



City Council Report

Date: May 17th 2012
To: City Council
Through: Christopher J. Brady, City Manager
William J. Jabjiniak, Economic Development Director 
From: Shea Joachim, Economic Development Project Manager

Subject: Consider the proposed Memorandum of Understanding that will facilitate the development of the Mesa Center for Higher Education for Albright College to be located at 245 W. 2nd Street

Resolution authorizing the City Manager or designee to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Mesa and Albright College.

District 4

**Strategic
Initiatives**



Purpose and Recommendation

Consider the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Mesa and Albright College. Included in this MOU will be the request to develop an agreement for the use of the Mesa Center for Higher Education to be located at 245 W. 2nd Street by Albright College to provide undergraduate classes and degree programs.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the following document:

Resolution to authorize City Manager or designee to execute a MOU between the City of Mesa and Albright College.

Background

This is the third project resulting from the Higher Education initiative that the City of Mesa started in March 2011. Albright College was one of the original qualified respondents to the City's RFI. The college visited Mesa in November and again in February.

Albright College is the oldest institution of higher learning in Berks County and is located on a 118-acre suburban campus nestled at the foot of Mount Penn in Reading, PA, a city of 80,000. Albright College was founded in 1856 as a co-educational institution. Albright College has grown through a series of mergers with other institutions of higher learning founded in the 19th century by the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church. In 2005, Albright formally reaffirmed its affiliation with the United Methodist Church, noting the College's historic roots in the Evangelical and Methodist tradition.

Albright College is a nationally ranked, four-year liberal arts program. Albright's current undergraduate enrollment is 2,334 students which is comprised of 1,660 day students and 674 evening students.

Discussion

Albright College wishes to establish their ninth location, the first outside of the state of Pennsylvania, in Downtown Mesa. Albright College will take occupancy in the Summer of 2012 in privately-owned office space at the Mesa Financial Plaza (1201 S. Alma School Road, Mesa AZ 85202). By no later than the Fall of 2014, Albright intends to also take occupancy in the Mesa Center for Higher Education, located at 245 W. 2nd Street, and grow over the next 5-10 years. The MOU provides a platform to negotiate a 5-year lease at 245 W. 2nd Street.

Albright College was granted approval from the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education as a degree granting institution in the State of Arizona on April 26th 2012. Albright College will enroll students in their Accelerated Degree Completion Program beginning this Fall. Albright's Accelerated Degree Completion Program is a cohort-based program targeting individuals who are at least 23 years old with a minimum of five years of work experience and an Associate's Degree or 48 transferable credits. Albright students enrolled in the program can expect to finish their Bachelor's degrees within 24 months.

In Albright's first year in Mesa they have proposed to offer three Bachelor of Science degree programs; Information Systems, Applied Psychology / Organizational

Behavior and Business. In their first year Albright estimates attracting 50-75 students and employing full and part-time faculty and staff from the local community. By year three, Albright projects enrollment of 200 students. Projected enrollment for Year 10 is 1,000 students.

Adaptive Reuse / Revitalization Project

The partnership will provide City of Mesa with an opportunity to reuse a City-owned asset for educational purposes near the light rail line, attract more students to downtown, increase the vibrancy in the urban core, create new high paying jobs, increase the higher education offerings for Mesa residents and attract students from outside the region and state.

Conditions and Additional Details

All financial, leasing and other material commitments of either or both parties shall be conditioned upon Albright receiving all remaining regulatory and governmental approvals.

The City of Mesa will coordinate design and construction of the Mesa Center of Higher Education in association with representatives of Albright College. Albright College will provide the city with specifications for the modifications or build-out of the building located at 245 W. 2nd Street in Mesa.

Albright College will prepare and provide to the City of Mesa a plan for access to, and utilization of, other facilities appropriate for a liberal arts college located in downtown Mesa. Such plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to terms for access to the Mesa Performing Arts Center, the Mesa Amphitheater, the Mesa Convention Center, the Mesa Public Library, and access to other facilities owned by Mesa, including without limitation appropriate and sufficient parking, and appropriate athletic facilities.

Attachments

Exhibit No. 1: Additional Background on Albright College

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General Information

- Founded in 1856
- Nickname: Lions
- School Colors are Red and White

Academic Programs

- 50 undergraduate majors
- Graduate program in Education
- 5 undergraduate Accelerated Degree majors
- 118 full-time day faculty
- 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio

Students

- 1,660 day students. Total undergraduate enrollment is 2,334 students.
- 14 states and 22 countries represented in student body
- 6% of student body composed of international students
- 68% of students live on-campus in college-owned housing
- 20% of graduates apply to professional schools

Undergraduate Tuition and Financial Aid

- Full-Time Day Student Tuition - \$33,190 (2011-2012 School year)
- Accelerated Degree Completion Program - \$25,540 (Total Tuition)
- 95% of students receive some type of aid from the college

Athletics

- NCAA Division III Affiliation
- 11 Men's Sports Teams
- 12 Women's Sports Teams

Alumni

- Albright College Alumni Association is a community of more than 18,000 living alumni worldwide

Rankings:

- *Newsweek's* College Rankings 2011 rated Albright in the top 25 colleges in the country for artistic students.