

Tyler

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Texas College Band Thinking Big

By BETTY WATERS
Staff Writer

Jeffery C. Herbert has a vision of the Texas College band becoming a show-band style group with 200-plus members who not only perform at TC games but someday also perform in major venues.

The band director dreams of the TC band performing in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif., Mardi Gras parades in New Orleans, Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in New York, half-time shows at Dallas Cowboys or New Orleans Saints games and even a presidential inauguration parade.

"My vision is seeing the TC marching band being a part of something big," Herbert said, but acknowledged, "you just can't get in overnight; you have to have a good package." He wants the band to eventually be known nationally and internationally.



(Staff Photo By Jaime R. Carrero)

NEW LOOK: Raymond Jones models the new Texas College band uniform as fellow band members (from left) LaSonya Runnels, Dakota Blanton, Kandace Culberson, Kristen Henderson, Shawan Baptiste, Duane Riley, Dedric Webb, Immanuel Harmison, Chris Webb and Vander George admire the new look in the school's band room on Friday.

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TC has existed since

1894 and needs to have a band that is "real great," Herbert said.

He is working to build up the high-stepping

marching band to branch out beyond performances at TC football and basketball games, the college's

homecoming parade and the Tyler Rose Parade. It had only 17 members when Herbert became director of TC bands in August 2006.

"I had to work that year with what they had," Herbert, a former assistant band director at Southern University in New Orleans and a past band director at several Louisiana high schools, recalled in a recent interview.

But Herbert touted his vision for the TC band on a 2,700-mile, 17-day tour across the south attempting to recruit high school seniors with an interest in band to attend TC in the current academic year. He visited 59 schools, mostly in big cities such as Atlanta, Tallahassee, Dallas, Houston, Birmingham, New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Shreveport.

"I didn't have much to offer to draw them, but my vision for a marching band (that) we were heading in a new direction and my heart in this music," Herbert said. "That vision pretty much sold them and the kids (felt) this man is for real."

That's why the band today is filled with students from Georgia, Florida, Alabama,

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