education.

15 cents, to 41 cents

• Increase the tax rate on chewing to-bacco, snuff and smoking tobacco from 28.125 percent to 35.213 percent of the fac-sends more money to school districts. Sen. tory list price.

• Increase the gross receipts tax on the the reform bill.

Besides addressing funding, the reform sale of mixed drinks from 12 percent to 14 percent. This was the last item in the tax House and 30-0 by the Senate.

• Raise by 50 percent the state fees for sioner. The commissioner now is appointed highway permits to move items that exceed the State Board of Education.
The tax and fee measures would:
Raise the sales tax to 6¼ cents on the
statutory size and weight limits. This was a separate bill, approved on a 126-15 House vote and 30-0 Senate vote.

• Raise the tax per pack of cigarettes by said he does not think the reform bill will meet the Supreme Court order to design a

Hector Uribe, D-Brownsville, voted against

