



**WOODY AND GAYLE HUNT
FAMILY FOUNDATION**



Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation Commits \$5 Million Matching Grant to Support Proposed UTEP Law School

*Matching grant builds on growing community support to bring
legal education to El Paso*

EL PASO, Texas – The Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation has established a \$5 million dollar-for-dollar matching grant to support the creation of a law school at The University of Texas at El Paso, giving the community an opportunity to double the impact of its contributions to the initiative. The gift provides another major boost to the community-led effort to establish a law school at UTEP. Alexa's

Under the matching challenge, the Foundation will contribute one dollar for every dollar donated by individuals, businesses, and organizations toward the proposed law school, up to \$5 million. If the full match is secured, the challenge will generate a combined \$10 million in support for the effort to bring a law school to El Paso.

"We are closer than ever to a law school in El Paso," said UTEP President Heather Wilson. "I am grateful to the Woody and Gayle Hunt for their support, which will help take us to the finish line."

The new matching grant builds on significant commitments made over the past year. In October 2025, the Paul L. Foster Family Foundation established a \$5 million matching challenge to help launch the law school. That commitment was followed in April 2026 by a \$5 million gift from El Paso law firm Tawney, Acosta & Chaparro, P.C., bringing the initiative halfway toward its \$20 million startup funding goal.

The Hunt Family Foundation's commitment adds momentum to the fundraising effort as UTEP prepares to present its vision for the law school to the Texas Legislature in 2027.

"As a border community, El Paso has unique legal needs, and establishing a law school at UTEP would help prepare the next generation of legal professionals to serve our region," said Woody L. Hunt, Chairman of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation. "We are proud to support this effort and encourage individuals, businesses, and organizations to join us. Through this matching challenge, every dollar contributed will be matched, doubling the impact of each gift and bringing us closer to making a law school in El Paso a reality."



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Several members of the legal community in El Paso and beyond have already stepped forward to take advantage of this matching opportunity and support the proposed law school, including Flores Mendez Law, Farah Law, ScottHulse PC Attorneys at Law and KASTL LAW, P.C., based in Dallas. Additional matching funds remain available, providing an opportunity for other donors to have their contributions matched by the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation. UTEP will begin announcing gifts made in response to the matching challenge in the coming weeks.

The University's efforts to establish a law school follow a [feasibility study](#) funded by the Texas Legislature in 2023 and completed in 2024. The study identified strong interest among prospective students and a growing regional and state-wide demand for legal professionals. It also concluded that a UTEP law school could become financially self-sustaining after an initial 10-year startup period.

The study estimated that establishing the school would require approximately \$20 million in operating support over 10 years, in addition to funding for a dedicated building. UTEP has proposed in its state budget request that the legislature fund the building needed for a law school. There is not sufficient space at UTEP for an accredited law school in existing buildings.

With the necessary approvals, state support for construction, and philanthropic support, UTEP anticipates welcoming its first law students in 2030, gradually increasing enrollment to 100 new students annually.

The proposed law school would prepare students for a wide range of legal careers while developing a distinctive strength in public and private international law involving the United States and Mexico. Areas of emphasis would include contracts, estates, taxation, imports and exports, customs and immigration, and international water law. The school would also help address a shortage of fluently bilingual lawyers equipped to serve individuals, businesses, and institutions on both sides of the border.

To make legal education more accessible, UTEP envisions an accelerated "4 plus 2" pathway that would allow qualified undergraduates to begin law school during their fourth year of college and apply undergraduate scholarships toward their first year of legal studies.



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Longer-term plans include an evening Master of Laws (LL.M.) program designed for attorneys trained in Mexico who want to pursue eligibility to practice law in the United States.

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About The University of Texas at El Paso

The University of Texas at El Paso is America's leading Hispanic-serving university. Located at the westernmost tip of Texas, where three states and two countries converge along the Rio Grande, 84% of our 27,000 students are Hispanic, and more than half are the first in their families to go to college. With respect to research, UTEP is in the top 5% of universities in America and offers 170 bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs at the only open-access, top-tier research university in America.

About the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation

The Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation is one of the Borderplex region's private family foundations focused on building a globally competitive region. Since 1987, the Foundation has made grants and commitments of over \$196.3 million to institutions working to transform education, improve healthcare, advance regional economic and cultural development, and enhance quality of life for all Borderplex residents. More than 90% of the Foundation's total giving has supported organizations and initiatives in the Borderplex region.