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# Barriers Go Down For UTA Handicapped

More and more handicapped persons are leading fuller lives by attending college but all too often they find they are faced with even more obstacles than they face already—literal obstacles such as steps, and for the blind student, no way to identify a building or a room number.

But UTA is taking steps to eliminate these obstacles.

And, to aid in this plan, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) has given \$34,000 to help alleviate remaining architectural barriers to handicapped students at UTA.

Matched by an equal amount from the university plus \$200 given by the Student Congress to the Handicapped Students Association, work can be started immediately.

E.E. Strahan, director of the physical plant at UTA, says the phase will include the remodeling of restrooms and construction of some larger ramps on the campus for wheelchairs. The project is to be completed within the year.

The TRC informed UTA President Dr. Wendell Nedderman the money could be used for 12 ramps with handrails and 12 curb cuts which would make the ground floors of buildings accessible by wheelchair.

The offer included the remodeling of one restroom for each sex on the ground floor of all buildings.

Two UTA buildings, Ransom and Preston, will undergo major renovations in December which include installation of two elevators, modified restroom facilities and any renovation required by Senate Bill which sets minimum standards for accessibility to handicapped persons.

Dudley Wetsel, vice president for business affairs, said the school's obligation would be fulfilled in part by money already set aside for handicapped improvements.

Wayne Duke, dean of student life, said he was "pleased about the grant from the TRC which will allow us to continue the program we've already started toward making this a model campus.

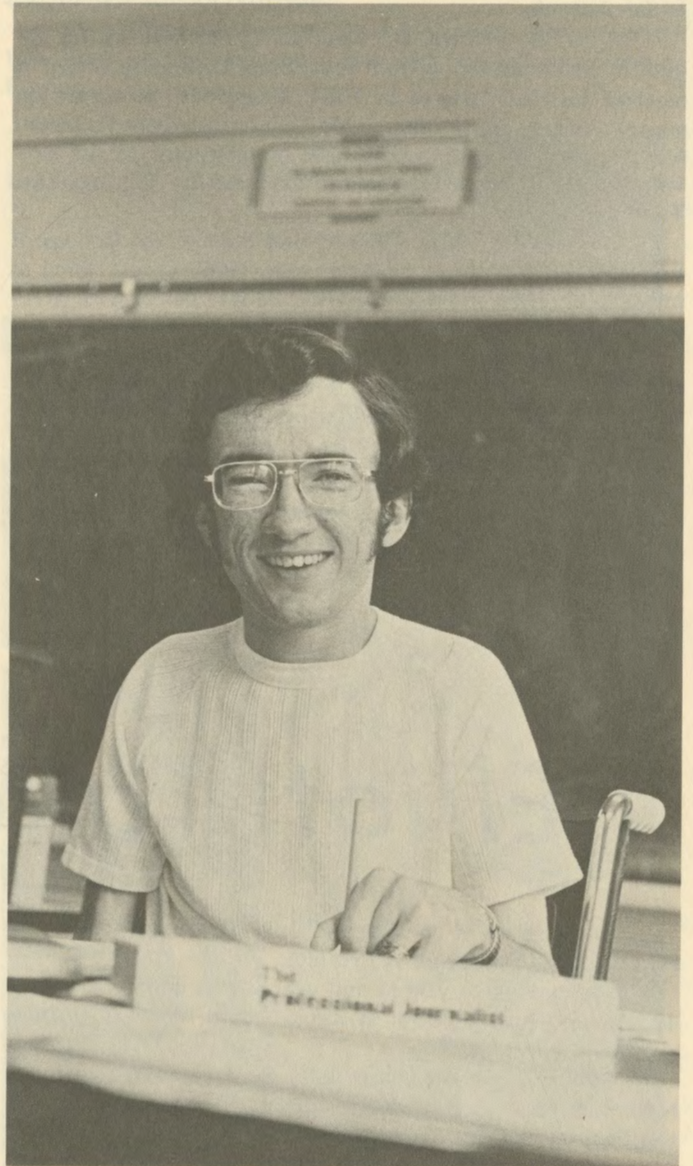
"To my knowledge, this is the first campus to be provided with funds of this sort. I feel this will have a large impact on enrollment of the handicapped here."

The idea for the improvements originated two years ago when the Handicapped Students Association drew up a proposal for a "model campus" which would make UTA completely accessible.

The proposal was submitted to administrators last year with the idea that UTA could serve as a model for other four-year colleges in Texas.

The group was told last fall the plan had been temporarily shelved pending appointment of a permanent president. After his appointment, Nedderman invited the TRC to consider the plan, which requested funds ranging from \$200,000 to \$2.5 million for a totally equipped campus.

Improvements completed this year with university funds include lowered telephones and drinking fountains, ramps, curb cuts and establishment of a parking lot directly south of Preston Hall reserved for handicapped students.



JOHN DYCUS, publications advisor for "The Shorthorn," has been named this year's outstanding handicapped state employee by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. Dycus, 25, has been confined to a wheelchair most of his life, the victim of cerebral palsy. But that hasn't stopped him from earning a BA in accounting with a minor in journalism nor has it stopped him from becoming one of the best teacher-editors in the business. Dycus received his honor during a special luncheon session with Gov. Dolph Briscoe.

expanding the value of their diplomas."