



Dialogue about the Atlanta spa shooting

Sol Garcia
THE RIDER

On March 16, a gunman killed eight people, six of whom were Asian women, and wounded another person at three different spas in Atlanta and the surrounding area.

Many people consider the shootings a hate crime, such as Jared Soto, a UTRGV computer engineering sophomore and co-vice president of the Filipino Student Association.

When Soto heard about the event, he was not surprised.

“Probably every day that I’ve looked on social media, I’ve seen another family or somebody else—it doesn’t even matter what country they’re in—hate crimes are being committed on them, so when I saw the news, I can’t say I was surprised,” Soto said.

He discussed the shootings with his friends and his girlfriend, and they each felt disappointed with the involved law enforcement’s statements during a news conference the day after the shootings.

The sheriff of Cherokee County, Frank Reynolds, said during the news conference that the suspect had “made indicators that he has some issues, potentially sexual addiction” and that the incident may not have been racially motivated.

Cherokee County Sheriff’s Office Capt. Jay Baker said that investigators who spoke with the suspect “got the impression that, yes, he understood the gravity of it, and he was pretty much fed up and kind of at the end of his rope, and yesterday was a really bad day for him and this is what he did.”

Soto said this response was a “really lame excuse ... to justify what he did.”

“First of all, you can’t say having a bad day is an excuse to commit a crime like that,” he said. “There’s no way that



HEALING CIRCLE

Stop the Hate and Violence against Asian Americans

Virtual Gatherings to Reflect, Process and Learn

that’s an excuse for that, and I think that’s what we’re most disappointed in.”

Soto and his friends believe the police should call the gunman a terrorist.

“Call him what he is,” he said. “Call him a terrorist.”

Yanrong Chang, a communication professor, was not surprised by the event, either.

“I think I’m not surprised when this took place,” Chang said. “Similar incidents have been taking place ever since last year.”

According to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, anti-Asian hate crimes have increased by 145% in 2020 in the nation’s 16 largest cities.

Chang believes this might be because the COVID-19 virus is often associated

with the Asian community.

“People just assume that it was started from China, and, so, as a result, is, as long as you’re Asian, then you’re considered, maybe, the cause of the virus,” Chang said. “The Asian people became the victim of such pain, hatred or the blame.”

While she said she may not personally know the gunman’s motives, Chang said this incident signifies hatred.

“In the U.S., it is a diverse society, so many races, so many ethnic groups live together, and so this racial problem has been a social problem for the United States,” she said. “It’s also a historical problem, and there’s the hatred, there’s a prejudice against certain minority groups, out of ignorance or out of other reasons.”

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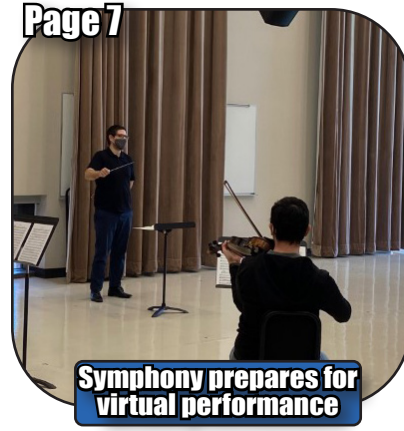
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UTRGV INTRODUCES "SUMMER LIFTOFF" TUITION RELIEF

Summer 2021

- Eligible students who meet all requirements will receive up to \$500 toward their tuition and mandatory fee balances.
- After all financial aid has been applied to your student account, UTRGV will cover the balance up to \$500.
- Undergraduate and graduate students must register for 6 or more credit hours by May 3.

Up to \$500 for eligible students

source: <https://link.utrgv.edu/summer-liftoff/>

UTRGV offers \$500 gap award for summer classes

during the summer and are attending another institution, also are eligible for the program.

“Even those students can also enroll with us for at least six hours, and they will be able to benefit for the \$500 Liftoff program,” Castilla said. “So, really, it is open to anyone. The only requirement that we are looking for is that they are enrolled in at least six hours by May 3.”

She described the Summer Liftoff program as a gap award.

“This is an award that goes ... to help students that are not receiving sufficient gift aids to cover their tuition and fees,” she said, “So, if a student, for example, does not qualify for any financial aid at all, then they will be able to get the full \$500. And then, they will just pay the difference for their coursework.”

Financial aid kicks in first for those students who receive it.

“Their financial aid goes in first, and it’s gift aid,” Castilla said. “So, any work-study or student loans are not counted. We are only looking at gift aids, such as Pell Grant, scholarship or any other grant they may be receiving during the summer.”

If the student still has a balance after their gift aid has been applied, then the Summer Liftoff pays up to \$500, she

said.

Among the students enrolling in the summer is biology sophomore Lloyd Rigney.

“Academically, it helps take a little bit of strain off of, kind of, worrying about, ‘How am I going to cover the payments of the extra summer tuition?’” Rigney said. “So, it just takes off a little of the worry about having to pay for everything.”

He said he will enroll in more classes to take advantage of the Summer Liftoff program.

“I needed to get some [classes] out of the way,” Rigney said. “But the extra money definitely did incentivize me a little bit more to take more credits, because it’s an opportunity to get some money off that I might not get that opportunity later.”

Communication Professor Greg Selber encourages students to take advantage of the program.

“The message is do not be denied and find a way,” Selber said. “And do not let the things that happen to you that are negative and to all of us stand in the way of the things that you want. ... We are here to help you as much as we can. Bottom line is do not be denied.”

Valeria Henderson
THE RIDER

UTRGV is offering \$500 for tuition and mandatory fees to students enrolled in courses during the Summer 2021 sessions. Students must register for classes by May 3.

Griselda Castilla, associate vice president for Strategic Enrollment, said

Jacqueline Wallace/ THE RIDER GRAPHIC under the Summer Liftoff program, all students who enroll in at least six hours during summer sessions are eligible.

“So, this includes, of course, our current students, both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as our new students that are just coming in either from high school or transferring in from other institutions,” Castilla said.

Transient students, who come home

THE RIDER

The Rider is the official, award-winning student newspaper of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Views presented are those of the writers and do not reflect those of the newspaper or university.

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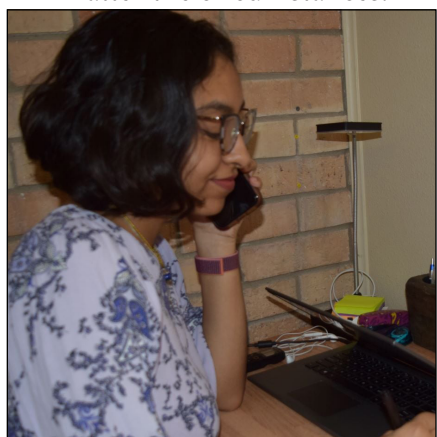
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MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER

Delivering news to UTRGV no matter the circumstances.



Reporter Jamejdra Holverstott

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Today Hulu Watch Party: 'Attack on Titan'

Watch the last two episodes of "Attack on Titan" with the

Student Union from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. via Zoom. Attendees will be entered in a giveaway. RSVP is available on VLink.

Women's Recovery

Join a **nine-week support group for women** to come together, receive support and empower one another at noon via Zoom hosted by the **Collegiate Recovery Program**. Email recovery@utrgv.edu for the Zoom link.

Holi 2021

Celebrate **Holi, the festival of colors**, by attending a **virtual paint social** from 4 to 5 p.m. via Zoom. The event is hosted by the **Campus Activities Board** and **International Admissions & Student Services**. Attendees will be entered in a giveaway for a chance to win a painting kit. RSVP is available on VLink.

Movie Monday: 'Knock Down the House'

Join the **Cultural Council** as it celebrates Women's History Month by showing "**Knock Down the House**" from 7 to 9 p.m. via Zoom. The documentary revolves around the 2018 congressional primary campaigns of **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Amy Vilela, Cori Bush and Paula Jean**

Swearingin. RSVP is available on VLink.

Tuesday Open Recovery

Join a **support group** for anyone seeking recovery from substance use, addictive behaviors or process addiction at 3 p.m. Tuesdays and noon Fridays, hosted by the **Collegiate Recovery Program**. Email recovery@utrgv.edu for Zoom link.

Halo Tournament

The **Student Union** will host a **Halo tournament** from 5 to 6:30 p.m. via Discord. The winner will be given a **UTRGV bundle**. Participants must have a **Discord** account to compete. RSVP is available on VLink.

Future is Female Series

Immigration Attorney Jessica Cisneros and **community organizer Natalie Marquez** will speak from 5 to 6:30 p.m. via Zoom as part of the **Future is Female Series** hosted by the **Civic Engagement Alliance** and the **Political Science Association**. Attendees will be given a chance to win a set of **Apple AirPods, UTRGV merchandise and other prizes**. RSVP is available on VLink.

The People Series

Learn about the legacy of American journalist, abolitionist and civil rights advocate **Ida B. Wells** from 6 to 7:30 p.m. via Zoom, hosted by the **Center**

for **Diversity & Inclusion and DREAM Resource Center**. RSVP is available on VLink.

Wednesday Smart Recovery

Join the **Collegiate Recovery Program for a self-management and recovery training**, a non-spiritual based peer support group at 11 a.m. via Zoom. Email recovery@utrgv.edu for Zoom link.

Voting: Misconceptions and Drawbacks

The **Civic Engagement Alliance** will host a discussion on misconceptions and drawbacks regarding voting and how they negatively impact the community from 3 to 4 p.m. via Zoom. Attendees will be entered in a giveaway. RSVP is available on VLink.

Women in Comics

Join the **UTRGV Library** for a **discussion about women in comics** from 5 to 6 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available on VLink.

Friday Autism Awareness Day

The **Civic Engagement Alliance** will host a virtual information session on autism from 5 to 6:15 p.m. via Zoom. Attendees will have a chance to win VBucks following a Kahoot game. RSVP is available on VLink.

--Compiled by Omar E. Zapata

POLICE REPORTS



The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between March 8 and 20.

March 8

9:36 a.m.: An officer observed a man climb over the U.S. border fence located in the area of Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus. A U.S. Border Patrol agent arrived on scene and detained the man, who is from Honduras, without incident.

11:22 p.m.: An officer responded to a resident assistant's reporting of a burned marijuana odor from an apartment at the Casa Bella Apartments on the Brownsville campus. The RA reported a safety check had been conducted at the apartment before the officer's arrival. The officer spoke with the apartment resident, who was identified as a current student. The student admitted to having marijuana in her possession. The officer retrieved the narcotic for evidence and issued a citation to the student for possession of drug paraphernalia. The incident will be referred to Student Rights and Responsibilities for further review.

March 9

6:27 p.m.: A non-affiliated woman reported losing her personal identification information while at the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus. She wanted to document the incident.

March 10

11:48 a.m.: A student reported witnessing an accident involving two university vehicles at the Central Utility Plant on the Edinburg campus. One of the vehicles was parked and unattended, and the other vehicle involved left the scene without reporting it. The case is under investigation.

4:12 p.m.: A staff member reported the door frame to a university vehicle was damaged due to a gust of wind swinging it open as he exited. No injuries were reported.

10:22 p.m.: An officer responded to a minor accident involving two university vehicles at the Facilities compound area on the Edinburg campus. The vehicles

sustained minor damage, and no injuries were reported.

March 12

1:46 p.m.: A staff member reported she had not been able to make contact with an employee for about a week. An officer contacted the employee and confirmed she was OK. The employee had fallen ill, making it difficult for her to reply to her emails.

9:36 p.m.: A housing coordinator at Unity Hall reported she had received a concerning text message from a student resident. An investigation concluded the text message had been a misunderstanding. With the assistance from the Pharr Police Department, the student was contacted at her boyfriend's residence and was found to be OK.

11:30 p.m.: An officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for a violation off campus in Edinburg. The officer's investigation revealed the non-affiliated operator was driving while intoxicated. As the officer attempted to apprehend the individual, the man fled on foot from the location. The officer was unable to arrest him. The case is under investigation.

March 13

12:19 a.m.: A staff member accidentally backed into a mailbox at an off-campus residence while driving a university vehicle. An Edinburg Police officer arrived to investigate the traffic accident. The vehicle and mailbox sustained minor damage, and no injuries were reported.

10:30 a.m.: UTRGV Police Communications observed a man climb over the U.S. border fence located behind the Interdisciplinary Academic Building via cameras on the Brownsville campus. A U.S. Border Patrol agent arrived and detained the man without incident. At the time, the man's country of origin was unknown.

10:35 p.m.: A U.S. Border Patrol agent requested assistance with an intoxicated man on River Levee Road in Brownsville. A check on the man yielded an active felony warrant out of the Cameron County Sheriff's Office

for a probation violation. The original charge was for possession of marijuana, a second-degree felony. The man was placed under arrest for the warrant and transported to the Cameron County Jail.

March 15

8:25 a.m.: A staff member reported that a privacy fence with slats surrounding the thermal plant on the Brownsville campus had fallen over. Upon further inspection, it was determined that the wind had blown down a portion of the fence.

March 17

11:27 a.m.: A staff member reported losing a piece of jewelry while working at the Soccer and Track & Field Complex on the Edinburg campus. She wanted to document the incident.

11:42 a.m.: A staff member reported losing his university-issued access card on the Edinburg campus. The card has been deactivated.

March 18

6:11 p.m.: A staff member reported that while driving a university vehicle, he backed into a parked university vehicle on the Edinburg campus. The vehicles sustained minor damage and no injuries were reported.

March 19

3:16 p.m.: An officer assisted the Brownsville Police Department in a disturbance involving two women at the intersection of FJRM Avenue and Jackson Street in Brownsville.

4:02 p.m.: A staff member reported being approached by another staff member asking her questions about her private life, which made her feel uncomfortable. A report was generated for documentation purposes.

March 20

1:48 a.m.: An officer observed damage to the plastic cover of the fire-stopping system located on the exterior stairwell of the third floor of Interdisciplinary Engineering & Academic Building on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

--Compiled by Sol Garcia

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SCREENSHOTS TAKEN BY ROXANNA MIRANDA FROM THE NASA SPACE FLIGHT WEBSITE

Immigration bills expected to stall in Senate



Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER PHOTO

The U.S. House of Representatives passed immigration bills H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603, which were sent to the Senate for approval. According to Jodi Goodwin, an immigration attorney in Harlingen, both bills would provide a pathway for citizenship to many individuals.

Jacqueline Peraza

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Migrant farmworkers and young unauthorized immigrants are waiting for the U.S. Senate to vote on two separate immigration bills that, if approved, could lead to U.S. citizenship for both groups.

On March 18, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603 to pass on to the Senate for approval.

Jodi Goodwin, an immigration attorney in Harlingen, said the two bills would provide a pathway for citizenship to many individuals.

“What we know is that it would provide a path to legalization and citizenship for individuals who are Dreamers,” Goodwin said. “It would include people who have DACA already but it would also include individuals that may not have qualified for DACA, for whatever reason. It would also include agricultural workers ... and include a path to legalization for individuals who are undocumented but can show they’ve been in the United States for some time.”

DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals,

a program that was implemented during the Obama administration. The program allows individuals who were brought to the United States as children to stay here.

The first bill passed was H.R. 6, or the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021, sponsored by Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-California). The House’s final vote on the bill was 228 to 197.

H.R. 6 states it “provides certain aliens with a path to receive permanent resident status and contains other immigration-related provisions,” according to congress.gov.

If approved, the bill would directly affect the citizenship status of Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status recipients and Deferred Enforced Departure beneficiaries.

H.R. 1603, or the Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021, sponsored by Reps. Zoe Lofgren (D-California) and Dan Newhouse (R-Washington), was approved, 247 to 174, by the House during a second vote.

“The bill provides a compromise solution by permitting farmworkers--and their

See **BILLS**, Page 8

Super Heavy BN1 makes its debut

Alejandra Yañez

THE RIDER

SpaceX has stacked its first Super Heavy Booster No. 1 (BN1) rocket at the Boca Chica launch site and will prepare to launch Starship prototype SN11 in the next couple of days.

Also at the launch site is SN15, which is undergoing stacking, meaning the prototype has been put together from separate pieces.

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk tweeted over Spring Break, stating, “SN11 almost ready to fly.”

SN11 will mark the final test of this duplication of Starship before the program moves into the next phase of testing, according to spaceflight.com.

After the flight of SN11, SpaceX will move on to SN15, 16 and 17, alongside testing of

Super Heavy prototypes BN1 and BN2, before shooting for an orbital launch with SN20 and BN3, according to spaceflight.com.

The orbital launch has a target date of July 1.

SN11 underwent a static fire test March 22 at the Boca Chica launch site, meaning a launch is on its way.

The three Raptor engines fired that morning for about two seconds before being shut down and were followed by a depress vent, according to spaceflightinsider.com.

The Wired website explains that a depress vent is used to “ventilate any oxygen that heats up to boil off so it does not blow up the tank.”

Cameron County ordered road closures for last Wednesday and Thursday, for a potential launch of SN11. Since

SpaceX does not perform launches on the weekends, the test flight may be postponed until today.

Given its history with past flights, SpaceX usually does not announce its launches until an hour before they occur. Due to this, the flight of SN11 will be touch and go for the next couple of days.

Despite the obvious data needed from the static fire test conducted on March 22, SpaceX also needs clearance from multiple agencies before a launch can take place.

This includes approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for favorable weather conditions, hardware preparations, and a public notice for the road closure of State Highway 4.

As previously reported by

See **SPACE X**, Page 8

SGA election platform breakdown

Jamejdra Holverstott

THE RIDER

With the Student Government Association Elections ending Wednesday, candidates and voters are voicing their concerns on matters affecting students, such as the increased pressure due to the pandemic, lack of resources and voter outreach.

Team Change, the executive ticket consisting of presidential candidate Michael White and vice presidential candidates Daniela Ramirez and Leticia Villarreal, advocated for the implementation of “Vaquero Day,” which would be a day off for students with no coursework due dates on a biweekly or monthly basis to alleviate stress.

“What we’re planning to do ... is having the Vaqueros’ Day proposed where we wanna, you know, help students alleviate the stress,” Ramirez said during last Tuesday’s Spring 2021 SGA Debate.

She said Team Change wants to add a Vaquero Day off, which students would choose in collaboration with Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Team Vision United, the executive ticket consisting of presidential candidate José Pablo Rojas and vice presidential candidates Yahia Al-Qudah and Anacette Cantu, proposed its solutions to bettering students’ mental health by bringing back the college experience.

Additionally, the topic of resources, number of courses and professor availability have also been major talking points this term. Team Vision United discussed its plans to combat the lack of resource availability by closely working with university administration to voice students’ concerns. Specifically, Team Vision United is pushing for more access to test preparation courses, which most students are unable to take due to GPA restrictions.

“We, as members of SGA, have powers to create specific legislations that can impact the student body,” Al-Qudah said at the debate. “And I, myself, and Anacette have been working very closely to do some of these resolutions.”

He said he and Cantu are scheduling meetings to discuss resource availability.

One major topic of discussion that student voters and SGA members believe is of great importance is voter outreach and awareness of the Student Government Association among the student body. Despite efforts made by the SGA to increase awareness, many students are still not aware of their presence.

Marketing junior Alondra Sanchez-Proa was previously unaware of the ongoing elections and suggested ways in which the association could gain student attention.

“I think we should have rallies,” Sanchez-Proa said. “I know that it’s not

Team Change

Vaquero Day!

Resources availability!

Team Vision United

Roxanna Miranda/ THE RIDER GRAPHIC

gonna happen soon, but I think it will increase how to be involved with one another, like the students, and university. Sadly, that can’t happen because of COVID. It’s still around, but hopefully soon when everything gets better.”

Biomedical sciences freshman Hannah Ceron was unaware of the SGA debate and said she hopes to see more collaboration among students, the SGA and university administration.

Ceron said she would like to see “a way that students and officials in administration could interact in a way that’s professional ... and a little more

casual.”

“I know I’ve seen other organization[s] on campus do trivia nights or movie nights,” she said, adding that the direct interaction between students and administration in a casual setting could foster a positive exchange of ideas.

For more information on the topics being discussed by candidates, students can watch a recording of the Spring 2021 SGA Debate on the UTRGV Student Life Facebook page. The deadline to cast a vote is 11:59 p.m. Wednesday.

YAQUERO VOICE



COVID-19 VACCINE STATUS

On March 22, The Rider conducted a poll on social media asking students, "What is your status on receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?" The results are shown below.

facebook

I RECEIVED BOTH DOSES 23

I RECEIVED THE FIRST DOSE 21

I'M ON THE WAITING LIST 12

I DON'T PLAN ON TAKING IT 5



twitter

5 I RECEIVED BOTH DOSES



2 I RECEIVED THE FIRST DOSE

1 I'M ON THE WAITING LIST

Instagram



I RECEIVED THE FIRST DOSE 14

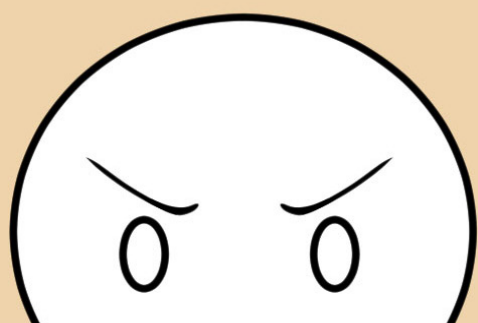
I'M ON THE WAITING LIST 14

I RECEIVED BOTH DOSES 13

I DON'T PLAN ON TAKING IT 2

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO PARTICIPATE @UTRGVRIDER

Enough of Racial Prejudice



Finding the right car for you



Brigitte Ortiz
THE RIDER

I purchased my first car the summer before my first semester in college. I did not know what I was getting myself into. All I knew was I needed a car to get to and from school.

My parents guided me and tried to help me make the right choice. The process was long and stressful. One day, you see a car and start imagining yourself in it, driving and going places, and the next, you find out the car was sold. You start to lose hope and patience.

I was not working at the time, so I was looking to buy a car in cash, but almost every

used car has something that needs major fixing. I had found one that was low on miles and, basically, worked fine. It was perfect for a college student just needing to get to school and back. Or so I thought.

The car gave me issues that were starting to become expensive to fix. So recently, I decided to get my car fixed and cleaned up to sell it. Although, I am not excited to go through the process of car shopping again.

From my first experience, I have learned to take my dad, or someone who knows about cars, with me to check any mechanical issues, such as the year and model, mileage, tires, the amount of space, the brakes or any other potential problems. All of these factors can make or break your purchase.

Car shopping is stressful and time consuming. To find the right car, you will need to do a lot of research and have patience. Maybe go to different dealerships and see what they offer you.

I have recently been in contact with different dealerships to try to get the best offers but even then, dealerships are all about business.

I don't have any previous experience with dealerships, so I did not know about a co-signer or how the annual percentage rate worked. It was intimidating, and I backed out so many times. You learn that this is a long process that takes a couple of weeks, or even months. But in the end, you will find it rewarding financing or buying your own car.

Submit a Letter to the Editor

The Rider encourages letters but does not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar and content. Letters for The Rider may be sent to therider@utrgv.edu. All letters must be typed and no longer than 400 words. Letters must include the name, classification and phone number of letter's author or the letter cannot be published. Opinions expressed in The Rider are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rider or UTRGV administrators.



COVID cases on campus down

Omar E. Zapata
THE RIDER

For several weeks, UTRGV has experienced a low number of COVID-19 cases, a decline in testing and people in isolation, but a UTRGV official says the university is ready for an uptick, especially after Spring Break.

Two students tested positive for COVID-19 between March 12 and 18 and none tested positive between March 5 and 11, according to the UTRGV Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 dashboard.

Doug Arney, vice president for Administrative Support Services and chair of the Infectious Disease Committee at UTRGV, told The Rider that there have been no reported faculty COVID-19 cases in the last six weeks and no reported cases among staff for the last seven weeks.

"The more vaccines we give to people, the more that they will not become a testing statistic," Arney said.

He said no one has been in isolation on campus in the last five weeks.

Arney said testing for COVID-19 has been declining and will continue to decline as more people receive the vaccine.

"Testing is actually going down," he said. "We actually have changed our hours on our lines because we don't need all the hours that we were manning. So, they're only open half-days."

On the Edinburg campus, testing is from 8 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. The Harlingen campus only has tests on Mondays and Fridays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. The Brownsville campus is testing Thursdays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Testing is by appointment only. To schedule an appointment for a test, click [here](#).



Jacqueline Wallace/ THE RIDER PHOTO

Doug Arney, UTRGV vice president for Administrative Support Services, told The Rider that no COVID-19 cases have been reported for faculty in six weeks, and no cases have been reported among staff in seven weeks.

“

We actually have changed our hours on our lines because we don't need all the hours that we were manning.

-Doug Arney

Administrative Support Services vice president and Infectious Disease Committee chair

”

Asked if gatherings at popular Spring Break spots, such as South Padre Island, were going to cause an increase in COVID-19 cases on campus, Arney replied, "I saw the pictures [of people gathering for Spring Break] and if any student, faculty or staff are participating, I think the numbers will go up."

He said if people follow safety protocols and do not come back to campus if they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, then the university should not expect a rise in cases.

"Then again, you know, they believe ... they feel good, and they come back to campus for some reason, and they don't get sick until three to four days later, then that's a problem," Arney said.

He said the benefit of having protocols on campus, such as wearing a face covering and social distancing, even if that individual is symptomatic or asymptomatic, is that if they follow these rules, then they will protect others and put them at less of a risk to get infected with COVID-19.

Asked if UTRGV is ready for any sudden increase of COVID-19 cases because of Spring Break, Arney replied he thinks that the university is set for it.

"We have 50 rooms already [for COVID-19 isolation]," he said. "That'll be adequate and if not we will adjust. ... If testing increases, we will cover it. Right now, we have a lot of testing capacity, and our cases managers will be able to handle any uptick that we get."

Arney said he is hopeful that there is no increase coming after Spring Break.

"We don't know how Spring Break will affect us until, I'd say, another week or two weeks," he said. "We'll know by then, so we'll see if the numbers come up. ... We'll see if people were safe or not safe."

Voices in the Moonlight by Bryan Rosario

The familiar drip of water echoes through the tiny room. The bars that make up the window allow slivers of moonlight to light the area, save the corners nearest to that wall. It's raining again, causing water to leak through the exposed pipe in the ceiling. The puddle directly underneath hungrily takes every falling drop. Drip. Drip.

"So, Cassius. How long have you been in here again?" A young woman, maybe nineteen years of age, looks at the hunched figure in a shadowy corner of the cell intently. The figure doesn't move. She frowns and clears her throat to get the figure's attention. "Hey, I asked you a question," she says impatiently, waving around a hand holding a sculpted silver piece of a griffon. Sitting across from her is a young man who's slightly older, closer to his mid-twenties. He says, "Leave the kid alone, Kaltha, he's had it rough."

Kaltha brushes a strand of hair from her face and replies, "It's just a simple question, Verrall. Why can't he answer it?"

"Just leave him," Verrall says again. Kaltha puts the miniature griffon on the multilevel chessboard between her and Verrall. Drip. Drip.

The figure in the shadow moves slightly. With a parched voice, cracking and hoarse, he speaks. "Four years." The bitterness is apparent. Cassius coughs and clears his throat, making his voice a bit clearer. Then he repeats, "Four years since the monster slaughtered them all. Four years since they disappeared."

Verrall makes his next move on the board, picking up and moving a golden dragon piece. Then he looks at Cassius in the corner. "And a little less since you were locked up, right?" No reply.

Kaltha moves yet another silver piece and removes a gold one along the way. "You gonna come out of your little corner, Cass?"

Cassius lifts his head enough for him to see the others. He says, "Are you playing Dragonchess?"

Verrall looks back at the board. "No, we were." He moves a piece on the second layer. "Checkmate."

Kaltha glares at Verrall and then examines the board. "What?! How? I was extra careful this time! How are you so good at this game?"

Verrall chuckles and winks. "A magician never reveals his secrets." Drip. Drip.

Cassius slowly crawls to the moonlight. His mud-caked platinum hair hangs to his shoulders. He takes up his hunched sitting position again after moving. Verrall clicks his tongue. "Tsk. You know, you look terrible. Nothing like the noble you're supposed to be." He shimmers ever so slightly. Must be the light playing tricks on my eyes, Cassius thinks.

Cassius absentmindedly scratches his shoulder through his fine clothing, long since worn and dirtied until they're more overglorified rags than noble clothes. "Don't forget you're one too," he growls. "Even more than me."

Verrall is suddenly on the other side of the room. When did he get up and move? Verrall shrugs, wearing a nonchalant expression. "Too true. Three nobles in a cell. Who would've thought?" He dusts off his own clothing, charcoal black and in much better shape than Cassius's. Despite the filth in the room, Verrall's clothes are clean.

Kaltha's clothes are like Verrall's but in scarlet. Hers are also clean. Strange. Kaltha comments, "But he knows very well why he's here. Don't you, Cass?"

Cassius looks away from them. "Doesn't matter," he spits in an obvious rage. "I will find him. He will pay." Drip. Drip.

"I hear you, brother," Verrall comments. "This guy you're obsessed with does sound pretty evil."

At the word "brother," Cassius clenches his fist hard. "My brother is dead!" he nearly screams. "Just like the rest of my family." A draft enters the room, causing him to shiver and pull his tattered cloak over himself. "He killed them."

Kaltha kicks back her legs, leaning on the grimy wall. The Dragonchess board next to her has mysteriously disappeared. "And you want revenge. Yeah, we know already. Just lighten up."

Cassius doesn't look like he's listening and gingerly puts a hand to a thin scar on his cheek. Despite this delicate gesture, his voice drips with hatred. "He'll die. They all will. I've slaughtered hundreds of them. Thousands. And for what? He's still out there. But I will find him. I'll tear down this country if I have to; destroy every building and kill every person." Drip. Drip.

The metal door swings open with a slam. Clad in light metal, the guard enters and looks right at Cassius. "Hey, enough talking, you know the rules!" Cassius stares at the ground and says nothing.

The guard takes a piece of paper from the wall outside and looks at it. He raises his eyebrows. "So, you're a high-priority prisoner, huh? Quite the troublemaker. You've been convicted of destruction of property; homicide; assault; theft. Ha! We got ourselves a real good one this time. You're lucky you weren't given the death penalty." He puts the sheet of paper in its place and brings in a metal plate with sloppy contents. "But my pals say you're 'unhinged,' is that right? That you snapped. Sure, it explains why you're talking to yourself just now, but it doesn't excuse your crimes. You're just a monster who thought he could get away with it." The guard laughs heartily and tosses the plate to Cassius. It clatters on the ground, smearing the questionable food onto the floor. "There's your food," he mocks. "Enjoy."

He continues to laugh as he closes the door as walks away. Drip. Drip.

Cassius looks at the revolting slop that substitutes food with blank eyes. He grabs a chunk with his dirty hands and forces it down. "Yeah, I'm a monster. But I will have my revenge. And nothing will stop me." He crawls back to his earlier position and sits back in the shadows. They're gone again. The voices in the moonlight are gone, leaving Cassius alone in the cell again, dwelling in solitary confinement for four long years. Drip. Drip.



Spring Break 2021 recap

Ruben Mohme
THE RIDER

For most of the sports at UTRGV, the season is almost over. On March 13, men's soccer defeated the University of Nevada at Las Vegas 3-1 at home.

UTRGV posted some serious numbers with seven shots on goal, two saves and three goals, according to goutrgv.com

Senior forward Willam Akio converted a penalty kick to tie the game and later scored another goal by an inbounding pass from senior midfielder Bryce Box. Junior forward Reshaun Walkes secured the game when he scored in the 65th minute.

Women's soccer started their break in Las Cruces against New Mexico State University on March 13 with eight shots, including four on goal, two saves and one goal. With a scoreless first half, junior forward Emily Zapata picked up a loose ball and gave UTRGV the lead in the first minutes of the second half. UTRGV's defense did not let New Mexico State University have any attempt for a shot on goal in the second half, leaving the game 1-0.

Women's golf finished 10th at the Houston Baptist University Husky Invitational on March 15, according to goutrgv.com. Redshirt freshman Samantha Garza led UTRGV with a three-round score of 228 and tied for 23rd. UTRGV finished with a three-round score of 943, seven strokes behind UT Arlington.

On March 15, women's vol-



Photo Courtesy UTRGV Athletics

Graduate student infielder Andy Atwood covers first base in a March 16 game against the University of Texas at Austin at the UFCU Disch-Falk Field in Austin.

leyball lost 3-0 against Utah Valley University at home, according to goutrgv.com. Senior middle blocker Veronika Jandova led with 11 kills and a season-high six blocks. Junior outside hitter/right side hitter Sarah Cruz finished with five kills and a career-high seven blocks. Senior setter Debora Nazario had 37 assists, 10 digs and a season-high four blocks for her first double double of the season. The women's volleyball team recorded a season-high 13 team blocks and 22 block assists.

Men's golf posted a sub-300 round and finished 11th at the Grand Canyon University Invitational on March 16, according to goutrgv.com. Redshirt freshman Rassrikanesh Kanavathi finished 19th, with a three-round score of 217 and also posted a final round 2-over-par 73. Redshirt senior Alex Summers posted UTRGV's highest round of the day in the final,

with 72 and finished 37th.

UTRGV's track and field team broke records on March 18 including the women's discus and men's 4x100 meter relay during the University of Texas at San Antonio Invitational, according to goutrgv.com.

Graduate student Desira Buerge broke the discus record with a second-place throw of 53.57 meters, beating the previous program record of 53.04 by University of Texas-Pan American hall of famer Delilah Johnson in 1992.

In the 4x100-meter relay, sophomore Yashawn Hamilton, graduate student Yariel Matute, junior Mariano Hernandez and freshman Jermarion Stewart finished with a second-place time of 40.62, besting the previous record of 41.12 set in 2018. Sophomore Tamara Woodley won the

See RECAP, Page 8

This Week in Athletics

Volleyball

- 5 p.m. Thursday vs. Chicago State University at Orem, Utah

- 6 p.m. Friday vs. New Mexico State University at Orem, Utah

Women's Soccer

- 8 p.m. Thursday and 1 p.m. Saturday vs. Dixie State University at St. George, Utah

Men's Soccer

- 6 p.m. Wednesday vs. Houston Baptist University at Houston

Women's Tennis

- TBA Sunday vs. Prairie View A&M University at home

Baseball

- 6 p.m. Tuesday vs. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi at home

- 6 p.m. Thursday, 1 and 4 p.m. Friday and noon Saturday vs. California Baptist University at home

--Compiled by Ruben Mohme

ON CAMPUS

"A time of transition"

Medical students learn residency location on Match Day

Brigitte Ortiz
THE RIDER

On March 19, 98% of the UTRGV School of Medicine students learned where they will spend several upcoming years practicing medicine.

John Krouse, dean of the School of Medicine and executive vice president of Health Affairs, said Match Day is a method that is used to pair the graduating seniors from U.S. medical schools with hospitals and health systems that have residency programs available for them.

"So the students, then, as they make their application list can apply to whatever number of those programs that they want and then over the fall months until January, the hospitals will offer invitations to the students that they're interested in to interview them," Krouse said.

He said students and hospitals create a ranking list of their top choices.

"The students submit a list of where they would like to go, ranked from one down to however many," Krouse said. "The hospitals submit a rank list of the students they would like to see come into their programs, ranked from one down to how many they rank."

"And then there's an algorithm. There's a computer process where people and programs are matched to the highest match possible at that point.



Carlos Sanchez/ UNIVERSITY MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Fifty of 51 student graduates were matched during Match Day 2021. Fourth-year medical student Annalisa Lopez will serve her residency in the plastic surgery program at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

So, basically, it's an objective system and then on Match Day ... all of those students learn where they're going to be going. All of those hospitals and health systems learn where they match and that, essentially, forms a binding con-

tract." "So, we've done very well," Krouse said. "The national average of those that match is about 95%, so for both this year and last year we are ahead of the national average of the number of stu-

dents that match.

The School of Medicine celebrated these students by hosting an in-person, socially distanced, capacity-controlled event on March 19.

"We did a Match Day celebration at the UTRGV Baseball Stadium and we had students and their families come and sit in designated areas," Krouse said. "We had in-person presentations by me and by several other faculty at the medical school. Students got the opportunity to announce publicly where they were going to match, so we really created as festive an environment as we could in person given the fact that we are not totally 100% clear of the social distancing ... because COVID-19 is still lurking there for us."

He said students will start their residency around July.

"After that, they are qualified in the specialty of their choice," Krouse said. "So, they generally will allow that time for what is called board certification examination. That's when they actually take a written and, perhaps, an oral test. So, now, they verify, certify that they have learned that specialty in a detailed practice."

"Many of those, after they completed their residency, will go into practice. ... Some of those that finish residency will go on to another level of training that's

See MATCH, Page 8

Symphony in Spring

Adalia Garza
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Symphony Orchestra is rehearsing two pieces that will be streamed virtually this semester.

The orchestra has faced new adjustments, such as the implementation of virtual auditions, rehearsals, and even a new director for the ensemble.

Norman Gamboa, music lecturer and director of orchestral activities, said the symphony mostly worked remotely last semester.

“Students were only able to study excerpts from repertoire that otherwise the orchestra would have played, so that was not an ideal situation,” Gamboa said.

The program has partially returned to campus and separated the orchestra into four small groups to ensure students feel safe and abide by safety protocols.

Orchestra manager and music senior Raul Lara said the return to campus feels nostalgic.

“We have the entire orchestra room to ourselves, with only 10 people allowed at a time, including [Gamboa],” Lara said. “We’re all 12 feet apart. I think a lot more people go to these rehearsals because we’ve been

so far away from each other, so these little groups bring back the nostalgia of feeling like we’re in a big group, playing with more people. That feeling is very heartwarming.”

Music freshman Marifer Guerrero started at UTRGV amid the pandemic.

“Coming in from high school to college was a big step,” Guerrero said. “I wanted to experience actual college, not just online studying in front of a screen, and that was pretty tough.”

She said she was becoming discouraged by virtual instruction, but she is now motivated by in-person rehearsals and the upcoming virtual performance.

“Dr. Gamboa said we are recording [the performance] to show people out there that we

I think a lot more people go to these rehearsals because we’ve been so far away from each other, so these little groups bring back the nostalgia of feeling like we’re in a big group, playing with more people.

-Raul Lara

Orchestra manager and music senior

are doing something through the pandemic, and we’re trying to move forward with this challenge that has been put upon us,” Guerrero said. “So, that’s



PHOTO COURTESY NORMAN GAMBOA

Samuel Pasqualetto, a master’s student, conducts during a partial rehearsal with members of the UTRGV Symphony Orchestra.

something that has been motivating me.”

Under the direction of Gamboa, the UTRGV Symphony

ate Professor Juan Pablo Andrade and Professor Kenneth Saxon, along with an original poem narration written by Gamboa; the second piece is Joseph Haydn’s Symphony No. 83, popularly known as “The Hen.”

Gamboa said the date for the performances will be announced once the recording and editing process is complete.

“The orchestra will put this together with the pianists, so as you can imagine, it’s a really large project, with a lot of mov-

ing pieces that we are excited about,” he said. “The date will be announced as soon as we can, after we have done all of the editing and bringing all the pieces together.”

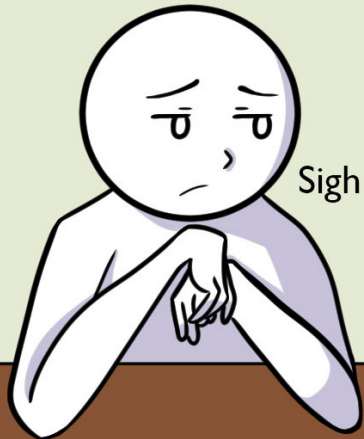
The UTRGV Symphony Orchestra intends to perform two concerts per semester, beginning Fall 2021.

“My goal is to grow the program and make it prestigious--put it out there,” Gamboa said. “For now, the orchestra needs to grow to where every student feels comfortable with each other to create a core sound that is going to be very identifiable if we go and perform at different venues. So, [other people] know, ‘Oh, that’s the UTRGV orchestra that is playing.’”

Orchestra will be recording two animal-themed pieces. “The Carnival of the Animals” by French composer Camille Saint-Saëns will be accompanied by piano soloists Associ-

The Doodler By Elizabeth Mendoza

Send your friend a funny video or a meme.

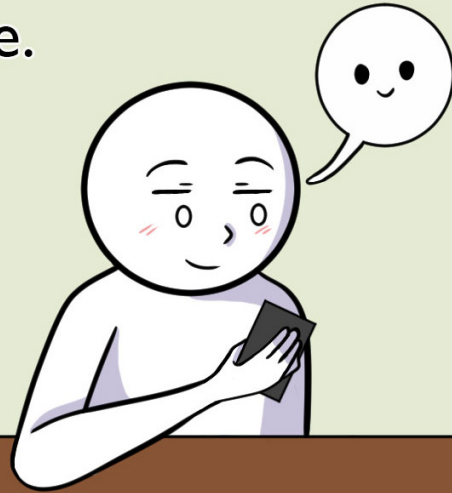


Sigh

BING!



It will put a smile on their face.



CRIMES
Continued from Page 1

That hatred and prejudice creates a feeling of wariness in people, including Chang.

“Being a minority myself, it does make you feel you have to be extra cautious or careful,” she said. “Otherwise, you don’t know. You don’t know what might happen to you.”

After the shootings, Chang believes the next steps for making positive change is understanding diversity while also seeing common similarities between everyone.

“You can always find common points between different individuals,” she said. “We look at people from ... a single dimension, but then you see people in the full dimension. Then, you are not going to be afraid of people who are racially different from you anymore.”

Chang believes having a dialogue about understanding each other is

important so further violence does not occur.

“If you really sit down, and then you want to understand each other, that is more knowledge,” she said. “A true understanding of people is necessary for us to avoid further violence, this kind of hate crimes,” she said.

In an email sent to The Rider, Chang wrote, “It’s counterintuitive and might be brushed aside instantly by some as impossible, but it is no denying the fact that without true forgiveness, hard relationships will continue and worsen.”

In response to the shootings, UTRGV President Guy Bailey sent a campus-wide email to “remind our campus of UTRGV’s commitment to fostering and preserving a diverse and inclusive environment, free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.”

The email contained resources for faculty, staff and students, including the Student Life and Dean of Students Office.

Rebecca Gadson, dean of students,

said she wants all students to know they are not alone.

“We want to make sure students realize they’re not alone, and that we’re here to support all members of our community,” Gadson said.

The Student Life and Dean of Students Office holds celebrations, workshops and programs year-round to create spaces for intersectionality, the dean said.

“We do a number of different types of celebrations--diversity and equity and inclusion, education and workshop opportunities for people to explore the intersectionality of their identity and to work toward equity in all areas of life,” she said.

Last week, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and DREAM Resource Center hosted three healing circles on reflecting, processing and learning about stopping the hate and violence against Asian Americans.

“We are able to share emotions, share feelings, share how we’re learning, how

we’re being affected, and then utilize each other for solidarity,” said Aaron Hinojosa, program coordinator for the center.

Hinojosa said he has seen a range of reactions from the UTRGV community regarding the spa shootings.

“People not knowing what they can do to help--that’s ... been a common theme that emerges,” Hinojosa said. “Also, what I noticed is people share that they’re holding on to a lot of emotions, but they don’t know how to address them.”

He said those themes are addressed during the healing circles and talking about these serious issues can help.

“That tradition of not talking about problems, not talking about issues--it’s not healthy,” Hinojosa said. “By what we’re seeing in just this country, in terms of violence, is [that] something’s not working. Talking about it is one of the steps in the right direction.”

BILLS
Continued from Page 3

spouses and children--to earn legal status through continued employment in the agricultural sector, and would make changes to the H-2A agricultural guest worker program,” according to lofgren.house.gov.

Despite the bills being approved by the House, they are expected to be rejected after the Senate’s final vote.

“It’s a highly partisan issue and the

margin in the Senate is a much smaller margin in terms of Democrats and Republicans,” Goodwin said. “We’re probably going to see actions on the part of the Republicans, within the Senate, to stall the bill out.”

She said it is possible that H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603 could have a higher chance of being approved by the Senate if revisions are made to them.

“They could change language about eligibility requirements,” Goodwin said. “They could change language about

dates. They could add in language about enforcement priorities or certain funding issues. There are a lot of things that could change.”

In the case that the bills are not passed by the Senate, she said the Biden administration could try to accomplish the same goals through policy or regulation without making it law.

“That’s not the preferable approach, just because laws are much harder to change than policies or regulations to the extent that you can make signif-

icant change through law, but that’s more longstanding and more likely to withstand future political pendulum swings,” Goodwin said. “Regulations and policy, that can sort of come and go with the wind of politics.”

As of press time Friday, the Senate had not voted on H.R. 6 and H.R. 1603. According to congress.gov, both bills were “Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary” as of March 22.

SPACE X
Continued from Page 3

The Rider, the 165-foot-tall Starship vehicle will eventually launch from

Earth attached to a giant rocket (Super Heavy).

Together, the Starship vehicle and Super Heavy will be 394 feet tall.

“SpaceX’s Starship spacecraft and Su-

per Heavy rocket (collectively referred to as Starship) represent a fully reusable transportation system designed to carry both crew and cargo to Earth orbit, the Moon, Mars and beyond,” as stated on

the SpaceX website. “Starship will be the world’s most powerful launch vehicle ever developed, with the ability to carry in excess of 100 metric tonnes to Earth orbit.”

MATCH
Continued from Page 6

called fellowship. And fellowships are done in a variety of specialties in order to even get further training beyond that of the specialty.”

He said this is a time of transition and great excitement for students. They need to start thinking about what it is going to be like as a resident.

“They need to really think about transitioning to the role of a responsible physician,” Krouse said. “As a medical student, you really are very much a protected learner. You’re learning under very close supervision. When you become a resident, you are now, you’re a physician, you’re a doctor. You have a training license and you will be more independent in the decisions around

the care of your patients.”

He said this is what the students have been looking forward to and the School of Medicine has provided a variety of resources for them in the last few months to make that transition as easy as possible for them.

Baine Herrera, a graduating medical student, has been matched to Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in the Central Texas city of Temple.

Herrera will be the first neurology resident to graduate from the UTRGV School of Medicine. He said he submitted 75 applications to hospitals and health care systems.

“I matched to a program I am very excited about,” he said. “I interviewed at 12 places and I interviewed all across the country at some very top programs and I consider Baylor Scott and White

one of the top, if not the best, for me, personally.”

Herrera said this new opportunity is about personal growth and prudence. He previously worked in community health in underserved areas from Houston to the Louisiana border.

“I’ve been in health care a long time, prior to medical school, and I just keep growing and growing, and my goal is to be the best neurologist for all of my patients regardless of their ability to pay,” he said. “I want to work with underserved populations and I want to teach. So, I plan on doing a fellowship.”

Herrera advises students going through the match process to network.

“I think early exposure and mentorship are, like, the key to getting into competitive fields,” he said. “Any program that’s considered top of the field

can be highly competitive, so networking is key.”

Herrera said he is thankful to have attended the UTRGV School of Medicine and have the opportunity to be part of the Class of 2021. He said it is an incredible cohort that has been through a lot of growing pains with the school.

“Majority of the success that our class enjoyed is because the people that are in the Class of 2021 are incredibly driven, and they’re incredibly motivated to be successful despite the fact that a new university and a new medical school did not have a history of students achieving to the level that the Class of 2021 did,” he said. “Our match list is incredible. We have people going to elite universities and elite programs at the highest and most competitive level.”

RECAP
Continued from Page 6

400-meter dash with a time of 55.30, the ninth-best in program history.

On March 20, men’s baseball posted an impressive win in St. George, Utah, against Dixie State University in a doubleheader sweep, with the first-game score of 13-3 and ending the series at

18-1, according to goutrgv.com.

Post-baccalaureate student and infielder Christian Sepulveda had a second-straight, three-hit game, stealing a base and scoring twice. Infielder/pitcher Darian Luper, first baseman Angel De La Cruz, catcher Conrado Diaz and outfielder Coleman Grubbs all finished with two hits. UTRGV ended with 20 hits. Colten Davis pitched a career-high 6.0

innings, striking out five, while allowing one run on four hits and two walks.

Women’s tennis defeated Chicago State University on March 20 in St. George, Utah, for its first Western Athletic Conference win of the season. Redshirt sophomore Katarina Sasaroga and freshman Isabelle Bahr opened in a doubles win of 6-2 at the No. 2 spot. Redshirt freshman Valeria Montero

and freshman Lea Karren clinched a win of 6-4 at the No. 1 spot. In singles, Bahr won her game 6-2, 6-0 at the No. 1 spot. Karren secured the win for UTRGV with a 6-4, 6-3 win for the No. 4 spot. UTRGV picked up the last two points by default at the No. 5 and No. 6 spots, according to goutrgv.com.

Have a story idea?

Let us know at

882-5143 or 665-5085