



THE RIDER

THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

AN INSIDE LOOK:

ON CAMPUS/LOCAL... 3

A & E8

SPORTS9

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

WWW.UTRGVRIDER.COM

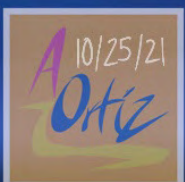
VOL. 7 ISSUE 10



/UTRGVRIDER



@UTRGVRIDER



THE RIDER

The *Rider* is the official, award-winning student newspaper of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The newspaper is widely distributed on and off campus in Brownsville and Edinburg, Texas. Views presented are those of the writers and do not reflect those of the newspaper or university.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Verilu Infante

SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

Danielle Perez

COPY EDITORS

Alejandra Yañez
Arisbeth Rodriguez

EDITORIAL CARTOONIST

Ariael Ortiz

SPORTS REPORTER

Omar E. Zapata

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Kaitlyn Polvado

SPANISH EDITOR

Fatima Gamez Lopez

REPORTERS

Brigitte Ortiz
Valeria Henderson
Natalie Lapsley

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Roxanna Miranda
Luis Martinez Santillano

DISTRIBUTION ASSISTANT

Diana Alvarez-Tovar

MARKETING SPECIALISTS

Monica Llanas
Alexis Ramos

FACULTY ADVISER

Michell Escajeda

STUDENT MEDIA DIRECTOR

Azenett Cornejo

STUDENT MEDIA PROGRAM ADVISER

Jesus Sanchez

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Ana Sanchez
Maggie Castillo

CONTACT:

EDINBURG CAMPUS

1201 West University Dr.
ELABS 170

Phone: (956) 665-2541
Fax: (956) 665-7122

BROWNSVILLE CAMPUS

1 West University Blvd.
Student Union 2.16

Phone: (956) 882-5143
Fax: (956) 882-5176

Email: TheRider@utrgv.edu

© 2021 The Rider

MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Today
SUBIR project
The **Office of Engaged Scholarship & Learning** invites freshmen to submit

a scholarly proposal by **Friday**. Scholarly Undergraduate-Based Interdisciplinary Research (SUBIR) is an opportunity for freshmen to participate in research, creative works or community engagement projects and sharpen their scholarly skills. For more information, email esa@utrgv.edu.

Tie-Dye DIY
The **Campus Activities Board** will host a **tie-dye shirts** event from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Chapel Lawn on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Tuesday on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus. Materials will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for those who RSVP on V Link.

Pumpkin Fitness Challenge
University Recreation will host a **pumpkin fitness challenge** from noon to 4 p.m. at the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center in Brownsville. Participants will carry a pumpkin through a spooky obstacle course while being timed. The fastest time will receive a prize.

Free totes
The **Student Union** will give away **free UTRGV tote bags** to decorate from noon to 1 p.m. in the Student Union Commons on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Wednesday in La Sala on the Brownsville campus. Supplies are limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Thriving Study Halls
The **Women in STEM Programs** organization will host a **virtual study hall** from 3:30 to 5 p.m. via Zoom. Assignment assistance and studying motivation may be provided. RSVP is available on V Link.

Delight Ministries Brownsville, a **Christ-centered community for college women**, will host an event to learn more about Delight from 7:30 to 9 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available on V Link.

Tuesday
Pumpkin Decorating Contest

The **Student Union** will host a **pumpkin decorating contest** at noon at the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

Wednesday
Costume Contest

The **Student Union** will host a **costume contest** at noon at the

Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus. The top three finalists and fan favorite will win VBucks and a spooky trophy. To participate, contestants must register at the info desk by 11:30 a.m.

Coffee and Careers
Students can ask the **Career Center** about **career exploration, internship opportunities and resume reviews** from 2:30 to 3 p.m. via Zoom. Register on Handshake or email careercenter@utrgv.edu.

Vaquero Bingo
The **Campus Activities Board** will host an online **Vaquero Bingo** from 4 to 6 p.m. There will be **multiple winners and one grand prizewinner**. RSVP is available on V Link.

Graphic Thoughts
The **University Library** will host **Graphic Thoughts discussion** online from 5 to 6 p.m. to discuss horror in comics.

Chess Night
The **Chess Club** will host **Chess Night** from 5 to 6 p.m. in Interdisciplinary Engineering and Academic Building 2.207 on the Edinburg campus and from 5 to 9 p.m. Thursday in Sabal Hall 2.102 on the Brownsville campus.

Mariachi Aztlán Concert
Mariachi Aztlán and **Mariachi Juvenil Aztlán** will perform in concert at 2 p.m. in the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Complex in Brownsville. Admission is free. The concert is part of the **Student Performance Series**.

Thursday
Free Lunch
The **Baptist Student Ministry** offers students **free lunch** at 12:30 p.m. every Thursday in the BSM building, located across from the UREC on the Edinburg campus.

ASL Club Meeting
The **ASL Club** will host an **online event to learn basic American Sign Language** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Students of all majors can expand their knowledge, play games and practice their skills at the event. RSVP is available on V Link.

The People Series
The **Center for Diversity & Inclusion and DREAM Resource Center** will host an educational series about **La Llorona** to learn about the **origins, versions and significance of the Latin American folklore** from 6 to 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. RSVP is available on V Link.

Fiesta de Fright
The **Department of Housing and Residence Life** will host **Fiesta**

de Fright from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Casa Bella Apartments Club House on the Brownsville campus. The event features a Halloween costume contest, games, food and music.

Online Concert
Flutist **Krista Jobson**, a School of Music assistant professor, and guitarist **Hector Rodríguez**, music lecturer, will perform at 7 p.m. online via the **Patron of the Arts YouTube channel**.

Halloween Drive-In Movie
The **Student Union**, in collaboration with the **Campus Activities Board**, will screen **"The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It,"** directed by **Michael Chaves**, at 8 p.m. at the Baseball Parking Stadium Lot E-32. The movie is a supernatural horror film about paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren, who try to uncover the truth behind a murderer's claim of demonic possession.

Fall Festival
The **Student Union** and **Campus Activities Board** will host a **fall festival** at 6 p.m. on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus to celebrate the season with games, music, pumpkin carving and more. RSVP is available on V Link.

Friday
Lucho Libre: Squid Game Edition
The **University Library** will conduct a **discussion** about theories, conspiracies and queries on the Netflix series **"Squid Game"** from noon to 12:45 p.m. via Zoom. The series is about hundreds of people with financial difficulties accepting a strange invitation to a survival game with a billion-dollar prize awaiting them.

Trunk or Treat
Student Activities will host **trunk or treat** from 6 to 9 p.m. at the UTRGV Fieldhouse parking lot on the Edinburg campus. The event will feature games, a costume contest, music and more.

Sunday
Octubafest
The **Patron of the Arts** program will present its annual **Octubafest concert** at 2 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Admission is free.

HalloFlute
The **Patron of the Arts** program will present its annual **Holiday Flute Ensemble** concert at 5 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. The public may attend the concert in costume to win prizes. Admission is free.

--Compiled by Fatima Gamez Lopez

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Oct. 14 and 19.



Oct. 14 7:54 a.m.: A student reported she was approached off campus by an unknown man driving a van who asked if she needed a ride.

She noticed the van had been following her along International Boulevard in Brownsville. She went into an off-campus business until the man left the area. The incident occurred around 9:30 a.m. Oct. 13. The student was provided information on the available campus services.

1:28 p.m.: A student was issued a criminal trespass warning at the request of an employee of The Grid on the Brownsville campus. The student was suspected of a previous theft at the location.

2:33 p.m.: A staff member reported having issues with a faculty member over work-related matters. At this time, no issues have risen to the level of a crime and the matter is being handled by the department. A report was generated for

documentation purposes.

5:59 p.m.: A non-affiliated individual was observed in the gated compound of the Academic Support Services facility in Edinburg. The man was escorted out of the area by an employee. An officer made contact with the non-affiliated man at a nearby off-campus business. The man was issued a criminal trespass warning after learning of his criminal history.

Oct. 18 2:22 a.m.: The Brownsville Fire Department and a UTRGV officer responded to the Life and Health Sciences Building on the Brownsville campus in regard to an active fire alarm. The panel read, "Flow Switch Zone 1" and it is unknown what caused it to activate. There were no signs of smoke or fire at the location.

7:10 p.m.: A student reported being followed by an unknown older man in the area of Lot B-3 and then eventually to the Casa Bella Apartments on the Brownsville campus. The incident occurred around 3:30 p.m. the same day. The man never made contact

with her but she wanted to document the incident.

Oct. 19 1:55 p.m.: A Unity Hall resident assistant that reported while conducting a routine health and safety check of a dorm room in Edinburg, he located a vape pen that was suspected of containing THC. The vape pen was handed over to the officer and tested positive for THC. Both residents of the room were not present at the time the item was found. The item was seized and the incident will be referred to Student Rights and Responsibilities for review.

2:03 p.m.: A resident assistant reported that while conducting a routine health and safety check of a dorm room in Heritage Hall in Edinburg, he found a clear plastic baggy containing 1½ Xanax bars. The student who resides in the room was not present during the health and safety check. The items were seized and the incident will be referred to Student Rights and Responsibilities for review.

--Compiled by Valeria Henderson

TWO UTRGV FACULTY MEMBERS EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS ON THE ATHLETICS FEE REFERENDUM

Verilu Infante
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Since they first announced a proposal to increase the UTRGV Athletics fee, two university officials have presented details of the plan to several student, staff and faculty organizations.

The Rider contacted Kip Austin Hinton, Faculty Senate president-elect, and Steven Block, dean of the College of Fine Arts, both of whom attended at least one of the presentations given by sponsors Maggie Hinojosa, senior vice president for Strategic Enrollment and Student Affairs, and Chasse Conque, vice president and director of Athletics.

"I know there are other things involved in it, but football is the key piece and is the motivation," Hinton said. "UTRGV has been looking at creating football since at least 2017. There were signs that it was seriously being considered, at least back in January of this year. I have mixed feelings, I will say, about this."

Hinton, who is a fan of college football, said he understands the appeal of adding a football program to the university, but he and other faculty members share concerns that mostly involve issues of safety.

"It is well documented in research that football is the most dangerous sport, and that it is the sport that creates

the most extreme injuries, the most traumatic brain injuries, the most concussions," he said.

He said the other concern is that there is only a small number of football programs that are directly able to bring in money while the rest lose it or break even.

"And one thing I've noticed speaking to UTRGV employees and students is that there seems to be a widespread belief that football is going to be profitable, and if you look at a school like UT San Antonio, they started a football team 10 years ago," Hinton said. "Approximately 10 years ago, I don't remember the exact year. And they are just now becoming a good football team. But they are still losing money and they lose money every year."

However, Hinton said that one good thing is that the current plan for UTRGV is to compete in the championship division instead of the bowl division, making it less burdensome financially.

"That makes me think it might be a better plan than, for example, what the plan that UTSA followed," he said. "We have to keep in mind that the [Rio Grande Valley] has a total population that is a lot smaller than the total population in greater San Antonio or Houston or Dallas Fort Worth area. Right. It's just a different scale and we should not expect it to look the same."



Kip Austin Hinton



PHOTO COURTESY VALLERIE HERNANDEZ, PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Steven Block, dean of the College of Fine Arts, speaks during the Oct. 6 CFA Town Hall Meeting in Brownsville. The college held town halls in Brownsville, Edinburg and online this month for the School of Music.

Under the proposal sponsored by Hinojosa and Conque, students would pay an additional \$11.25 per credit hour, capped at 12 hours, to fund the establishment of a football program, women's swimming and diving teams, two marching bands and two spirit programs.

In September, the Student Government Association voted to approve the Athletics Fee Referendum application. Students will vote on the proposal to increase the

athletic fee Nov. 8 through 10.

As for the safety concerns, he said a lot of faculty at UTRGV in the division of Health Affairs are more aware of the patterns of injuries created from sports than he is and although football is not the only dangerous sport, this is an issue that has come up at many universities with large football programs.

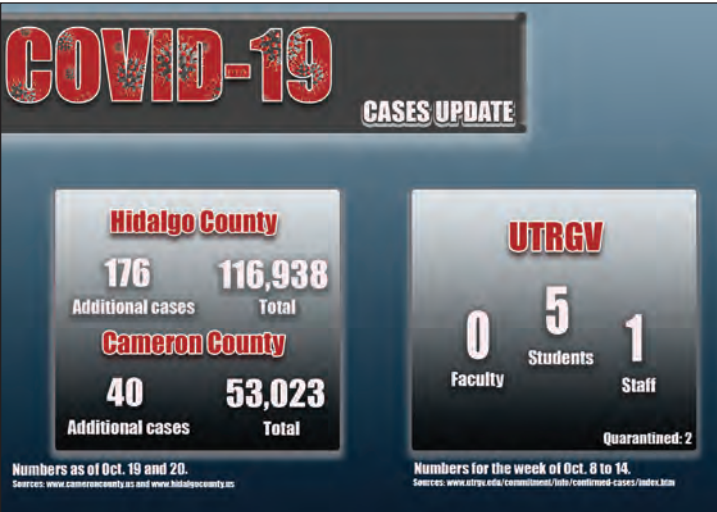
"That we are an institution promoting higher learning and increasing knowledge and expanding the power of our

brains," Hinton said. "And this is a sport that may not fit into that mission. That was specifically mentioned to me by another faculty member, and I hadn't thought of it that way before, but I think it is a valid point for us all to think about, even those of us who love football."

He also said that, thankfully, safety measures have improved a lot since his father's time as a football player and it gives him hope

See **FACULTY**, Page 10

AT UTRGV Six COVID-19 positives



Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

Alejandra Yañez
THE RIDER

UTRGV reported six additional COVID-19 cases between Oct. 8 and 14, according to a university official.

Doug Arney, vice president for Administrative Support Services and chair of the Infectious Disease Committee at UTRGV, said among the six were five students and one staff member.

UTRGV updates the number of cases reported for

campus individuals weekly through the Confirmed Cases Dashboard. The numbers on the website are provided by the university COVID-19

VISIT UTRGV.EDU/COMMITMENT TO VIEW
THE COVID-19 DASHBOARD

Response Team.

Arney said two UTRGV students were quarantined on campus the week of Oct. 8 to 14.

As previously reported by The Rider, UTRGV has provided 50 rooms in

separate wings of the Casa Bella Apartments on the Brownsville campus and in the Village Apartments in Edinburg for quarantining students.

As of last Wednesday, UT Health RGV had administered 45,586 tests and 86,255 vaccine doses, according to the Confirmed Cases Dashboard on the UTRGV COVID-19 website.

In Hidalgo and Cameron counties, COVID-19 numbers are still on the rise.

Hidalgo County reported an additional 176 confirmed cases last Wednesday, raising the county's total to 116,938, according to its website.

As of last Wednesday, the county reported two additional deaths raising its death toll to 3,420. Both individuals were unvaccinated.

Last Tuesday, Cameron County Public Health reported an additional 40 COVID-19 cases, raising its total to 53,023.

Cameron County also reported two additional COVID-19-related deaths Tuesday, raising its death toll to 1,961. Both individuals were unvaccinated.

SGA highlights campus services

Valeria Henderson
THE RIDER

Last Tuesday there were three appointments and two special guests at the Student Government Association meeting on the Brownsville campus.

Under new business, were the new appointments:

--Senior psychology major Alondra Gonzalez, appointed Chief of Staff

--Graduate student in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Abby Davila, appointed Secretary of Graduate Affairs

--Information system junior Marco Kidder, appointed Secretary of Administration and Finance
Sarah Rodriguez, senior

nursing student and Engagement Zone data specialist for the Office of Community Engagement, presented at the meeting. The Office for Community Engagement is an institutional and academic support unit that works with professional development resources who are faculty, staff and community partners and closely with nonprofit agencies across the Rio Grande Valley, Rodriguez said.

"UTRGV is a nationally recognized Carnegie university," she said. "So, Carnegie is an honor that is given to universities every five years"

See **SGA**, Page 7



Valeria Henderson/THE RIDER

Newly appointed Abby Davila, secretary of graduate affairs (via Zoom), Alondra Gonzalez, chief of staff (left), and Marco Kidder administration and finance are sworn in by Samantha Lara, chief justice of the Student Government Association.

YAQUERO VOICE



HALLOWEEN ACTIVITY

On Oct. 19, The Rider conducted a poll on social media asking students, "What is your favorite Halloween activity?" The results are shown below.

facebook



WATCHING HORROR FILMS 18

VISITING A PUMPKIN PATCH 10

GOING TO HAUNTED HOUSES 4

twitter



4 WATCHING HORROR FILMS

2 VISITING A PUMPKIN PATCH

2 TRICK-OR-TREATING

1 GOING TO HAUNTED HOUSES

Instagram



WATCHING HORROR FILMS 18

GOING TO HAUNTED HOUSES 8

TRICK-OR-TREATING 7

VISITING A PUMPKIN PATCH 7

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO PARTICIPATE @UTRGVRIDER



And who are you supposed to be?



Scary, fun times



Arisbeth Rodriguez
THE RIDER

Halloween has always been my favorite holiday, even when I was a child. I love the free candy, seeing people dressed up and walking around Brownsville with my family as they trick or treat.

And now, as a *tia* of four kids and an older sister to a 3-year-old girl, I am even more excited about the spooky holiday. I will get to see them running around Sunday night in costumes, scared of random teens dressed as this year's latest horrors, such as the new series "Chucky," or as classic things, like clowns and whatnot, all while annoying the heck out of their parents to go into haunted houses they know they cannot handle.

It is an overall wonderful holiday for my big family, who absolutely love all scary things. Because we have always been fans of spooky stuff-haunted houses, horror

movies about paranormal events or with gore and scaring each other around the house--it is not a big deal when trick-or-treating is not an option.

With the pandemic still looming over us and my family being worried about themselves and the kids, we decided we can still have a great time with a horror movie night and scaring each other randomly around the house at night.

We have many Halloween

services. We are especially fans of "The Conjuring" and "Insidious" movie series. We even put them on for most of the month and we love it. We do it to pregame Halloween in a way.

Another thing we do throughout the month is, whenever we are all watching something on TV and someone gets up for a bathroom break or to get snacks, we place a fake tarantula or jump scare them. A lot of times, the fake spider, sometimes even a real one, is the most effective, especially for me since I am deathly afraid of them, regardless of how big or small they are.

Then, if possible with COVID-19, we let the kids choose a haunted house to go into with one of the family adults, such as myself, my parents or older sisters and their boyfriends. Or, if they want to have a good time without being scared, we go to the Boo! at the Zoo event or events like the pumpkin patch or maze.

This year, with my older sister moving out and everything seeming to be changing, I hope we will keep up with our Halloween traditions together.


"I love the free candy, seeing people dressed up and walking around Brownsville with my family as they trick or treat."

traditions, especially since the start of the pandemic.

I have watched horror movies since I was about 5 because my family loved them. So, my siblings and I grew to love them, too. And those movies certainly help with keeping the younger kids in their seats, which is a plus.

So now, before we go out to trick or treat, we put on horror movies all throughout the day on Netflix, HBO Max and other streaming

AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



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.

Concursos celebrarán el Día de los Muertos



FOTOS DE CORTESÍA

Concurso del altar de muertos en el 2018 donde Health Services ganó el primer lugar en el altar de muertos. Alrededor de 15 grupos participaron en el concurso del altar de muertos. El concurso de las calaveritas y el altar de muertos está abierto para toda la comunidad de UTRGV. La fecha límite para participar en el concurso es el 29 de octubre a las 11:59 de la noche.

Fatima Gamez Lopez
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

El programa de pregrado de español y la Sociedad Nacional Honoraria Hispánica, *Sigma Delta Pi*, invitan a la comunidad de UTRGV a participar en los concursos en conmemoración al Día de los Muertos.

Ana Peña-Oliva, profesora del Departamento de Escritura y Estudios del Lenguaje y consejera de la Sociedad Nacional Honoraria Hispánica, *Sigma Delta Pi*, describió el objetivo de los concursos de las calaveritas y el altar de muertos que se llevarán a cabo para celebrar el Día de los Muertos.

“Como parte de la Sociedad Honoraria, nuestras metas son expandir la lengua española”, dijo Peña-Oliva. “Tratar de promoverla y es lo que estamos haciendo por medio de actividades y concursos”.

Laura Garcia, profesora y consejera de la Sociedad Nacional Honoraria Hispánica, *Sigma Delta Pi*, explicó las reglas que la comunidad de UTRGV debe seguir para participar en el concurso de las calaveritas y el altar de muertos.

“Las calaveritas son versos”, dijo. “Es un poema que tiene que tener rima, tiene que tener un sentido irónico y pueden poner también incluso una ilustración. Pedimos que sean trabajos originales que no sean copiados de otros lugares, y debe estar escrito en español sin usar malas palabras”.

La calaverita debe estar compuesta por al menos dos versos, una parte importante de la calaverita es que debe hablar sobre el encuentro del personaje principal con la muerte, dijo.

“El altar de muertos depende donde

lo hagan, si en la universidad o en su propia casa”, dijo Garcia. “Si lo hacen en la universidad no pueden tener velas, no puede haber luz, no puede haber fuego. Muchas veces se recomienda que tenga un aroma fuerte como el incienso. Pero, si está en la universidad, no se recomienda”.

Garcia dijo que se piden cuatro fotos y un video de dos minutos del altar de muertos por cuestiones de la pandemia para que se muestre en diferentes ángulos del altar de muertos.

“Los altares se pueden hacer de cualquier manera”, dijo. “Normalmente llevan agua, sal, velas, incienso, flores naturales o flores artificiales, la comida que le gustaba a la persona fallecida, calaveritas de azúcar, el retrato de la persona a la que se le está poniendo el altar. Estos son algunos de los elementos tradicionales que pueden añadir. Obviamente pueden adaptarlo a la situación”.

Eventualmente quieren expandirlo a la comunidad pero por la pandemia no se ha podido, dijo Garcia. Eventualmente, tienen pensado hacer otros eventos relacionados con el Día de los Muertos ya presenciales.

Peña-Oliva explicó que la razón por la que decidieron organizar un concurso de calaveritas y altares del Día de los Muertos es porque es una fecha muy importante para la mayoría de las personas que son de origen hispano.

“Sobre todo en esta área que la mayoría de las personas son de descendencia mexicana o incluso son mexicanos”, dijo Peña-Oliva.

See **CELEBRARÁN**, *Página 10*

STUDENT MEDIA PET COSTUME CONTEST

SCAN TO VISIT THE UTRGV STUDENT MEDIA FACEBOOK PAGE AND CAST YOUR VOTE!

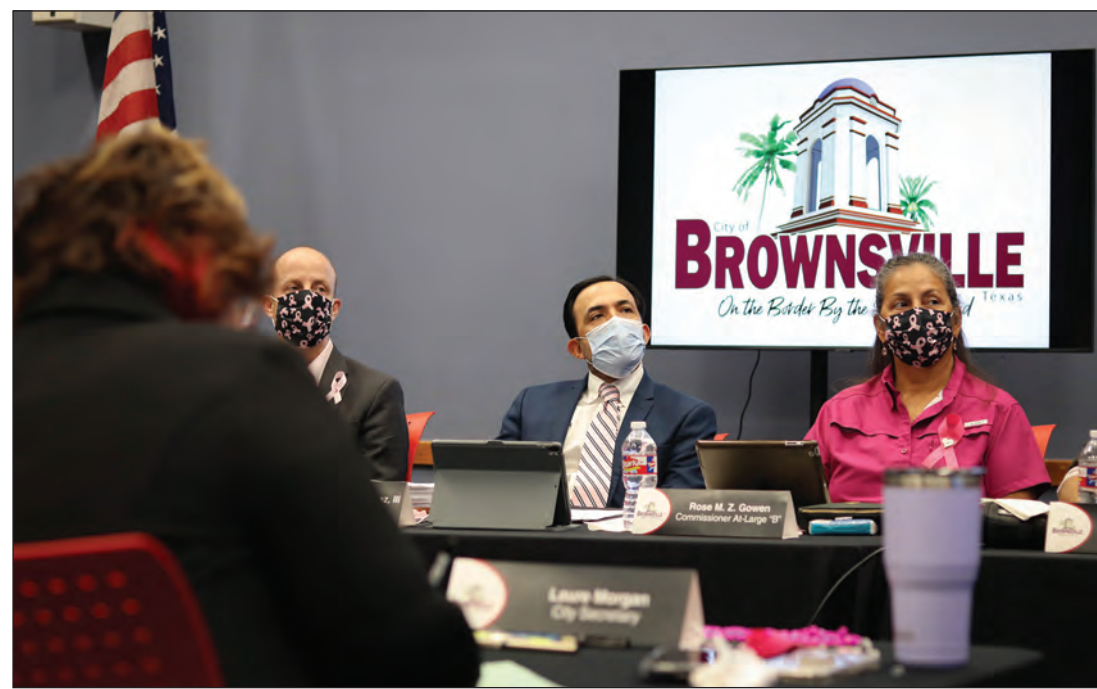


WINNERS
WILL BE
FEATURED IN
OUR NOV. 1
ISSUE

THE PET WITH THE MOST REACTIONS BY 11:59 P.M. THURSDAY, OCT. 28, WILL BE THE WINNER SO BE SURE TO SHARE AND MAY THE BEST FUR BABY WIN!



Brownsville City Commission votes out Neece from BCIC



Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER

Brownsville City Commissioner At-Large "A" John Cowen Jr. (from left), Mayor Trey Mendez and Commissioner At-Large "B" Rose Gowen listen to a presentation on a Bus Shelter Improvement Program during Tuesday's meeting in the Brownsville Public Library Main Branch meeting room. During the meeting, the commission voted to replace former City Commissioner Ben Neece from the Brownsville Community Improvement Corp. board with Cesar Lopez, former member of the Brownsville Independent School District Board.

Alejandra Yañez

THE RIDER

The Brownsville City Commission voted last Tuesday to replace Ben Neece on the Brownsville Community Improvement Corp. board with Cesar Lopez. The new board appointment was made a priority by District 2 City Commissioner Jessica Tetreau, who arrived at the meeting late and left early. Tetreau asked to go straight to board appointments after the

proclamation period because she needed to get to a prior engagement.

"It has been a long-standing understanding of the commission that when you are appointed to a board, that when we vacate our commission seat, we vacate our board appointment," she said of Neece, who lost his reelection as District 4 City Commissioner to Pedro Cardenas in July and still serves on the board of the Brownsville Community Improvement Corp.

District 3 City Commissioner Roy De los Santos wanted to personally hear from Commissioner Cardenas on the matter.

"Only because I feel that since that seat was given to Commissioner Neece, by being the District 4 commissioner, I believe the filling of that [seat] would belong to Commissioner Cardenas," De los Santos said. "So, I would like to know his thoughts."

In an interview with The Rider Thursday, Cardenas

said, "Mr. Neece's time was actually up when he stopped being our commissioner but he had not been removed because there was a lapse in communication between city management and the city commission."

While the proposal to give Neece the boot had no objection from Cardenas, District 1 Commissioner Nurith Galonsky Pizana had opposing views, noting that the timing was off and that it seemed like a personal attack.

"I'm gonna vote 'nay' simply because to me it seems more 'Why now? There's only two months left,'" Galonsky Pizana said. "If it would have happened, it should have happened a lot earlier. And just based on information I've received otherwise, this is more of a personal vendetta, which I don't want to be a part of. If it's because someone is opposed to the way he has voiced his opinions, then I don't believe in stifling speech. And, so, for that reason, I just don't see the point."

Commissioner At-Large "B" Rose Gowen countered Galonsky Pizana's opinion by saying she established the rule after seeing what leaving an ex-commissioner on other boards had done to the community in the past.

"My vote 'yes' is not a personal vendetta," Gowen said. "My vote is based on past and long experience on this commission and had I known that, I didn't know

that he was still on the board. I have seen that cause harm in the past many years ago and for that reason I will vote 'yes,' because I believe it should have happened when he lost the election. But it is in no way a personal vendetta on my part in any way, shape or form."

All commissioners, except Galonsky Pizana and Cowen, voted to remove Neece from the board.

Although Lopez was not on the list of 14 candidates recommended during the meeting, Cardenas made the motion to appoint the former Brownsville Independent School District board member from 2012 to 2018, as the newest member of the Brownsville Community Improvement Corp board.

De los Santos seconded the motion.

In an interview with The Rider Thursday, Lopez said he served on the Cameron County Appraisal Board from 2016 to 2018 and is currently the director of marketing and public relations for an engineering consultant.

"Pedro is somebody that my family and I supported when he ran," he said. "After supporting him for his election we became friends and after having discussions he considered me for this position."

Cardenas said he believes Lopez will do a great job in the BCIC.

Spring 2022: Back on campus



Luis Martinez Santillano/THE RIDER

Steven Hawks, a professor for the School of Art and Design, discusses class work with graphic design junior Emilio Moya. The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost announced Oct. 11 that UTRGV will be back to full operations in Spring 2022. This is in line with the majority of UT institutions already at full operation this fall.

Natalie Lapsley

THE RIDER

As the 20-month mark of the COVID-19 pandemic approaches, the university plans to make a full return to on-campus operations in Spring 2022.

UTRGV is doing its best to provide a mix of modalities that will be beneficial to students, according to a campuswide email sent

Oct. 11 by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost Janna Arney and School of Medicine Dean Michael Hocker.

The email also included plans for Spring 2022 courses to be 59.56% traditional and 19.96% online asynchronous, with the rest being a mix of online synchronous, hybrid and interactive video (ITV).

Course modalities for

this spring are determined in collaboration with UTRGV health officials and are influenced by health information regarding COVID-19, according to Arney.

"Our modalities look far more like they did, you know, pre-pandemic," she said. "But we've made a conscious effort to try to include options for students. We heard loud and

clear from students that not everybody wants to be online, not everyone wants to be traditional."

The accreditation procedures to change class modalities to online are also in action again.

"Accreditation standards are not new in the spring," Arney said. "We are in compliance on an ongoing basis with the accreditation standards."

She said in the recent semesters, there was a "blanket waiver," which allowed schools to move courses online without going through the full accreditation process.

The blanket waiver is now expired, Arney said.

UTRGV will also continue to take caution when it comes to COVID-19.

"We know what measures work to prevent and to mitigate the spread, and we will continue to reinforce those measures," she said. "And we will continue to work with our School of Medicine and our health faculty and our health students ... to make accessible vaccines and accessible boosters."

UTRGV's self-reported vaccination rates reveal that 90% of employees and 83%

of students are vaccinated, according to the email.

"I'm encouraged by the case numbers going down, the high levels of vaccinations and the respect and responsibility that I've seen on both campuses," said Karin Lewis, UTRGV's Faculty Senate president. "I've been to both campuses this fall, and I see people being very responsible wearing masks."

Last summer, there was a task force created to prepare for the return to campus this fall.

Lewis said the most beneficial accommodation was the room for flexibility and experimentation.

"It can be daunting," she said. "It can be really challenging, too, but we, as faculty, continue to learn just as students continue to learn."

Lewis said that although campus operations will make a full return in spring, it will do so with compassion and sensitivity to each student's situation.

"Everyone is impacted by the pandemic in a variety of different ways," she said. "So, we continue to do our very best to respond to this situation, respond to student

See **SPRING**, Page 11

UTRGV Madness makes a comeback

Brigitte Ortiz
THE RIDER

Student Activities, Athletics and The Herd will host UTRGV Madness at 9 p.m. Friday in the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus.

Sara Hernandez, associate athletics director for Marketing and Strategic Initiative, said Madness is the biggest event on campus every year.

“The best way I can describe it is a huge pep rally in which we introduced the [men’s and women’s] basketball teams.” Hernandez said. “We also welcome a lot of student organizations for a dance contest. This year, we also have a lip-sync contest, which is kind of part of that. But, it’s a huge, huge event in which we showcase and celebrate UTRGV spirit.”

She said the organizations have a couple of surprises planned for the event.

“I think one of the staples of the event is the glow aspect of it,” Hernandez said. “So, I think we have a couple of things going on with that. I think that’s what students kind of look forward to the most and, obviously, the dances. We do have a couple of new dances that I think the students will be excited about and that involve a little bit more of our department, so I’ll leave it as a cliffhanger.”

She said the event will also have giveaways and prizes.

“As always, there’s always a huge prize for the, I guess, initial musical chairs game,” Hernandez said. “There are T-shirts, [which] are really cool by the way. I think people are going to be really pleased with the way the T-shirts look. I think, again, like I mentioned, it’s a good opportunity for students to really celebrate and I think especially after we didn’t have one last year. So, we’re really taking this opportunity to bring our students back together and celebrate that we’re here and that UTRGV is still thriving.”

She mentioned there will be a half-court-shot contest where students will have the opportunity to be entered in a giveaway.

“Everybody who makes it, they’re going to be entered into a drawing to get a two-year lease on a car from Hacienda Ford. So, everybody there will have the opportunity to participate,” Hernandez said. “And it’s always very exciting. There will be opportunities for students to be part of the actual show.”

She said there will be a bus for students to take from Brownsville to Edinburg. The bus will depart at 5:30 p.m. from the Casa Bella Apartments on the Brownsville campus.

See **MADNESS**, Page 10



RIDER FILE PHOTO

SGA Continued from Page 3

recognize the amount of community engagement that the university does in their communities. So, in 2020 we were recognized as a community engagement scholar.”

The office also oversees the Engagement Zone, which allows students to track their community service hours. The Engagement Zone can be found under Applications at myUTRGV.edu or at its website <https://ez.utrgv.edu>.

“You can also use [The Engagement Zone] for any type of essay writing or if you need to send anything for

Office for Sustainability sets sights on platinum rating



Omar E. Zapata/THE RIDER

Biology junior Bryan Ramos plants broccoli last Wednesday at the Agroecology Research Community Garden on the Edinburg campus. Ramos said it was his first time at the garden but thinks he will continue to volunteer.

Fatima Gamez Lopez
SPANISH EDITOR

The Office for Sustainability aims to become a model for the community in integrating the objectives of a healthy and sustainable ecological system, developing viability and searching for social justice.

It seeks to involve all corners of the university to create an environment in which all members of the campus community promote sustainability in their personal and professional lives.

“We have been here for 12 years now and in those 12 years, we have been trying to help the institution integrate sustainability into all its products and services,” said Marianella Franklin, chief sustainability officer at UTRGV. “In other words, we are not here to do sustainability for the university, we are here to help the university integrate sustainability into academics, operations, engagement, and into planning and governance for the university.”

The Office for Sustainability works with every department on campus to help integrate sustainability, Franklin said.

Jeremy San Miguel, Office for Sustainability program coordinator, explained the purpose of the office.

a scholarship or a job application,” said Karitza Garcia, senator for the School of Nursing and chair of the internal affairs standing committee. “This is actually really good for even graduate school programs.”

Jeremy San Miguel represented the Office for Sustainability during the meeting, noting that the office is committed to highlighting sustainability on campus.

“One of the core priorities for the university is sustainability. It’s in our mission statement,” San Miguel said. “Sustainability is about sustaining the quality of life, our society, our planet and economics.”

“Our office is more than just an office; we represent sustainability on all campuses,” San Miguel said. “It’s larger than just Edinburg, Harlingen and Brownsville. The videos that we record we try to be as equitable as possible to the locations.”

Christian Garcia, Office for

for the university.

“We report to an organization called Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education,” she said. “They have a reporting tool, which is the sustainability tracking assessment rating system. That particular report is done every three years in order to get a rating.”

She said UTRGV received a gold rating in 2018 and is now working on submitting the next report.

The report takes about two years to complete, Franklin said.

“I think the report is going to significantly transform the Rio Grande Valley in terms of opportunities that are available to our students,” Garcia said. “There are a lot of resources that we do not have at the moment and that gold standard will bring more fundings for our institution and provide our students with more and better resources.”

Franklin explained UTRGV was among one of the first three universities to receive the gold rating.

“We received our first gold rating in 2018 and we were the first in the UT System to receive that rating,” she said. “By now most of the UT System institutions have a gold rating as well, but we were the first to receive the gold rating along with Texas A&M and Rice [universities].”

Franklin said the Office for Sustainability aims to move up in ratings.

“We hope to get to platinum at

See **SUSTAINABILITY**, Page 11

“We find sustainability to be that tool for student success, because it helps our students understand the interconnection of the world we live in, the interconnection of the social, environmental and economic system.”

--Marianella Franklin

UTRGV chief sustainability officer

Sustainability data analyst, spoke about the report that the office is currently working on.

“Currently, we are working on a report that we are going to get published at the end of the year,” Garcia said. “With support, [it] is going to oversee the entire university’s operations, academics and the entirety of the whole university itself.”

Franklin said the report is important

The Office for Sustainability now has its own podcast, “Sustainability... Adelante!” that can be found on its website and SoundCloud.

The office will also host a film series from 6 to 8 p.m. until Wednesday via Zoom. The link will be available through V Link.

San Miguel said the “Sustainability...Adelante!” speaker series will premiere in the spring semester.

Campus Sustainability Fun Day will be from noon to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Thursday in the Student Union on the Edinburg

campus. Snacks, swag and music will be available to students.

For the advisers’ report, early voting began Oct. 18 and will end Friday.

Delma Olivarez, an SGA adviser and associate dean of students, said the Student Academic Building is a voting location for Hidalgo County.

The next SGA senate meeting will be at 6 p.m. Nov. 2.

Job Martinez, senator for the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship, reminded students that voting for the Athletic Fee Referendum will take place Nov. 8 through 10.

UTRGV Theatre presents 'The Weird'

Kaitlyn Polvado

A&E EDITOR

UTRGV Theatre's presentation of "The Weird," a compilation of short horror stories written by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, continues this weekend at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre in Edinburg.

The play, which opened last Friday, will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The viewings are intended for mature audiences. Admission is free.

Trey Mikolasky, Theatre Department chair and director of "The Weird," said to keep the audience at a safe distance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the theater will be limited to 50% capacity, and encourages the use of facial coverings. However, they are not mandatory.

The play includes six different stories that each have their own horror elements.

The opening story, "Bloody Mary," follows two teenagers who play a game of Bloody Mary while driving to a secluded location.

Another story, "Insect Love," follows a scientist and his lab assistant who

have feelings for each other while the film "The Fly" plays in theaters across the country.

Aguirre-Sacasa is an American playwright, comic book writer and screenwriter.

His most famous works include his contributions to Marvel Comics and shows, such as "Glee," "Riverdale" and "Chilling Adventures of Sabrina." He is also the chief creative officer of Archie comics.

Because of Aguirre-Sacasa's connection to comics and film throughout his career, many of the stories in the show tie back to them and depict some part of horror history. While some are obvious, such as how "Insect Love" was based on the classic movie "The Fly," others have subtle undertones.

The story "Morning Becomes Olestra" is based on the Eugene O'Neill play, "Mourning Becomes Electra."

Olestra was a type of oil used in the 1990s which was used to market fat-free potato chips. However, the oil turned out to cause digestive problems in consumers. The play highlights this fad as a pivotal part of the story.

The story "Bloody Mary" has a classic slasher horror movie feel to it, similar



Kaitlyn Polvado/THE RIDER

Frida Aviles, multidisciplinary studies senior, and Eli Garcia, theatre senior, rehearse last Wednesday for the University Productions' first showing of "The Weird," which premiered last Friday.

to "Scream" and "Halloween."

The show is narrated by the character M.T. Grave, played by theatre junior Mateo Ramirez, who said the play is something that the audience will find

"exciting and fun."

For more information about "The Weird" and other upcoming projects from the UTRGV Department of Theatre, visit utrgv.edu/theatre.



Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

Alejandra Yañez

THE RIDER

Aries-You know better than anyone that you have not been taking the best care of yourself. Your body is a temple and by cheating it you are only cheating yourself. Take this week to practice better habits for health. You only get one life.

Taurus-You are on fire this week. It seems that you have found the secret to attraction and are not giving it up. Bask in this warmth and attention while you can. Only time will tell how long it will last.

Gemini-Your home life might be a bit hectic at the moment but know that your situation does not define you. Look for comfort in the ones that make you feel calm when your world is up in flames.

Cancer-You may find this week that you will need to be assertive to get your points across. Learn to identify the difference between assertion and aggression. There is a difference. One will earn you respect while the other can cause you to lose friends.

Leo-You may have indulged yourself a little too much last week. Give your wallet a break this week. That extra cash might come in handy in the near future.

Virgo-You were down for a minute but you are back. You are exuding confidence this week. Own it. This is a good look for you.

Libra-Keep an eye out for old flames trying to be reignited. Your ex might try to reach out this week and start things up where you left off. They have definitely been keeping an eye on you recently. Remember the reasons for your separation but also know it does not hurt to hear them out.

Scorpio-This week may bring drama within your clique. Take this week to find your individuality and strengths within your squad. Use those strengths to bring your group back together.

Sagittarius-You are at the top of your game right now when it comes to your finances. Keep up the good work and you might just find that you can break molds you did not even know about.

Capricorn-The past couple of weeks have made you feel a bit stuck in your own funk. Be spontaneous this week and do something a bit out of your comfort zone. This might just be the remedy to get out of your own head.

Aquarius-You have been neglecting your responsibilities for too long. Use this week to get back on your grind. You can do it if you just prioritize the right things.

Pisces-You are juggling many different relationships in your life. This can become overwhelming for anyone. Use this week to find balance in those relationships and nourish them accordingly. Remember that the best relationships are those that do not feel like they drain you.



Cartoonish-Hijinks by Ariael Ortiz



SUDOKU

Last week's puzzle answer key:

5	6	2	8	9	3	1	7	4
1	3	8	7	4	2	6	9	5
7	9	4	5	1	6	3	8	2
4	2	9	3	6	7	8	5	1
8	5	3	1	2	4	7	6	9
6	7	1	9	5	8	2	4	3
2	8	5	6	3	9	4	1	7
9	4	7	2	8	1	5	3	6
3	1	6	4	7	5	9	2	8

4		2	7	1				
			9	4		2		
	3			7		1		
		8		6			2	
6			4					9
	8		3					
3	4	7				5		
			6					1

Visit us online at utrgvrider.com

UTRGV volleyball player's energy brings team together



Omar E. Zapata/THE RIDER

Freshman middle blocker Revna Çakir lifts freshman setter Julia Abramo Rocha during a game against Sam Houston State University Oct. 16 at the UTRGV Fieldhouse in Edinburg.

Omar E. Zapata
SPORTS REPORTER

At every game, you will find freshman volleyball setter Julia Abramo Rocha screaming her heart out in support of her teammates, giving words of encouragement and doing goofy but energetic celebrations, such as pretending to have a heart attack on the court after the team scores a good point.

Described as being the most energetic person on the court by her head coach and teammate, the São Paulo, Brazil, native finds a way to impact the game on and off the court.

Rocha tries to be her teammates' No. 1 supporter by cheering them on.

"If I'm not playing, I need to be there for my teammates and I want them to feel like I'm playing with them on the court," she said. "And I want them

to feel that if they're not playing good, I'm here for them. I'm cheering them up, and I'm here for every point of the game."

Rocha has a variety of celebratory staples in her repertoire, from being lifted in the air like a cheerleader to pretending to take a picture of the team, or faking a heart attack and being resuscitated after the team scores a point.

"[My teammates and I] love doing the celebrations because we know that the girls are gonna look at us and they're gonna be like, 'Yes, they're here for us,'" she said.

Volleyball head coach Todd Lowery told Tohe Rider the energy Rocha brings to games, practices and team meetings is crucial to the team culture he is trying to establish

this season.

"She was part of, like, really, the reset plan that we had [for this season], you know, just for everybody to buy in from top to bottom and being engaged throughout the match, being engaged in practice, and doing all those things," Lowery said.

When recruiting Rocha, he saw the energy in her and

support that she gives to the team is infectious and has spread to the whole team.

Asked how much Rocha's energy at games helps the team, he replied, "It's huge, especially when we go on the road. Of course, it's easy to get the crowd behind us here at home and I think she's a part of what draws the crowd into the match as well. ... So it

gets noticed, but on the road that becomes so important, because it's just our little group in somebody else's gym and how the team can feel their support."

Maria Eduarda Rodrigues, sophomore right side hitter, said she loves Rocha's energy and has had the same energy since meeting her on day one, when they

"[My teammates and I] love doing the celebrations because we know that the girls are gonna look at us and they're gonna be like, 'Yes, they're here for us.'"

*--Julia Abramo Rocha
freshman volleyball setter*

knew she would be good for the team.

"When she got here, it was just kind of times two of what we were expecting," Lowery said.

When Rocha met the team, she thought her high energy and happy personality would be an issue, but that was not the case.

"They love it," she said. "They always say that if Julia's down, the whole team is down. ... And, if Julia's not smiling, something's really wrong."

The fans also notice Rocha's energy. She said people comment on her Instagram, saying things such as "I love your energy" and "Your energy makes people feel happy around you."

Lowery said the genuine

had a team dinner at Lowery's house.

"Every time I look at her, she's cheering me up," Rodrigues said. "We have our own handshake, so every time I come out [of the game] to the handshake, and she always has, like, something to tell me, so it makes me, like, really confident."

Lowery said another way he would describe Rocha's energy is being a kid at heart.

"They're still college kids at the end of the day," he said. "And this has to be some of the best experiences of their lives, and I think sometimes they get too caught up and stuff and they're like, 'I'm too cool to have fun,' you know, and that's what makes Julia so

See **VOLLEYBALL**, Page 11

SPORTS SCHEDULE

WOMEN'S SOCCER



7 P.M. THURSDAY VS. ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY (CONFERENCE, HOME)

7 P.M. SATURDAY VS. CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY (CONFERENCE, HOME)

MEN'S SOCCER



8 P.M. FRIDAY VS. DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY (CONFERENCE, AWAY)

3 P.M. SUNDAY VS. UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS (CONFERENCE, AWAY)



VOLLEYBALL

6:30 P.M. MONDAY VS. TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI (AWAY)

6:30 P.M. THURSDAY VS. SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY (CONFERENCE, AWAY)

NOON SATURDAY VS. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY (CONFERENCE, AWAY)

FACULTY
Continued from Page 3

that the sport could become safer.

“Which is something that, I know a lot of people are concerned about, and Chasse Conque shared his interest also in making this as safe as possible, but it will never be completely safe.”

According to Hinton, another concern raised by faculty from the College of Fine Arts is whether the university has a large enough student population, especially music majors, to create two full marching bands.

“So this is something that I think has not quite been resolved yet,” he said. “Does it mean we’re going to have two small bands? What does that look like? And also, an issue that goes back to the very founding of UTRGV, which is this idea that we have two main campuses, Brownsville and Edinburg.”

Hinton said that he appreciates the idea that the Intercollegiate Athletics Department plans to hold one football game per year in Brownsville or near Brownsville, but it highlights the fact that every other game is going to be in Edinburg, just like in all the other sports.

“And even if you put a marching band in Brownsville, there’s really no way to interpret this as fair or equitable,” Hinton said. “And it’s something I would like UTRGV to figure out. Maybe we could take the football approach and it’s extended to other sports. ... What if there were one soccer, one men’s soccer match per season in Brownsville, one

women’s soccer match per season in Brownsville, one women’s volleyball match in Brownsville each season, right? Maybe that idea. It’s my favorite part of the proposal. Maybe that idea could be a way to really bring Brownsville students into the UTRGV Athletics program and in a better way.”

Asked about a student’s question during the SGA Brownsville Town Hall regarding whether it was ethical for current students to make a decision on the Athletic fee increase when it would only affect future students, Hinton replied that he understands why someone would be concerned about that, but as long as the student body is thinking in the best interest of those future students, then he does not think it is unethical.

“I think we each have to weigh all of these factors,” he said. “We have to go into this with our eyes open about what this could mean, including for things like money.”

Hinton also noted the perspective of sportscaster Bob Costas, who believes that football is going to have difficulty continuing into the upcoming decades.

“Not that it’s ending in the next few years, but that he says there is the beginning of a cultural shift,” he said. “That if there are more parents who don’t want their 12-year-olds to play peewee football, then that’s going to be fewer high school players, which is going to mean fewer players who are going to be trying to play at the college level, which will mean fewer players for the NFL. I don’t know if this

prediction will come true, but it is something to think about.”

College of Fine Arts Dean Block believes the student fee portion of the funding is only a small part of what it is about and it is less important to the University of Texas System Board of Regents than the idea of students supporting a richer campus life.

“That actually is what the vote is really about,” Block said. “Not how to pay for a very small portion of Athletics, which is beyond the football team.”

He said that when discussing a budget for the marching band with Athletics and a consultant, he gave them a preliminary budget of \$300,000 annually that may increase over time.

“If you have a 200-member marching band, you need 200 instruments, you need 200 uniforms and those change every year,” Block said. “You need to pay for the shows that are going on, how those are designed. There are all sorts of things that go into it. Field maintenance, locker storage places, things like that, all of which goes into a marching band.”

He said that in addition to this, there is the unusual circumstance of being two campuses.

“So there has to be equal access, both equal access and equal opportunity for the students on both campuses,” Block said. “That’s a given. And how that gets worked out, that’s going to be the School of Music’s. ... That’s going to be a tough thing. So it may involve another position, another faculty position on the Brownsville campus, and

maybe it may change the way we look at bands.”

Asked about a comment made at the Brownsville SGA town hall by a graphic and web design student quoting him from a College of Fine Arts town hall, Block said he was not referring to the college but the School of Art in Brownsville.

“The School of Art in Brownsville is in a leased building, Rusteberg, which is falling apart, and we don’t even own the building and my point to them is that the School of Art has been built in Brownsville but not strongly enough, and it’s difficult because art requires a really good facility,” he said. “But that’s a completely separate issue. If I used the words ‘Hanging on by a thread’ it would have only been applied to the School of Art, so you gotta remember the difference, which I think a lot of people confuse.”

He said that this is something he has complained about frequently and the college is not keeping anything hidden.

“It’s a real mess and it’s problematic, because we don’t own it and that means the university can’t make any changes to it without asking [Texas Southmost College], who owns the building, to do it and that, as you might guess ... we’re not talking about immediate changes,” he said.

Block also said that when it comes to the referendum, faculty sometimes also only understands the “small picture” rather than the “big picture” and are no different than students.

He said having the community’s support and

interest, this will eventually help fund things like photography and other things because the community has that pride in the institution.

“That’s a difficult thing to explain,” he said. “You have to have a long vision. These things are going to take years to occur.”

Block reiterated that people need to understand the referendum is much more than a question of supporting student fees, and it is really a question of supporting growth, culture, campus life and carving out an identity for UTRGV that goes beyond now.

“That’s the future that’s being voted on and it may not be the time that students want to do this and that’s OK but the reason this is being pushed, I think, maybe this is one of the things that isn’t clear: The regents only meet every two years,” he said. “They’re meeting in February. So, when I was first come to by Chasse [Conque] and Maggie [Hinojosa] in either in August or September, but I think August, there wasn’t a whole lot of time. But if the student referendum isn’t passed, then probably we’re talking at least another two years down the road and then it takes another two years to develop plans and all that so ... and, as you’re hearing me express, it takes a long time to develop plans and develop the right plans.

“So, again, I think the most important point is to realize that this referendum has much more to do with a greater campus life of the students that attend UTRGV in the future than it does center in on a fee.”

CELEBRARÁN
Continuación de Página 5

“Sabiendo la importancia de esa festividad se nos ocurrió promover la lengua por medio de este tipo de festividades y honestamente la primera vez que organizamos estos concursos hace cuatro años tuvimos una respuesta que la verdad no nos la esperábamos.”

Peña-Oliva dijo que se sorprendió mucho la primera vez que organizaron estos concursos ya que alrededor de 50 personas participaron.

“Muchas personas hacen altares en sus casas y me sorprendió que desde el

primer día comenzamos a recibir entradas de las calaveritas”, dijo. “Habiendo una muy buena respuesta por eso lo hemos continuado haciendo anualmente, incluso ha habido casos que ni siquiera hemos comenzado el concurso y ya tenemos estudiantes que empiezan a mandar calaveritas porque les interesa bastante”.

A pesar de que estamos en los Estados Unidos la gente continúa con esta tradición que viene muchas veces desde su familia que es una manera de tener conexión con sus raíces, dijo Peña-Oliva.

“El objetivo de ambos

concursos es aumentar la conciencia cultural entre los estudiantes, los profesores y el personal de la universidad ya que es una institución que da servicio a hispanos”, dijo Garcia. “Este sería el cuarto año que hacemos el concurso de las calaveritas y el segundo año que hacemos el concurso del altar de muertos”.

Peña-Oliva dijo que es importante que se fomenten las culturas mexicanas en la comunidad de UTRGV.

“Es importante que [estudiantes] sepan acerca de estas tradiciones y que las sigan cultivando porque,

como digo, es parte de sus raíces aunque hayan nacido aquí en los Estados Unidos,” dijo. “Yo creo que es importante que ellos sepan de sus orígenes porque para tener una identidad es importante saber exactamente de dónde venimos y cuales son nuestros orígenes”.

Peña-Oliva invita a la comunidad de UTRGV a que participen en estos concursos.

“Nosotros no estamos calificando en base a la gramática si no estamos calificando el trabajo del estudiante” dijo Peña-Oliva. “No importa si escribe un español perfecto, no

importa si escribe una palabra en inglés. Lo importante es que se animen a participar”.

La comunidad de UTRGV puede comenzar a enviar sus calaveritas y las fotos y videos de sus altares de muertos al correo electrónico de *Sigma Delta Pi*.

“El último día para mandar ya sea la Calaverita o las fotos y el video del altar es el día 29 de octubre a las 11:59 de la noche al correo sigmadeltapi@utrgv.edu”, dijo. “Los ganadores de los concursos serán notificados el 10 de noviembre en su correo electrónico”.

MADNESS
Continued from Page 7

Hernandez said Madness is scheduled early this year because of the trunk or treat event Student Activities is hosting outside of the Fieldhouse.

“It’s happening right before, so we’re working together so [students] can be here for trunk or treat as well,” she said. “And then, if they come on that bus, they would ensure one of the T-shirts that we’re going to distribute and they also get a Chick-fil-A sandwich.”

Hernandez said Madness will not only be using the UTRGV shuttles but also separate buses to make sure there is enough seating.

“[Students] can RSVP at goutrgv.com/madness,” she said. “They can RSVP for the bus and it is going to ask you

a couple of questions about whether you need the bus on the way up, on the way back or both. We just want to make sure that we know who’s coming, to make sure that if we need additional transportation, we can get it and just to make sure, for everybody’s safety, that we know who’s on the bus.”

Asked what COVID-19 protocols will be in place, she replied the entire UTRGV Fieldhouse will be used for students to social distance.

“And we’re also encouraging people to wear masks,” Hernandez said. “So we hope that our students will be there, will be attending safely and [that] they can stay in the groups that they come in for safety.”

She said she would encourage students to attend because it only happens once

a year.

“So, if anybody has any doubt about UTRGV spirit and how fun things can be, that is the best event that you can go to, to really just enjoy and be proud of being part of UTRGV and really be with your fellow students, especially right now that a lot of people are online,” Hernandez said. “I think it’s a good opportunity for them to go, like, maybe mingle and get to know their [peers] at the same time.”

She said the university is happy to be the avenue to allow students to make new friends and network.

Natalie Navarrete, a biomedical science junior, said she is interested in attending events throughout Spirit Week leading to UTRGV Madness.

“I’m glad it’s in person, honestly, because I feel like

it makes everyone, I feel like, a little bit more included,” Navarrete said. “We have more participation in actual events. It’s not just school, it’s a break from, like, academics and, like, a breather, but as long as, you know, follow [COVID-19] guidelines.”

She said she believes events like these keep students wanting to come back to school and that her only concern would be not everyone wearing a mask.

“That’s what worries me a little bit,” Navarrete said. “So, that’s kind of like my only concern for myself. I would just make sure I’d be more cautious.”

Joanna Robles, a music education sophomore, said she has never attended UTRGV Madness before but she has heard about it from her friends.

“They said it was very fun, actually,” Robles said. “They totally recommended it to me and, well, my manager that I work with. She used to be a UTRGV student and she said that she has gone and she was actually also recommending it to me. So I’m guessing it’s a pretty good experience.”

Robles said it is important for UTRGV to have signature events because it is a time where everyone sees each other.

Yarisa Peña, a criminal justice freshman, said she likes to be involved at UTRGV.

“Being in programs has helped me a lot. I mean, I’ve been in the TRIO Student Support Services and it has helped me a lot,” Peña said.

She said she is looking forward to feeling the UTRGV spirit, having fun and being distracted from school.

SPRING
Continued from Page 6

needs and provide the best education possible.”
Modalities are determined in a way that will be most effective for each course. Before the pandemic, modality was determined based on faculty choice, interests and preference. During the pandemic, that changed to respond to need. “The primary focus is the pedagogical practice that is best for that particular course in that program,” Lewis said. “I think it’s opened up a lot

of possibilities.” Allison Castillo, a biomedical sciences freshman, said the university has been very helpful during the pandemic. “A lot of my classes are hybrid,” Castillo said. “I’m glad that the teachers are able to go ahead and accommodate for students so they’re online and in person. They both get the same learning experience.” She said that while she has adjusted to and likes online classes, she is looking forward to traditional classes in the spring semester.

“I am, myself, vaccinated,” Castillo said. “It’s to help, not only to decrease the rates of infection between COVID, but also to literally return everything back to normal.” Ximena Zepeda, an integrated health sciences freshman, said that hybrid classes made it easier to stay safe during the pandemic, but that traditional classes are better. “I prefer traditional because if I have questions, I can ask the professor face to face,” Zepeda said. “If there’s any concerns, he can respond right away instead of in an email.”

She said that she is vaccinated, and believes the vaccine is an important part of the return. “I feel like it’s necessary,” Zepeda said. “Because, at the end of the day, like, the vaccine is what’s going to help us end COVID.” Lewis said one of her hopes is to work with her students and colleagues again in a way that is closer to normal. “I hope to see the continued respect and responsibility in our community and support for each other and continued focus on our wellbeing and stay open

to learning,” she said. “We never know what’s around the next corner. If we’re there for each other, then we can make it through anything, as this past almost two years has shown.” Arney hopes for students and faculty to remain safe but engaged. “Our students are our first priority,” she said. “Making sure that they stay on track for them to reach their educational goals is what we’re here to do and what we’re most proud of, and what I hope spring continues to look like.”

VOLLEYBALL
Continued from Page 9

much fun.” Lowery said Rocha is a kid at heart. Her teammates nicknamed her “Dinosaur” because she’s always roaring. “Yeah, you know, she was always, like, acting like she was a dinosaur,” Lowery said. “You know, one of my kids had this dinosaur mask that they’ve had, and I was like, ‘Oh my gosh, I gotta give this to her.’ And we saved it, kind of, for that big moment. And we gave it to her on game day, before the first match, and she came out that morning, wearing the dinosaur mask, just literally walking around the gym like a velociraptor.” Rocha said at the beginning of the season, the team’s connection was not great but by being engaged

and bringing energy to games, practices, the weight room and outside of school, the team has formed a connection. “If we have a good connection, like friendshipwise, we can, like, go really good at the conference and we’re doing great just now,” she said.

“And, if we keep playing like that together, it’s gonna be great.” The Vaqueras’ record was 12-6 as of press time Friday. The team will be on the road for its next six games before coming home to face Lamar University at 2 p.m. Nov. 6 at the UTRGV Fieldhouse in Edinburg.



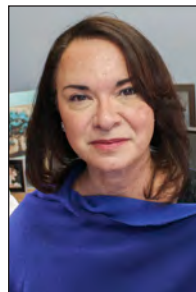
Omar E. Zapata/THE RIDER

Freshman setter Julia Abramo Rocha pretends to take a picture of the UTRGV Volleyball Team after scoring a point in Set 2 against Sam Houston State University Oct. 16 at the UTRGV Fieldhouse in Edinburg.

SUSTAINABILITY
Continued from Page 7

some point, but we have to start behaving more sustainably and we have to start upgrading our campus in a sustainable way,” she said. “We are doing really well in our academics, research and engagement. Those are where we got our highest points.” Garcia explained the importance of joining the university community and how one does not only attend university for the education but also its resources. “I had a meeting with Marianella Franklin, and she says that the Rio Grande Valley is really underappreciated in its resources and she believes that the people from the RGV

are very intelligent,” he said. Garcia said the office has several ideas but lacks resources. “We try to create impacts through education,” Franklin said. She said it launched a new series this year, which includes a podcast series titled “Sustainability... Adelante!,” as well as a TikTok and film series to target different audiences. “We are really here to create student success. That is our goal,” Franklin said. “We find sustainability to be that tool for student success, because it helps our students understand the interconnection of the world we live in, the interconnection of the social, environmental and economic system.”



Marianella Franklin

Storms Dark *By Reese Nittler*

The rows and rows of assorted clutter seemed dauntingly impossible to correct, but a man with a long blue coat did not accept this; his hands moved in slow, graceful motions while he slid boxes of fresh tea leaves onto loftier racks. The teacups below received the same and were swooped aside also.
“I wouldn’t believe one would care about such things,” the man muttered to himself. He then rushed to his counter, where the cash register was hanging open and dropped a few silver coins inside. “I thought this was over. I thought. . . I wished. Yes. Wished. What a fool I am.”
The man’s dark eyes flicked across his shop to a soft mesh curtain that hid the horrible storm outside from view. He rushed at the window and whisked the fabric closed because it wasn’t doing a good enough job.
“Do remind me to speak to Mr. Penn about this, Angelica,” the man implored. His hands fidgeted with the curtain— and even though he was complaining about them, they were not what was bothering him. “Angelica...?”
Angelica let out a soft sigh from behind him and leaped out of her chair.
“Please come here, my love,” the man said. “I need to hold you.”
The tiny kitten padded away from her chair and sprung into the man’s arms.
“I thank you dearly, Angelica,” the man murmured. He rubbed the tip of his nose over her soft brown head and closed his eyes. “Do save me from this pain.”
The kitten meowed dolefully and peered into his dark eyes with her starry, green ones.
“What pain?” the man asked. “Thank you for asking. I love you. I am distressed to the point of simply imploding because I know that—”
The front door burst open with a bang, and torrents of rainwater flooded over the man’s scrubbed floor. Wind gust into the little room, sending papers flying and teacups clattering to the ground.
A young man fell into the room, clutching a hand over his heart and holding a hat over his eyes and face. Water in steady streams poured out of his shoes and clothes, and he stumbled blindly into the room. The door slammed with a snap behind him and the shop owner blinked.
“Welcome to Giles’ Supplies and Other Such Things,” the shop owner said, not seeming to realize that his floor was coated in mud and flowing with floodwater.
“Sir!” the young man sobbed. “Sir! please!”
“I have a feeling that for whatever you are begging me I will gladly assist,” the shop owner said. “I will also allow you to address me as L. E. Giles.”
“L.E...?” the man said, trying desperately to make

himself stop crying. “Anything. Help me. Help me find the...”
“Have a seat,” L. E. Giles said. He indicated a dry chair to his left which was Angelica’s. “And don’t bother saying L. E. Giles. I am Laurence—”
“My son is dying,” the man grieved. “He’s not sick. But he is— he’s—”
“He is cursed, is this correct?” Laurence asked. He stepped over a splotch of mud on the floor and stopped beside the man.
“Yes! Cursed! Yes. Help me. Help me!”
“I will help you,” Laurence said obligingly.
“You will? Thank you! The wizard...”
“You know the wizard?” Laurence asked. A hushed, almost intrigued tone rushed into his voice.
“No— I know where he— lives though. You have to come— with me!”
The man jumped as though startled and bolted towards the door again. He didn’t stop to wait on Laurence and ripped it open— letting rain flood the room once again. His eyes widened under his little cap, and he fell into the storm. Laurence tore after him, leaping across the water on his beautiful wooden floor.
“Wait!” Laurence shouted. “Please wait!”
The man was already bounding across the street, brandishing wildly with his arms and crying anew.
“The wizard lives in the left portion of Second Street!” the man sobbed. “Please. Please! Come!”
“I know he lives on the left portion of Second Street,” Laurence yelled— gently somehow— while he sprinted.
“Then—”
“Stop,” Laurence said. He set an example of this by freezing in a puddle. The filthy water lapped over his boots, and to Laurence’s surprise, the man stopped.
“Sir,” Laurence said. His eyes cast around at the dull houses around him, sorrowfully. “No wizard lives over here.”
The words hit the man in full force, and he slapped his hands over his face.
“Go, then,” the man choked, his voice ragged. He dropped down onto the street where he stood and wept.
“There is no hope. Let me die.”
Laurence did not leave him in the mud to die.
“There is hope,” Laurence said, wanting desperately to be understood. He knelt down on the filthy road and put one hand on the rocks. “Where is your son?”
The man stared into Laurence’s face. Something about it made him trust. Laurence extended his other hand. The man took it.
“Hurry,” Laurence said, hushed. “Take me.”
So Laurence pulled the man out of the mud, then they ran, and they ran through the rain. It was a whirl of motion and bolting past rows of doors, a blur of water

splashing every which way. The man yanked at a handle; a door sprang open— it must belong to his house. It flew open and the man fell inside a room. Laurence leaped in behind him, and they were suddenly staring at a tiny room with one tiny bed which held one tiny boy. Laurence froze the second he entered the home because a chill unlike anything else crept up his spine. Laurence padded across the room to the bed, surprised by the sudden quiet that preceded the raging storm outside. The rain still slashed against the wooden door, and the man covered his face with his hands, leaning against it while Laurence hurried to the tiny child in the bed.
The boy was deeply asleep, moaning and quivering— bound up in what could be described only as tangible wickedness. His tiny hands were shaking and his eyes wouldn’t open. Laurence knelt beside the bed and took both of the tiny hands in his large one.
The boy’s chubby fingers burned with cold— throbbed with the power of the darkness— and Laurence let his eyes flutter shut. The wickedness trapped inside the boy thrashed, jolting Laurence, but the latter refused to let go; whatever evil was locked in the tiny soul would not be able to remain in the presence of Laurence’s purity.
“Leave him!” Laurence cried, and not at the boy. The darkness contracted in wailing agony, vibrating the interlocked fingers before surging out of the boy in a smoking black cloud. The fog of evil rushed away and soared through the air. It slipped under the door— disappearing in a haze of darkness— never to be seen again.
“Daddy?” the little boy asked through the sudden silence.
The boy had a fine, round face that broke into a sunny smile when he caught his father hiding across the room. Laurence sprang up as the boy’s father did the same, then slipped across the room as the man lunged at his son.
The door swung open, and Laurence swung himself out. The rain came for a moment, then left as Wizard Laurence did too. Then Laurence was gone— and the boy lived. The man gripped his son. The boy hugged him back.



***Vote for a Bigger, Stronger,
and Safer Edinburg***

GILBERT 
ENRIQUEZ

For MAYOR of Edinburg

As your former Edinburg city councilman, Gilbert Enriquez has advocated for lower taxes, stronger infrastructure, and responsible spending since 2017. As your next Mayor, he will continue to fight for what is best for Edinburg families.



Distinguished
SPEAKER SERIES
AT **UTRGV**

Presents

LANA CONDOR

ACTRESS AND AAPI ADVOCATE

NOVEMBER 3, 2021 | 7:30PM

VIRTUAL EVENT

RSVP THROUGH V LINK



For more information and accommodations, contact Student Activities at (956) 665-7364 or via email at studentactivities@utrgv.edu.

SCAN
TO RSVP

