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WEEKEND EDITION

UTPB to show off engineering college

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Rafael Aguilera/Submitted photo The University of Texas Permian Basin's new engineering building on Highway 191. UTPB will host a reception for College of Engineering alumni and friends at the building on Sept. 21.

The University of Texas Permian Basin will be showing off its College of Engineering at 11105 W. Highway 191 with an alumni reception Sept. 21.

Those attending the reception will get to meet George Nnanna, dean and professor at the college and head of the Texas Water and Energy Institute at the college. Attendees will also hear about the latest projects underway at the college and have a chance to network with UTPB alumni and other professionals.

“Having a strong engineering program in the Permian Basin is critical to the general area economy — to provide workers, research and support local companies,” Grant Swartzwelder, chairman of the UTPB

Engineering Advisory Board and president of OTA Environmental Solutions, told the Reporter-Telegram by email. “Strengthening the UTPB College of Engineering will have a far reach throughout West Texas and really help drive the growth of local industry.”

Swartzwelder added, “While there are many reasons for alumni to attend this reception, the most important is to network between each other and potential employers. At the end of the day, meeting fellow UTPB graduates will lead to job leads and a better career.”

While the college has been graduating mechanical and petroleum engineers, it has also just begun graduating chemical and electrical engineers.

One project keeping students and faculty busy is researching ways to put the region's plentiful produced water to beneficial use. They have been researching ways to identify the characteristics of produced water, a key first step in treating or reusing that water. Thanks to microscopy, the researchers can identify characteristics in about 45 minutes and, using historic data, create predictive analysis to understand how water would react to specific treatments.

The college is also working to promote advanced manufacturing in the region to help diversify the area's economy. It is joining in efforts to create an incubator next door at the Center for Energy and Economic Diversification.