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## Student debt forgiveness

**Brigitte Ortiz**  
 THE RIDER

The Biden administration and the U.S. Department of Education announced a three-part plan on Aug. 24 to help federal student loan borrowers transition back to regular payment as pandemic-related support expires. The plan includes loan forgiveness of up to \$20,000, according to the Federal Student Aid website. Since President Joe Biden

took office in January 2021, individuals with federally held loans have not “had to pay a single dollar in loan payments” due to the economic challenges created by the pandemic, according to the website.

Under the first part of the plan, the student loan repayment pause will be extended through Dec. 31, 2022, to “ensure a smooth transition to repayment and prevent unnecessary defaults,” according to the website.

Felipe Olivarez, UTRGV assistant director of Financial Aid, stressed that the plan applies to student loans obtained before June 20, 2022.

“At this moment, we don’t know if they’re only going to approve it for those that are already in repayment, or if they will go ahead and grant the loan forgiveness for anybody that’s currently in school,” he said. “Because, technically, while you’re in school, you’re

See **DEBT**, Page 2

**Biden Administration Student Debt Relief Plan**

- PART 1** The Biden administration will extend the student loan repayment pause one last time, with payments resuming in January 2023.
- PART 2** Debt relief to low- and middle-income families will be provided: up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation to Pell Grant recipients and up to \$10,000 for non-Pell Grant recipients.
- PART 3** Proposing a rule to create a more manageable student loan system for current and future borrowers. This means reducing future monthly payments for low- and middle-income borrowers.

For more information, visit [studentaid.gov/debt-relief/announcement/](https://studentaid.gov/debt-relief/announcement/).

Roxanna Miranda/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

# HOME WIN



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

UTRGV middle blocker Margherita Giani prepares to spike the ball during last Tuesday’s game against Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus. Visit [utrgvrider.com](http://utrgvrider.com) for the full story.

## A life-changing solution



COURTESY PHOTO  
 DR. PAUL BERRY  
 BOARD-CERTIFIED PLASTIC SURGEON AT UT HEALTH RGV AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE DIVISION OF PLASTIC SURGERY

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**  
 SPANISH EDITOR

New to UT Health RGV is a Cosmetic Surgery clinic in Edinburg, which offers surgical and non-surgical aesthetic procedures to the UTRGV and Rio Grande Valley communities. “So we are sort of a comprehensive plastic surgery clinic and I think most of the community knows about our reconstructive efforts and we do great reconstructive surgery in terms of breast reconstruction, skin cancer reconstruction,” said Dr. Paul Berry, a board-certified plastic surgeon at UT Health RGV. See **SOLUTION**, Page 8

## Transportation department rides into fall semester

**Juan Villarreal**  
 THE RIDER

UTRGV officials say about 1,500 passengers rode the Campus Connector on Aug. 29, the first day of the fall semester at UTRGV. The Transportation and Parking Department approaches this demand with excitement, but is not shying away from the concerns of its passengers.

The main change is the influx of students, both returning and, especially, the freshman class, the largest in UTRGV history.

Last week, the university said there were 5,757 incoming students, as reported by The Rider in its Aug. 29 issue.

“There’s a lot more people this year than there were last year,” said student Jaime Vadiendos.

Rodney Gomez, executive director of UTRGV Parking and Transportation, said the department is working to address the increase in ridership.

“We’ve had peaks in the morning coming from campus to campus ... where we’ve had

four or five buses at one time because there’s been so many people,” Gomez said about the shuttle service. “So we do our best to adapt to that demand.”

Some students have complained about the larger number of passengers and the lack of air conditioning on the shuttles, especially in the afternoon.

“It can get really hot in there,” said student Lauren Torres.

Vadiendos agreed. “On the way back, for sure, it got hot,” he said.


See **TRANSPORTATION**, Page 8



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

Pamela Banda, a UTRGV Campus Auxiliary Services student assistant, verifies that students board the proper shuttles as they head back to the Brownsville campus.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Tuesday**  
Moliere Auditions  
Auditions for  
Moliere's "The  
Flying Doctor"  
and "Two Precious  
Maidens Ridiculed"  
will be held from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Studio  
Theater in the Liberal Arts South Building on  
the Edinburg campus. For more information,  
email Theatre Associate Professor **Brian  
Warren** at [brian.warren@utrgv.edu](mailto:brian.warren@utrgv.edu).

'Frankenstein' Auditions  
Auditions for the play "Frankenstein"  
will be held at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre  
from 7 to 10 p.m. For more information,  
email Theatre Professor **Eric Wiley** at  
[eric.wiley@utrgv.edu](mailto:eric.wiley@utrgv.edu).

Involvement Fair  
Students can learn about university  
organizations at the **Involvement Fair**,  
scheduled from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the  
Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus.  
The event is hosted by the **Center for  
Student Involvement** and **Involvement**

**Ambassadors.** There will be **free food**  
and **giveaways.** RSVP on V Link.  
RGV German Club Meeting  
**The RGV German Club** will meet from  
12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Main Building Room  
2.502 on the Brownsville campus.  
Brownsville Bible Reading  
**Christians at RGV** will host a **Bible  
reading** from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in  
Brownsville Student Union Room 2.24.  
**Snacks** will be provided.  
**Wednesday**  
Picnic with the President  
UTRGV will host a **Picnic with the  
President & Executive Leadership**  
from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the  
Music, Science and Learning Center  
on the Brownsville campus and at the  
same time Thursday in the University  
Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. **Free  
hamburgers** and **drinks** will be served.  
For accommodations and questions,  
email [SESAEvents@utrgv.edu](mailto:SESAEvents@utrgv.edu).  
International Meet and Greet  
UTRGV will host a celebration of

**international students** from 11 a.m. to  
1:30 p.m. in the Music, Science and Learning  
Center on the Brownsville campus and at  
the same time Thursday in the University  
Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. The  
event is part of **Welcome Week.**  
K.I.S.S. General Meeting  
**The Korean International Student  
Society** will host a meeting from 12:30  
to 1:45 p.m. in Health Affairs Building  
West Room 1.404 on the Edinburg  
campus. RSVP on V Link.  
Vaqueros School of Magic  
The **Campus Activities Board** will  
host a "Harry Potter"-themed get-  
together for students to be sorted into  
their Hogwarts house. The event will  
feature **arts and crafts** and a showing  
of the movie, "Harry Potter and the  
Prisoner of Azkaban." It will take  
place from 7 to 10 p.m. on the Student  
Union lawn on the Brownsville campus  
and from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday in the  
University Ballroom on the Edinburg  
campus.

Book Club Info Table  
**Inqspot** will provide information about  
its book club from 1 to 2 p.m. in the  
Student Union Commons on the Edinburg  
campus. For accommodations, email  
[studentunion@utrgv.edu](mailto:studentunion@utrgv.edu) or call 665-7989.  
TKE Hot Dog Sale  
**Tau Kappa Epsilon** will sell **hot dogs**  
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. outside the University  
Library on the Edinburg campus.  
EUREC Pound  
**University Recreation** will host a **Pound  
exercise class** from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.  
via Zoom and in EUREC Studio 1. Pound  
combines cardio, strength training and Pilates  
with drumming to burn 500 to 900 calories.  
**Friday**  
SGA Meeting  
The fourth **Student Government  
Association** meeting will take place  
from 2 to 3 p.m. via Zoom and in person  
in Student Academic Center Room 2.130  
on the Edinburg campus. For more  
information, contact [sga@utrgv.edu](mailto:sga@utrgv.edu).  
--Compiled by Landon Burns

## POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Aug. 25 and 31.



**Aug. 25**  
**4:28 p.m.:** A  
UTRGV police  
officer responded  
to a request for  
assistance from the  
U.S. Border Patrol in  
reference to three  
men who crossed the  
border fence south of the UTRGV  
Facilities complex in Brownsville and  
were running east on Ringgold Road.  
The officer detained the three men and  
the Border Patrol arrived and took  
custody of them. The men all claimed  
to be Mexican citizens.  
**Aug. 27**  
**3:39 a.m.:** A UTRGV police officer  
responded to the intersection of  
McColl and Trenton roads in Edinburg  
in reference to a collision involving  
a university vehicle. The Edinburg  
Police Department arrived and placed  
the driver who struck the employee  
under arrest on charges of driving

while intoxicated. The employee and  
the other non-affiliated driver were  
transported to a local hospital with  
non-life-threatening injuries.  
**Aug. 28**  
**6:35 a.m.:** A student reported that  
she had fallen off an inflatable jumper  
at a university event and injured her  
shoulder. Emergency medical services  
arrived and evaluated the student, who  
declined emergency medical services  
transport.  
**Aug. 29**  
**7:43 p.m.:** A student reported she  
had been having issues with an ex-  
boyfriend and requested an escort  
to her vehicle in Lot E-27 on the  
Edinburg campus. Upon arrival at  
the parking lot, her ex-boyfriend (a  
university vendor) was waiting for  
her by the vehicle. He informed the  
officer he only wanted to speak with  
the student to retrieve his belongings  
from her. Both parties decided to meet  
on Saturday at the police department

to return personal items to each other.  
**Aug. 30**  
**8:22 a.m.:** A UTRGV police officer  
was waved down at the Main Building  
on the Brownsville campus regarding  
a student who was making incoherent  
statements. Officers contacted the  
student and determined he was not  
a danger to himself or others. The  
student voluntarily agreed to be seen  
by the UTRGV Counseling Center for  
further assistance.  
**2:03 p.m.:** A student went to pick up  
his wallet, which he had lost earlier in  
the day in the Student Union on the  
Edinburg campus. Upon retrieving the  
wallet, he noticed \$200 was missing.  
The student does wish to file criminal  
charges.  
**5:08 p.m.:** A female student reported  
a male student acquaintance for  
making her uncomfortable by staring  
at her while in the University Library  
on the Edinburg campus. The male  
student had already left the scene upon

the officer's arrival.  
**Aug. 31**  
**11:53 a.m.:** A UTRGV police officer  
responded to a report of a disturbance  
at the UT Health RGV Multispecialty  
Clinic in Harlingen. A staff member  
reported that a male patient became  
upset due to delays and cursed at the  
staff before leaving the area.  
**2:34 p.m.:** A student reported a  
domestic violence incident which  
occurred at her off-campus residence  
involving her live-in boyfriend. She  
filed a report with the Brownsville  
Police Department. The student said  
her boyfriend is also a UTRGV student  
and attends the same classes as  
she does. She has contacted the  
Office of Student Rights and  
Responsibilities, UTRGV Police  
Department Victims Services  
Advocate and the Office for Advocacy  
and Violence Prevention, which are  
providing services.  
--Compiled by Landon Burns

**DEBT**  
*Continued from Page 1*

not in repayment for student loans,  
because your student loan payments are  
deferred."

The second part of the plan, once  
payments resume, to help students or  
borrowers at risk of delinquencies, the  
Education Department will provide  
up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation to  
Pell Grant recipients and \$10,000 to  
non-Pell Grant recipients. Their relief  
will be capped at the amount of their  
outstanding debt.

To be eligible, the individual's income  
must be less than \$125,000 or \$250,000  
for married couples or heads of households.  
Olivarez said the Education  
Department will make an application  
available before the end of the student  
loan repayment pause in December of  
this year.

"Borrowers are advised to apply before  
November 15th in order to receive relief  
before the payment pause expires,"  
according to the Federal Student Aid  
website. "The Department of Education  
will continue to process applications as  
they are received, even after the pause  
expires on December 31, 2022."

After the application has been  
submitted, students or borrowers can  
expect relief within four to six weeks.

Students or borrowers who made their  
income data available to the Education  
Department may be eligible to receive  
relief automatically.

Part three of the plan involves the  
Biden administration proposing "a rule  
to create a new income-driven repayment  
plan that will substantially reduce future  
monthly payments for lower- and  
middle-income borrowers," according to  
the Federal Student Aid website.

The plan would require borrowers  
to not pay more than 5% of their  
discretionary income monthly on  
undergraduate loans; raise the amount  
of income that is considered non-  
discretionary income and therefore is  
protected from repayment; forgive loan  
balances after 10 years of payments and  
cover the borrower's unpaid monthly  
interest, the website states.

Olivarez said the Financial Aid Office  
will make information available to the  
UTRGV community to make sure that  
everybody is aware, as far as what they  
need to do in order to apply for this loan  
forgiveness.


"So one thing that we did do with the  
public service loan forgiveness when  
they basically provided that temporary  
waiver, we basically collected all the  
information that was needed, and how to  
guide student loan borrowers to apply,"

he said. "So we sent out emails, we placed  
a banner on the UTRGV homepage to  
redirect students to that information and  
that process, and how to actually submit  
that."

Mark Kaswan, an associate professor  
in the department of Political Science,  
said it is a great program that is going to  
help a lot of people.

"There are a lot of arguments that say  
that it doesn't go far enough," Kaswan  
said. "And it's still going to leave a lot  
of people with a lot of debt, but it's also  
going to help a lot of people. It doesn't  
solve the problem of student debt  
entirely, but it will help."

To be notified when the application  
is open, visit [Subscriptions | U.S.](#)  
Department of Education. For more  
information on the plan, visit [The Biden-  
Harris Administration's Student Debt  
Relief Plan Explained.](#)



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# Recruiting senators

SGA invites students to apply for vacant positions

## Student Government Association Open Application

Source: <https://messenger.utrgv.edu/#/bulletin/49625>

### Legislative Branch

- . College of Education & P-16 Integration (4 Senators)
- . College of Engineering & Computer Science (3 Senators)
  - . College of Fine Arts (4 Senators)
  - . College of Health Professions (2 Senators)
  - . College of Liberal Arts (3 Senators)
  - . Graduate College (2 Senators)
- . Robert C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship (3 Senators)
  - . School of Nursing (4 Senators)
  - . School of Social Work (4 Senators)
  - . Senator-at-Large for Brownsville (3)

### Executive Branch

- . Secretary of Administration and Finance (1 Senator)

Isabel Morales/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

### Andrea Flores

THE RIDER

Student Government Association President  
Jonathan Dominguez and Vice President Kimberly

Escalante said the SGA is looking to fill 33 vacancies for the 2022-2023 academic year. In the College of Education & P-16 Integration, there are four vacant positions; the College of Engineering &

Computer Science, three; the College of Fine Arts, four; the College of Health Professions, two; the College of Liberal Arts, three; the School of Nursing, four; the School of Social Work, four; the Robert

C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship, three; and the Graduate College, two.

The SGA also needs three senators-at-large for the Brownsville campus. In the executive branch, the position of secretary of Administration and Finance is also open.

Dominguez said the organization's duties and responsibilities will not be affected by the vacancies in the legislative branch.

“Since it's the first week, this is when things are going to start changing,” he said. “It's too early to make any assumptions or conclusions about what could potentially happen.”

Escalante added that the current senators are active in the association's activities. She also said the legislative branch would focus on recruiting senators for colleges that lack representation, such as the College of Fine Arts.

Asked how the SGA would tackle this matter, Dominguez replied that besides participating in events such as The Stomp and Info Depots, the association plans on holding town hall meetings with each college.

“I'm in the works of meeting with the College of Sciences

to see how we can increase representation on each campus and how we can get more students involved from the College of Sciences,” he said.

Dominguez said the application is first sent to the executive team. After the team arranges an interview with the student, it decides whether to accept the student or not. If approved, the executive team sends the recorded interview to the Internal Affairs Committee, which votes for or against the candidate. The student is then asked to give a short speech at the next senate meeting where members conduct a final vote.

“They do have to be enrolled in at least six academic hours, so that's part time,” Program Coordinator Kourtnie Hernandez said about candidates. “And then, they also have to be on good academic standing defined by the university.”

Students must also have completed at least two semesters at UTRGV.

“The most important qualification is for them to have the spirit of wanting to serve, more than anything,” Dominguez said.

SGA applications are available on VLink throughout the academic year.

VISIT [UTRGV.EDU/VLINK](https://UTRGV.EDU/VLINK)  
TO VIEW THE  
SGA 2022-2023 APPLICATION

# CLUB SPOTLIGHT



Daniela Martinez Salazar/THE RIDER

Members and officers of the International Society of Automation include (front row, from left) Membership Chair Jennifer Calderon, Treasurer Jade Mendieta and Secretary Anette Torres. Back row: member Sebastian Villanueva, Vice President James Cua, President Eugenio Reyes and Program Chair Brandon Ramirez.

**Name:** International Society of Automation (ISA)

**Established:** 2021

**Mission:** Advance technical competence by connecting the automation community to achieve operational excellence.

**Purpose:** The International Society of Automation (ISA) helps students with great opportunities throughout their academic career, such as creating a network and helping them connect with different companies. ISA helps students work hands-on in labs, gain experience and technical skills, participate in competitions and attend conferences.

**President:** Eugenio Reyes

**Vice President:** James Cua

**Secretary:** Anette Torres

**Treasurer:** Jade Mendieta

**Membership Chair:** Jennifer Calderon

**Program Chair:** Brandon Ramirez

**Faculty Adviser:** Jesus Gonzalez, assistant professor in practice in the Engineering Technology Program

**Membership Requirements:** All majors welcome. \$10 annual fee.

**Meetings:** To be announced.

**For more information, email:** [jesus.gonzalez1@utrgv.edu](mailto:jesus.gonzalez1@utrgv.edu).

--Compiled by Daniela Martinez Salazar

Want your club featured?

Email us at

[therider@utrgv.edu](mailto:therider@utrgv.edu) or call us

at 882-5143 in Brownsville and

665-5085 in Edinburg!



# VAQUERO VOICE

How was your experience on the first day of school?



Anahi Mejia  
Biology sophomore

"It was nice. It was just, like, the parking lot was, like, really, really packed. So, like, 20 minutes to get some parking space. And then it was really, really hot. But overall, like, it was pretty chill."

"So, today was actually pretty crazy because I live in Edinburg and I had classes here in Brownsville at 9:30. So I missed the bus and I had to come here and drive. And I also couldn't find parking and I knew where my classes were, but I was kind of lost. It was my first time in campus here in Brownsville. So, it was pretty, you know, kind of hectic. But the classes [were] pretty good. Professors were really nice and they were kind of, like, lenient with the first day of class. And I was late, so I had to tell them that I am from Edinburg. So, but, they were pretty fun and exciting."



Deborah Lagas  
Integrated health science junior



Kiona Brooks  
Art education junior

"My first day was pretty interesting. I met some people that had the same interests as me, and I felt more connected than I have in a while. I'm very excited to see where my classes take me and I'm set to have a great year."

"So the first day of school was a little hectic, starting off with the parking. But overall it was really good. It was a lot of walking, but all my classes were very interesting and they were fun. And especially the professors, they made it very—they were, they're very lenient. And they just made me feel very welcome."



Ludwika Flores  
Biomedical sciences freshman



Uzzi Guasa  
Chemistry sophomore

"My first day of school, I guess it was pretty hectic. I'm from the Edinburg campus. I came to [Brownsville] at 7:30ish and I couldn't get to my classes because traffic was pretty crazy. So I couldn't get to my classes till, I think, around 8:15. So that's how much traffic was packed. But other than that, I think I had fun with my classes. It was very back to back, but it was very refreshing to go back into university."

--Compiled and photos by Danielle Perez

## Participation awards: Do they teach us how to lose?



Abigail Ollave  
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

boost the confidence of young competitors who did not experience the hardships of failure. They will later develop a sense of entitlement given the fact they have not learned what it is like to earn success in return for hard work.

Children should learn how to fail, to learn and develop. One does not technically fail if they are handed a title of recognition for simply participating. Falling short of our accomplishments teaches us that disappointment will come.

Children should learn how to fail, to learn and develop.

Failing will also spawn a thirst for greatness.

Being present is too low of a bar to set for impressionable children or young adults.

Many will justify this poor attempt at positive reinforcement as a good way of teaching responsibility or the value of taking time out of your day to participate in team activities.

Children, and perhaps adults, too, will soon disregard team building, trust and intrinsic motivation once each participant sees that they are recognized for only attending

the event. They will cut down on working or training hard, because if their goal is to collect awards, then an award is an award, despite the title.

In the real world, simply showing up will not be good enough and will not help them prosper in their preferred field. We should all be learning to push past the expectations, not limiting ourselves during our journey to success.

Not to mention, these "trophies" might inspire narcissism.

As each child receives a participation award, they will feel as if they are the most skilled and talented, no matter how much or little skill they have for that competition.

Through allowing all to receive the same level of recognition, we create a false sense of accomplishment in the competitors who did not put forth the same effort as the harder-working peers.

If we were to continue to give them participation awards, they will lose the intrinsic value and motivation to compete and excel among worthy competitors. They will only grow lazy as they soon realize that, regardless of the effort invested in the sport or craft, they will receive an award, nonetheless.

Once we eliminate this See **AWARDS**, Page 8

**WACKY WEB POLL**

WOULD YOU RATHER BE SPIDER-MAN COVERED IN ANTS OR ANT-MAN COVERED IN SPIDERS?

**93%**  
Spider-Man

**7%**  
Ant-Man

Visit us online at [utgrider.com](http://utgrider.com) to participate →

**AIR MAIL**  
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# Reducción de deuda estudiantil

**Brigitte Ortiz**  
THE RIDER

La administración de Biden y el Departamento de Educación de EE.UU. anunciaron un plan de tres partes el 24 de agosto para ayudar a los prestatarios de préstamos estudiantiles federales a hacer la transición de regreso al pago regular cuando expire el apoyo relacionado con la pandemia.

El plan incluye la reducción de la deuda estudiantil de hasta \$20,000, según el sitio web de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes.

Desde que el presidente Joe Biden asumió el cargo en enero de 2021, las personas con préstamos federales no han "tenido que pagar un solo dólar en pagos de préstamos" debido a los desafíos económicos creados por la pandemia, según el sitio web.

Según la primera parte del plan, la pausa en el pago de préstamos estudiantiles se extenderá hasta el 31 de diciembre de 2022 para "garantizar una transición fluida al pago y evitar incumplimientos innecesarios", según el sitio web.

Felipe Olivarez, subdirector de Asistencia Económica de UTRGV, destacó que el plan aplica para los créditos estudiantiles obtenidos antes

del 20 de junio de 2022.

"En este momento, no sabemos si solo lo van a aprobar para aquellos que ya están pagando, o si seguirán adelante y otorgarán la reducción del préstamo para cualquiera que esté actualmente en la escuela", dijo. "Porque, técnicamente, mientras está en la escuela, no está pagando los préstamos estudiantiles, porque los pagos de sus préstamos estudiantiles son diferidos".

La segunda parte del plan es una vez que se reanuden los pagos, para ayudar a los estudiantes o prestatarios en riesgo de morosidad, el Departamento de Educación proporcionará hasta \$20,000 en cancelación de deuda a los beneficiarios de la Beca Pell y \$10,000 a los que no son beneficiarios de la Beca Pell. Su alivio estará limitado al monto de su deuda pendiente.

Para ser elegible, el ingreso del individuo debe ser inferior a \$125,000 o \$250,000 para parejas casadas o cabezas de hogar.

Olivarez dijo que el Departamento de Educación pondrá a disposición una solicitud antes del final de la pausa de pago de préstamos estudiantiles en diciembre de este año.

"Se recomienda a los prestatarios que presenten su solicitud antes del 15

**Plan federal de reducción de deuda para los estudiantes**

- PARTE 1** La administración Biden extenderá la pausa de reembolso del préstamo estudiantil por última vez, y los pagos se reanudarán en enero de 2023.
- PARTE 2** Se proporcionará alivio de la deuda a las familias de ingresos bajos y medios: hasta \$20,000 en cancelación de la deuda a los beneficiarios de Pell Grant y hasta \$10,000 para los beneficiarios que no sean Pell Grant.
- PARTE 3** Proponer una regla para crear un sistema de préstamos estudiantiles más manejable para los prestatarios actuales y futuros. Esto significa reducir los pagos mensuales futuros para los prestatarios de ingresos bajos y medios.

Para más información, visite [studentaid.gov/debt-relief-announcement/](https://studentaid.gov/debt-relief-announcement/).

Roxanna Miranda/GRÁFICA RIDER

de noviembre para recibir alivio antes de que expire la pausa de pago", según el sitio web de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes. "El Departamento de Educación continuará procesando las solicitudes a medida que se reciban, incluso después de que expire la pausa el 31 de diciembre de 2022".

Después de que se haya presentado la solicitud, los estudiantes o prestatarios pueden esperar alivio dentro

de cuatro a seis semanas.

Los estudiantes o prestatarios que proporcionaron datos de sus ingresos al Departamento de Educación pueden ser elegibles para recibir ayuda automáticamente.

La tercera parte del plan implica que la administración de Biden proponga "una regla para crear un nuevo plan de pago basado en los ingresos que reducirá sustancialmente los pagos mensuales futuros

para los prestatarios de ingresos bajos y medios", según el sitio web de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes.

El plan requeriría que los prestatarios no paguen más del 5% de sus ingresos discretos mensuales en préstamos para estudiantes universitarios de pregrado; aumentar la cantidad de ingresos que se consideran ingresos no discretos y, por lo tanto, están protegidos

Veá DEUDA, Página 8

**I.T. TECHDAYS**

Web design > Gaming > UI/UX > Cyber security

**Brownsville Campus:**  
PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón  
**Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022**

**Edinburg Campus:**  
Ballroom  
**Monday, Oct. 3, 2022**

**Harlingen:** UTRGV Clinical Education Building  
Auditorium / Rotunda & Hallway  
**Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022**

Open to UTRGV students (student ID recommended).  
Visit [UTRGV.edu/events/ittechdays](https://UTRGV.edu/events/ittechdays) for details.

## Mariachi Aztlán continues to grow



Omar E. Zapata/THE RIDER

UTRGV Mariachi Aztlán member Nathan Fernandez leads fellow violinists during practice last Tuesday at the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Seated (from left) are Alan Sanchez, Cassandra Juarez, Anthony Flores and Priscilla Espinoza.

**Omar E. Zapata**  
A&E REPORTER

Mariachi Aztlán formed in 1989 at legacy institution University of Texas-Pan American as a way to represent

the students and culture of the area and has blossomed into a nationally award-winning program.

Dahlia Guerra, UTRGV assistant vice president for Public Art and Special

Projects, founded Mariachi Aztlán when few music programs in the Rio Grande Valley offered mariachi.

“La Joya High School started [a mariachi program] in 1982 and I think McAllen

High School started a year before us,” Guerra said. “But I had been impressed by the La Joya program. ... The students really enjoyed what they were doing and it was a beautiful way to showcase the culture of their area. ... So, I started it here.”

From performances for then-President Barack Obama at the White House in October 2010 to collaborating with the Houston Grand Opera for the world’s first mariachi opera “Cruzar la Cara de la Luna,” Mariachi Aztlán has made a name for itself in the mariachi world.

“It’s been my life’s work and brought me so much joy and so much satisfaction,” Guerra said. “I feel like that it’s a legacy that I’m leaving. I have been at it for around 30 years. ... So my whole life has been traveling the mariachi and promoting the mariachi. ... I didn’t know what I expected. I just was doing it for the love of music and for the love of our culture.”

She said seeing many students thrive and blossom through their experiences has resulted in many becoming teachers all over the state and professional artists.

Some notable alumni from Mariachi Aztlán are Mónica Fogelquist, an assistant professor of practice in mariachi and ethnomusicology and the director of the University of Texas at Austin’s Mariachi Paredes; Adolfo Estrada, an assistant professor at the Texas State University School of Music; Carlos Toledo and José Perez, members of the Mariachi Sol de Mexico; and Nathan Garcia, of Mariachi Los Camperos.

Francisco Loera, Mariachi Aztlán co-director and a UTRGV School of Music senior lecturer, joined the group as a student in 1994 and has been associated with the group ever since.

“It’s not an 8-to-5 job,” Loera said. “It’s a lot of practice [and] ... research, and to take the kids to all these conferences where they can learn and motivate the kids and just submerge them into the mariachi culture.”

Currently, Mariachi Aztlán consists of eight violins, three guitars, three trumpets, a *guitarrón* and *vihuela*, with many students being able to play multiple. See **MARIACHI**, Page 8

## Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

**Danielle Perez**  
ONLINE EDITOR

**Aries**-Forget about other people’s opinions and focus on what you believe in. Don’t allow this to step in the way of your goals. Remove any negativity from your energy and reinforce the solitude you deserve. Soon you will be back on track with everything lined up waiting for you.

**Leo**-Old habits always seem to creep back up when you least expect it. Therefore, be aware of your decisions and behaviors. If you are determined to change these patterns, do not entertain them. The more you do this, the further you push away what the universe has for you.

**Sagittarius**-It’s time to let go of your old self to become the new version you’ve been dreaming of. Spirit has big plans waiting for you to embrace once you’re ready. Allow yourself to take a big break, if needed, before moving forward in your spiritual journey.

**Libra**-Restore your confidence by setting boundaries in your relationships. Refrain from allowing people to get the best of your emotions, as this is weighing you down. After doing this, you will feel refreshed, revealing the impact it had on you.

**Gemini**-Instead of blaming others for how you’re currently feeling, try to develop self-awareness. Spirit is trying to encourage you to reflect on your reactions to situations. Sometimes we don’t realize that the outcomes of situations happen due to how we choose to handle it.

**Aquarius**-Death is inevitable and a hard subject to comprehend. For that reason, speak to someone you trust about what you are experiencing to release any hidden emotions. Perspective and awareness will be reaching you soon to attain peace of mind.

**Scorpio**-Your self-control will be tested this week. Remind yourself to be patient when something arises. Instead of feeling outraged, try a different angle when solving your problems.

**Pisces**-Treat this week like never before: Be social, positive and assertive. Changing your attitude on how you go about your day will help improve it. Avoid isolating yourself and being the quiet student in the back of the classroom. Be the spontaneous one.

**Cancer**-Although people are testing your limits, do not let it push you overboard. Disconnect yourself from the situation and reflect on it instead. Ask yourself if the stress is worth your time. Value yourself enough to know when to let go.

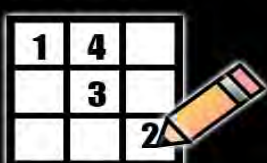
**Taurus**-This week will end on a happy note; therefore, don’t worry about the tasks that are pending on your planner.

Soon they will be completed with time to spare for other activities. Take it easy throughout the week and share some laughs while you’re at it.

**Virgo**-These next couple of months will be important for your future. Take into consideration everything you learn and people you encounter to see how it can benefit you. Make plans and set new goals that you want to accomplish before the year ends.

**Capricorn**-Open yourself to others by offering a helping hand whenever you can. Remember the universe always repays others for the kindness they give out. Spreading good energy will bring positive luck to you and your future.

## Sudoku



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

Last week’s puzzle answer key:

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

## Dibble Dabbles

by Alejandro Peña



Athlete of the Week:  
Taj Sutherland



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

Taj Sutherland, an interdisciplinary studies junior from Casper, Wyoming, is a redshirt sophomore on the UTRGV Men's Golf Team.

**Q: What do you like to do for fun outside of golf?**

**A:** "Honestly, I don't really have many other hobbies. I pretty much just hang out with my teammates, and just kind of see what happens throughout the day."

**Q: What movies or shows do you like?**

**A:** "Everything action, that's about it. I've watched 'Formula 1: Drive to Survive' on Netflix. That's my favorite show by far."

**Q: What kind of music do you like listening to?**

**A:** "Country, huge country fan. Morgan Wallen and Luke Combs, those are my two biggest, for sure."

**Q: What are some of your personal goals this year?**

**A:** "I think, just first off, I just wanna meet the team, get to know everybody. I want to be the tightest team we can be, for sure. As far as playing, I mean, I really just want to do the best that I can do. I try not to put too many expectations on anything because then I try to chase those a little too hard. I'm just trying to stay me and stay confident and see what I can do."

**Q: What are your career plans?**

**A:** "After college, turn pro, go for as long as I can in this and see how that ends up. Just try to make it as far as I can. I've got some pretty good belief in myself."

**Q: Who inspires you?**

**A:** "I think my dad inspires me a lot for his work ethic. He is a very strongly driven man, so I try to kind of go off of what I've seen him do throughout my life."

--Compiled by Jose Medina

# Clear bag policy

## Athletics implements new rules

# UTRGV ATHLETICS

## CLEAR BAG POLICY

### APPROVED BAGS

CLEAR BAG

Made of plastic, vinyl or PVC  
Size does not exceed 12" x 6" x 12"



PLASTIC STORAGE BAG

One-gallon, resealable, clear



SMALL BAG

Does not have to be clear but cannot exceed 4.5" x 6.5"



### PROHIBITED BAGS

Purses	Cases (camera, binoculars, etc.)
Backpacks	Fanny packs
Printed pattern plastic bags	Reusable grocery totes
Tinted plastic bags	Mesh or straw bags
Duffel bags	Large totes





For more information, visit [GoUTRGV.com/ClearBag](http://GoUTRGV.com/ClearBag)

GRAPHIC BY UTRGV ATHLETICS

### Matthew Gonzalez

THE RIDER

UTRGV Athletics has implemented a clear bag policy for home athletic events to keep attendees safe and to ensure weapons as well as other items, such as purses and noisemakers, are not brought.

The most recent event that

prompted the creation of the policy was the May 24 shooting at Robb Elementary School in the southwest Texas city of Uvalde, according to Vice President and Athletics Director Chasse Conque.

"It's all about the safety of our fans and our student athletes and those that come in our venue, especially ... in light of what's happened here in the state of Texas, and some of the unfortunate situations, that we've all seen happen," Conque said.

A gunman killed 19 students and two teachers at the Uvalde

elementary school.

The UTRGV policy was researched and modeled after other venues that have had success with their policies, according to Sara Hernandez, Athletics director for Marketing and Strategic Initiatives.

"So, the first thing we did was go out and do some research to see what other, not only

universities, but also other venues, like H-E-B Park, for example, and the Bert Ogden Arena," Hernandez said. "So we did a lot of research, to see, kind of, what

the standard was and what was applicable. We know it's something that our fans may not be used to.

"So we wanted it to be something that they might have seen somewhere else. So, I think the main thing was looking at research to see what things apply to us and what things didn't. And we kind of went from there and came up with what we thought was best

for our venues."

To make sure everyone is aware of the policy before attending sporting events, the Athletics Department has been advertising on social media.

"We've been hammering it down on Instagram as well, quite a bit," Hernandez said. "And also, once people get to the Fieldhouse, there will be some signage, in case you missed everything."

Psychology freshman Maria Espinoza attends volleyball games regularly and her reaction to the policy has been positive.

"I think, with what has been happening in the country, a

policy like this is necessary to keep everyone at an event safe," Espinoza said. "Most of the items that are listed shouldn't be brought anyway. Most people won't be affected by the policy and those that are can buy clear bags. I do think not allowing purses is a bit much but if it means we will be safer, I'm all for it."

Clear bags may not exceed 12-by-6-by-12 inches. Exceptions will be made for diaper or medically necessary bags.

For more information on the policy, visit [goutrgv.com/news/2022/8/17/general-utrgv-athletics-announces-clear-bag-policy.aspx](http://goutrgv.com/news/2022/8/17/general-utrgv-athletics-announces-clear-bag-policy.aspx).

WHAT DO YOU WANT  
TO SEE IN THE RIDER?  
CALL US AT  
882-5143 OR 665-2541

## THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

UTRGV VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT  
AT UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

<p style="margin: 0;"><b>FRIDAY</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">2:30 p.m. PRAIRIE VIEW A&amp;M UNIVERSITY VS. UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:30 p.m. UTRGV VS. UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA</p>	<p style="margin: 0;"><b>SATURDAY</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">11 a.m. UTRGV VS. PRAIRIE VIEW A&amp;M UNIVERSITY</p> <p style="margin: 0;">2:30 p.m. UTRGV VS. UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA</p>
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**SOLUTION***Continued from Page 1*

Health RGV, vice chairman of the Division of Plastic Surgery and an assistant professor in the Department of Surgery.

Some of the cosmetic and reconstruction services the clinic offers include tummy tucks, tumor removal, hernia repair, buttock augmentation with fat grafting and much more.

The clinic, which opened on Aug. 22, also offers minimally invasive procedures such as Botox, chemical peel, sclerotherapy and soft tissue fillers.

"A lot of the cosmetic operations and procedures that we do involve, essentially, correcting the mistakes of other surgeons in the community," Berry said. "So, one of the things we realize is that, you know, we have to make more of an effort so that we will be the primary people to help avoid some of the complications and problems that we are seeing."

He said the clinic will soon have energy devices for hair removal, hair reduction and some non-invasive anti-aging procedures.

Reconstructive surgery is done to rebuild a part of the body malformed by a disease or medical condition.

"So as plastic surgeons, we are trained and we have clinical experience in reconstructive surgery, which most plastic surgeons will define as taking something that is abnormal and making it more normal," Berry said. "Let's say a lady gets breast cancer and she has to have a mastectomy where she has to lose her breasts. Well, we are the ones that would come by and, essentially, give her [breasts] back."

In cosmetic surgery, a person chooses to have a procedure to change their physical appearance for cosmetic rather than medical reasons.

"We take something that is pretty normal and we make it, sort of, enhanced in some way," Berry said. "There is a wide

range of what is considered normal when it comes to noses. They can breathe through it, they sound reasonably normal when they speak, but they don't like the shape of it for whatever reason. ... We take that and we reshape it to make it more in line with how they see themselves.

"When we meet a patient and we are trying to decide on a treatment plan, it has to be a plan that is for that specific patient. Rhinoplasty is a great example. I can make the perfect rhinoplasty for your nose and if I put it on somebody else's face, it looks bizarre. So all the plans have to be directed towards the individual patients."

Berry said UT Health accepts insurance on some surgeries.

"Most of our reconstructive surgeries are covered by insurance because they are considered medically necessary," he said. "Now, of course, cosmetic surgery is generally not considered medically necessary. So insurance becomes non-relevant."

UT Health accepts some insurance plans, such as Aetna, Ambetter, Molina and WellMed. Visit its website for more information about insurance coverage.

"Our injectable procedures, our minimally invasive procedures and our minor surgeries are performed at our clinic location for our major operation," Berry said. "The things that require sort of a general anesthetic and things like that, we operate [at the] Edinburg Regional Medical Center, McAllen Medical Center, sometimes Cornerstone and Harlingen Medical Center."

The UT Health RGV Surgical Specialty clinic is located at 3115 Center Pointe Drive in Edinburg. To schedule an appointment, fill out the online appointment request form on its website or call 1-833-887-4863.

The clinic on the Edinburg campus is open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Computer science junior Laisha Garcia Dominguez said the reconstructive surgeries that the clinic offers will change the lives of many people.

"I think that is a pretty good thing and it is pretty important because there is a lot of people that will get into accidents," Dominguez said.

English senior Kimberly Gonzalez has a relative who needed plastic surgery and said there is a local demand for the service.

"My cousin broke her nose really bad and she had to get it fixed," Gonzalez said. "So, I think, in cases like that, it's super necessary but in other cases, it's really just our societal standards towards it. That's the problem."

She said more reconstruction surgery facilities will benefit the Valley.

"I haven't seen a lot of cosmetic and reconstruction surgery places around," Gonzalez said. "I know we have a few, but it's always good to have more if people need it."

**TRANSPORTATION***Continued from Page 1*

Gomez said the lack of air conditioning is a maintenance issue.

"That might be a factor," he said. "You know, maybe we haven't gotten a bus back from wherever we got it to be repaired."

Gomez said the department is addressing the issue.

"We are completely rehabbing most of our internal fleet ... completely replacing the engine,

replacing some of the other parts, including the AC, so that we don't have a repeat of that," Gomez said. "Because we need those buses on the road, we're doing it on [a] one-by-one basis."

He also responded to students' concern about the elimination of the 8 p.m. line.

"We needed to find some time, just for safety purposes, to allow the driver to rest and to allow the vehicle to be refueled," Gomez said.

Other students are concerned about not having

enough lines in general.

"If our [professors] let us out late, then we might miss the shuttle back to Brownsville," art major Ashley Bana said. "Sometimes [students] work and they miss the bus and that's hard."

According to Gomez this issue could be addressed by the municipalities of Brownsville and Edinburg prioritizing public transportation.

"We could benefit from a more developed transit system that offered more routes,

more routes throughout the day instead of certain times of the day," he said.

Despite these challenges, Gomez remains confident the UTRGV public transportation system is a vital service for students on campus.

"It's very cost effective to take the bus versus typically taking a private automobile, just in terms of the insurance, the maintenance, the gas, all of that stuff," he said. "You can be on a bus. Study, relax, just chill out and you're gonna

get to where you need to go."

For Gomez, the same is true for the importance of the VOLT line, which runs through both campuses, driving students throughout campus and the parking lots.

"That's just convenience," he said. "You can park remotely. ... You can take the VOLT."

Vadiendos and Torres agree.

"They're doing pretty good so far," Vadiendos said.

Torres said, "It's, honestly, a good experience."

**AWARDS***Continued from Page 4*

concept of participation awards, children's path to success in the real world will be better paved.

To solve this issue, as we continue to build children's self-esteem, other ways of recognition could be a certificate acknowledging their area of expertise.

For instance, in sports, though the team may not have won, each participant could still be awarded superlatives, such as "Most Improved," "Best Spirit," "Most Valuable Player," and so

on. These awards would be more encouraging since they highlight each member's skill and boost their self-esteem as it is more personalized than a title awarded to everyone.

This is only one idea to eliminate participation awards, though I strongly believe it can ignite those who lose to become a greater version of themselves.

**DEUDA***Continuación de Página 5*

contra el reembolso; perdona los saldos de los préstamos después de 10 años de pagos y cubre los intereses mensuales impagos del prestatario, afirma el sitio web.

Olivarez dijo que la Oficina de Ayuda Financiera pondrá información a disposición de la comunidad de UTRGV para

asegurarse de que todos estén al tanto de lo que deben hacer para solicitar la reducción de deuda.

"Entonces, una cosa que hicimos con la reducción de deuda de servicio público cuando básicamente proporcionaron esa extensión temporal, básicamente recopilamos toda la información que se necesitaba

y cómo guiar a los prestatarios de préstamos estudiantiles para que presenten la solicitud", dijo. "Así que enviamos correos electrónicos, colocamos un banner en la página de inicio de UTRGV para redirigir a los estudiantes a esa información y ese proceso, y cómo enviarlo realmente".

Mark Kaswan, profesor asociado en el departamento

de Ciencias Políticas, dijo que es un gran programa que ayudará a mucha gente.

"Hay muchos argumentos que dicen que no va lo suficientemente lejos", dijo Kaswan. "Y seguirá dejando a muchas personas con muchas deudas, pero también ayudará a muchas personas. No resuelve por completo el problema de la deuda

estudiantil, pero ayudará".

Para recibir una notificación cuando la aplicación esté abierta, visite Suscripciones | Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos. Para obtener más información sobre el plan, visite la Explicación del plan de reducción de la deuda estudiantil de la administración Biden-Harris.

**MARIACHI***Continued from Page 6*

instruments, Loera said.

Eduardo Martínez, a music senior and trumpet player in the group, said he comes from a multigenerational family of mariachis and joined Mariachi Aztlán in 2018.

Martínez said he had heard about how prestigious the group was and made it his goal to join.

In his fourth year with Mariachi Aztlán, Martínez said the current group is a good mix of newcomers and veterans.

Having traveled and toured with Mariachi Aztlán for the last four years, Martínez will

not participate in tours slated for this year to give other members a chance at those experiences.

"There's two new guys here and they haven't gotten the opportunity," Martínez said. "I want them to go, and it's their turn to enjoy that kind of experience."

Guerra said it makes her happy to give students experiences outside of the Valley, such as performing at the Kennedy Center, the Hollywood Bowl, Santa Barbara Bowl and at many other venues across the United States.

"Some of these kids had never left the Valley," she said. "They had never been on an

airplane. So, for example, to go and meet the president, it's just a moment they'll never forget."

Loera said students jump to another level when they perform with other groups or mariachi, such as playing with the Houston Grand Opera or the Chicago Lyric Opera.

"They learn responsibility and experience," he said. "To me, in this business, it's the most valuable learning you can have. Because those guys [from other groups] are very professional, from organizing events, practices, having showmanship on stage. So, they learn to be more professional."

During the fall semester,

Mariachi Aztlán will be on tour with Aida Cuevas, the queen of *ranchera* music, on the "Yo Creo Que Es Tiempo" USA Tour, which includes performances in Edinburg and Brownsville.

Guerra said Cuevas, a guest artist in 2011, was so impressed with Mariachi Aztlán that she started inviting them to perform with her.

The most recent experiences the group has had performing with Cuevas was in the summer and fall of 2019 and at FESTIBA in March 2020.

Guerra said the confirmed tour dates that Mariachi Aztlán will perform with Cuevas are, as of press time,

Sept. 30 in California; Oct. 16 in Tucson, Arizona; and Nov. 4 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

On Nov. 9, the group will perform with Cuevas at the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Center in Brownsville and Nov. 11 at the UTRGV Performing Arts Center on the Edinburg campus. Both shows start at 7:30 p.m.

"This is going to be two fabulous concerts," Guerra said. "She's the ultimate icon right now for Mexican artists. It'll be a beautiful evening of Mexican folk music. Last time we had her here it was sold out, so we really do want the community to come out and join us again."