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Texas lawmakers talk law school and budget

Brigitte Ortiz
 REPORTER

Since 2015, bills proposing the establishment of a law school in the Rio Grande Valley have never gotten past the Higher Education Committee of the Texas State Senate, but

a local lawmaker is hoping this year will be different. State Rep. Armando "Mando" Martinez (D-Weslaco) proposed House Bill 1077 for the 88th Texas Legislature, relating to the establishment of a public law school in the Valley. In late

2020, Martinez proposed the same bill as House Bill 695.

To watch the 88th legislative session, visit house.texas.gov/video-audio/

He said there is no difference between the bills.

"It's been stalled there in the Senate, but we're gonna attempt again," Martinez said in an interview with The Rider last Tuesday. "Obviously, the House understands the purpose and the nature, and why we need one in the Rio Grande Valley, being a law

school, and we are definitely refiling again and making sure it comes out of the Senate."

Asked why he believed House Bill 695 stalled in the Senate, Martinez replied that it was possibly because there was not a "senator that could actually

REMEMBERING BLACK HISTORY

Helping provide a voice

Teresita Dominguez
 THE RIDER

The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights, a program that advocates for the rights and best interest of immigrant children, is seeking volunteer child advocates.

The program serves as trusted allies for these children while they are in deportation proceedings, advocating for their best interests, and stands for the creation of a dedicated children's immigrant justice system that ensures the safety and well-being of every child, according to its website, theyoungcenter.org.

"If anyone knows of a child who is [detained] in a facility that needs [the] help of a child advocate or who knows that we can help them, they refer that child to our website and our organization," said Lillian Murray, volunteer coordinator for the center, which is located in Harlingen.

"Essentially, our office sees about [300] to 400 referrals a month, but because we are a small staff and we have very little volunteers, we really, really depend on having volunteers to be able to fulfill the high intake of [referrals]," Murray said. "The amount of children that we can help really depends on the volunteers that we have on deck."

For more information and to access the volunteer form, visit theyoungcenter.org.

These volunteers spend time with and advocate on behalf of an individual, unaccompanied immigrant child while he or she is subject to deportation proceedings, according to its website.

Volunteers are the most important part of the organization, according to Miriam Aguayo, managing attorney at the Harlingen office.

"They are the person that's there for them oftentimes, maybe in a time that they're needing at least one person ... to be on their corner in a time when they are very vulnerable,"

Verilu Infante/THE RIDER

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul," written by Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrated by Frank Morrison, is on display on the first floor of the University Library on the Brownsville campus. The book is one of several featured in the exhibit space and available to check out in observance of Black History Month.

Natalie Lapley
 THE RIDER

Throughout February, UTRGV students will have access to databases, journals, books and films in observance of Black History Month.

Raquel Estrada, Acquisition and Collection Development librarian for UTRGV, said Black History Month is an opportunity to celebrate African American and Afro Hispanic culture and heritage.

"I think it is a time to bring awareness to the triumph and success of many individuals as well as the struggles, past and present," Estrada said.

A book display featuring topics such as Black resistance and Afro Hispanic culture is available on the first floor of the University Library on the Brownsville campus. Estrada said the library is working on creating a similar display on the Edinburg campus.

"We kind of just want to showcase a variety of topics within Black history," she said. "... If [students] see something on the display, they can just take it off the display and check it out."

To spark discussion and interest, the University Library on the Brownsville campus will host two film screenings of

"Speaking Truth to Power" by Barbara Lee at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 17 and "The Central Park Five" by Ken Burns at 11 a.m. Feb. 24. Both screenings will take place in Library Instruction Room 1.118 and are open to the public.

The library also offers a guide that highlights materials, including books, films, journals and databases. There is also a resource poster complete with popular book titles and links to government resources.

Estrada said the poster can be viewed in person on the third floor of the Brownsville and Edinburg University Libraries, as well as in the Mario E. Ramirez, M.D., Library on the

Harlingen campus.

Both the poster and the library guide can be accessed at utrgv.libguides.com.

Council for Cultural Activities

The Council for Cultural Activities will host two screenings of the movie "Till," directed by Nigerian native Chinonye Chukwu, who is also known for the films "Clemency" and "A Long Walk."

"Till" tells a "powerful and important story of Mamie Till-Mobley, the mother of Emmett Till, and her fight for justice after her son's murder," according to art sophomore Alyna Lizcano, a CCA co-chair.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Today Civic Engagement Tabling

The **Civic Engagement Alliance** will hold an information session from 2:15 to 3:45 p.m. in the Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus.

Group Counseling

The **Counseling Center** will hold **group counseling** to navigate family dynamics from 2 to 3 p.m. in University Center Room 102 on the Edinburg campus. For accommodations, call 665-2574 or email counseling@utrgv.edu.

Tuesday Asian Snacks

The **Korean International Student Society** will sell **Asian snacks** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

Involvement Fair, Hoco Parade

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host involvement fairs for students to share interests and get involved on campus from noon to 3 p.m. on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus. Afterward, students,

organizations, staff and faculty may join the **Homecoming Parade**.

Hot Cheetos Sale
The **Pre-PA Society** will sell **Hot Cheetos** from noon to 4 p.m. on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus.

Wednesday Leadership Info Session

The **Student Leadership Academy** will conduct a workshop on different leadership styles from 10 to 11 a.m. in Student Academic Center Room 1.101 on the Edinburg campus and at the same time in Salón Bougainvillea on the Brownsville campus. **Free food** will be provided.

Hoco Charro Days Mixer

The **Alumni Relations Office** and the **Office of Economic Development** will host a mixer from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at 1325 E. Madison St. in Brownsville. There will be **Charro Days floats, mariachis** and **antojitos**. Charro Days costumes are encouraged.

Crypto Currency

The **Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Club** will teach members **how to code** and deploy their own cryptocurrency from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in Robert

C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Room 118 on the Edinburg campus. No prior knowledge of coding is necessary to attend.

Family Academy

Family Involvement and the **Center for Student Involvement** will hold a series of information sessions for family and guests of UTRGV students from 6 to 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Thursday CEO Meeting

The **Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization** will conduct a meeting from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Room 119 on the Edinburg campus.

Homecoming Parade

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host a **parade** at 4 p.m. on the Chapel Lawn on the Edinburg campus. Students, organizations, staff and faculty are encouraged to join to show their Vaquero pride.

Burning of the Letters

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host the Homecoming tradition of the burning of the letters at 8:45 p.m. outside the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the

Edinburg campus.

Friday Dance Practice

The **Filipino Student Association** will hold modern dance practice from 3 to 5 p.m. in the University Recreation Center on the Edinburg campus.

Saturday Dye Hard Orange 5K

University Recreation will host the **Dye Hard Orange 5K** at Harlingen Collegiate High School, located at 2901 Medical Drive. Check-in starts at 7:15 a.m. and the race begins at 8:30 a.m. Students must register by Thursday at apm.activecommunities.com/utrgvurec. For information or accommodations, call 665-7813 or 882-5969. The first 150 participants to register will receive a **Dye Hard Orange 5K T-shirt**.

Homecoming Royals

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host the crowning of the **2023 Homecoming Royal Court** at the women's basketball game at 4 p.m. in the UTRGV Fieldhouse. The Royal Court will also be presented at 6:30 p.m. at the men's basketball game.

--Compiled by *Landon Burns and Arisbeth Rodriguez*

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Jan. 26 and 31.



Jan. 26

6:47 a.m.: A UTRGV student in the Village Apartments on the Edinburg campus reported that he felt he was going to have a seizure. Emergency medical services arrived and transported the student to the hospital for further evaluation.

11:26 a.m.: A police officer was dispatched to the UT Health Multispecialty Clinic on the Harlingen campus regarding a 911 call from the location. A patient was complaining of chest pains and was subsequently transported to the hospital by emergency medical services for further evaluation.

11:39 a.m.: A female UTRGV student reported an unknown woman attempted to make contact with her Jan. 24 by knocking on her vehicle window in Lot

E-19 on the Edinburg campus.

5:14 p.m.: Officers responded to a two-vehicle collision in Lot E-9 on the Edinburg campus. No injuries were reported.

Jan. 27

7:24 a.m.: A tree fell onto the power lines over Lot B-12 on the Brownsville campus. No injuries were reported. The utility company responded and, after a brief outage for repairs, electricity was restored.

2:38 p.m.: An employee in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus reported discovering an iPad missing that was stored in a filing cabinet. The case is under investigation.

7:19 p.m.: A student reported that a man sat next to her and made her feel uncomfortable at the University Library on the Edinburg campus. The student reported that she had encountered the man previously at the library.

7:31 p.m.: A student in the Village

Apartments on the Edinburg campus reported he experienced seizures and requested to be taken to the hospital. Emergency medical services arrived and transported the student to the hospital for further evaluation.

Jan. 28

12:32 a.m.: A student in the Village Apartments on the Edinburg campus reported he had a seizure and wanted to be taken to the hospital. Emergency medical services arrived and transported the student to the hospital for further evaluation.

Jan. 30

8:20 p.m.: Officers were dispatched to Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus in reference to a female student having an allergic reaction. The student was later transported to the hospital for further medical evaluation.

9:57 p.m.: Officers were dispatched to the UTRGV Casa Bella Apartments

on the Brownsville campus regarding a disturbance. Officers met with a man, a woman and a UTRGV student, who is a Casa Bella resident. A verbal argument had occurred, and the two non-affiliated individuals were issued written criminal trespass warnings for all UTRGV properties. After the individuals left the area, the student stated that one of the individuals had grabbed her wrist without her consent and she wanted to file criminal charges. The incident is under investigation.

Jan. 31

8:27 a.m.: A student in Performing Arts Complex C on the Edinburg campus reported that, while inside a music practice room, a piece of foam board fell from the wall striking him behind his head. The student said he felt pain to the back of his head and would seek medical attention on his own.

--Compiled by *Arisbeth Rodriguez*

public hearing Jan. 30.

State Sen. Joan Huffman (R-Houston), chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, said if there was one word to describe the state fiscal matter heading into the next budget cycle, it would be "unprecedented."

"Over the last few years, our state has managed a steep economic downturn due to the pandemic," Huffman said during the committee's hearing, which was livestreamed. "Tens of billions of new federal COVID-19 relief funds, massive inflation and we are now looking at unprecedented amounts of revenue to the state. Our committee's biggest challenge this session will be how to use this unprecedented revenue to craft a responsible budget that is sustainable in future years."

State Sen. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen), vice chair of the Senate

Committee on Finance, said the state of Texas hit a \$32.7 billion surplus.

"[But] because of the constitutional limit, we can only spend approximately \$12.5 billion of that money," Hinojosa said in an interview with The Rider last Wednesday. "So, we still have the capacity of about \$4 billion for general spending."

He said some of the surplus funds will be used for standard, normal needs of state agencies.

"Some of the extra funding will [also] be focused on not only property tax cuts, but also on identifying long-term projects, [such as] water infrastructure, transportation needs, broadband, so that we can have investments that will have a long-term benefit for the public," Hinojosa said.

He said that during the committee meeting, they started with Article I,

general government, to hear testimonies on the different requests being made by state agencies.

"So we talk to the comptroller of public accounts, comptroller Glenn Hegar, who gives a summary of projections of the estimated revenue that we have and will be able to spend, and any surplus, which we have quite a large surplus of funds," Hinojosa said.

The senator said the committee is focused on public education.

"On trying to increase funding of public education and make sure that our students receive increased financial support and also increase different types of courses at UTRGV that are needed for our students to succeed," Hinojosa said.

The Senate Committee on Finance met last Friday and will meet again at 10 a.m. today. To view the livestream, visit senate.texas.gov.



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.

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This is Vaquero Nation



THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

Kevin Garza and Jessica Vallejo, of UTRGV Housing and Residence Life, carry UTRGV flags during the Feb. 16, 2022, Victory Trail parade during Homecoming Week on the Edinburg campus.

Andrea Flores THE RIDER

Homecoming, UTRGV's first signature spring event, is underway this week, bringing pride to the Vaquero community and fun activities, such as parades, a 5K run, the burning of the letters and more.

The events are open to students, alumni, faculty and staff to continue traditions, honor the university's legacy and highlight its values.

Homecoming begins Tuesday and ends Saturday.

Student Activities Assistant Director Cristina Rodriguez spoke about maintaining traditions.

"We want to continue these traditions because we want to celebrate the legacy, not just of our former institutions, but of UTRGV in the continued years further," Rodriguez told The Rider last Wednesday. "We definitely would like our students to experience it as a student, and as an alumni and, hopefully, as a parent down the road and so it kind of evolves over time. We just want to continue building on the values

of the Vaquero Nation."

Student organizations will start by putting their art and creativity to test with a Window Painting Contest. The competition began last Friday and ends at 5 p.m. Tuesday in the student unions on both campuses.

Students can connect with organizations and other Vaqueros during Involvement Fairs, scheduled from noon to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Wednesday on the Chapel Lawn

on the Edinburg campus.

To demonstrate the university's pride and spirit, Homecoming is bringing two parades to the community. The first will be from 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesday on the Student Union Lawn in Brownsville.

Transportation assistance is available for students who would like to travel to another campus for the events.

For both campuses, the Vaquero Express operates from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., with the exception of Friday having its last departure at 8:10 p.m. The buses take one hour and 30 minutes to arrive at their respective campus and students are advised to arrive 15 minutes before departure time. For more information on the Vaquero Express schedule, please visit: utrgv.edu/parking-and-transportation-services/transportation-services/vaquero-express/.

On the Edinburg campus, Rodriguez said students will have access to spirit stations and activities before the parade at 4 p.m. Thursday on the Chapel Lawn. The parade will start at 5:30 p.m. and work its way to the Fieldhouse.

This is the second year that UTRGV includes parades as part of the celebration.

"That's been something of a new tradition within Homecoming Week that our departments are wanting to put on," Rodriguez said. "But I would say every year, with our campus partners growing and jumping in this, I think it just continues to expand and have more engagement opportunities for our students."

She said students will have access to orange hair spray paint,

tattoos, cheerleader pom-poms, materials for making posters and photo opportunities. Golf carts, wagons and bicycles are allowed in the parades.

The UTRGV letters will be lit at 8:45 p.m. Thursday after the Men's Basketball Team competes against the University of Texas at Arlington.

Rodriguez said the burning of the letters is subject to be rescheduled based on Thursday's weather.

She said that free T-shirts are expected to be distributed on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Other events include the DYE Hard Orange 5K at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at Harlingen Collegiate High School, followed by the presentation of the Homecoming Royal Court during the women's basketball game against Abilene Christian University, scheduled at 4 p.m. in the UTRGV Fieldhouse. The men's team will compete against Stephen F. Austin State University at 6:30 p.m.

Randi Flores, an English senior and student assistant for the Athletics department, encourages students to be part of Homecoming.

"There's only going to be, like, a certain point in your life where you, like, attend college," Flores said. "I think it's worthwhile to come."

Accounting sophomore Ayisha Castillo has not heard about Homecoming but said that she has attended another of the university's staple events, UTRGV Madness.

"It's, like, honestly super enjoyable," Castillo said about Madness. "The activities that they do, the energy, all the, like, student athletes, the dances; it's just a good, like, vibe in there."

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In 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till was lynched while visiting his cousins in Mississippi. Till-Mobley then fought for justice for her son and, in turn, helped usher in the civil rights movement, according to Lizcano.

"Till" tells the story while also showing the power of love and family and the fight for what is right and just," she said. "And we hope that after viewing this movie at our event, students will be able to have, like, a discussion about the topics that they witnessed and also just learn stuff that maybe they'll relate to."

Lizcano believes that celebrating the achievements of African Americans in the United States is important and that offering events, such as the movie screenings, allows students to learn about topics they may not be familiar with.

"[The movie screenings] give other students, like, a safe space to have on campus where they can relate to what they're watching and maybe think back on it later and realize that the world is not always as good as it may seem," she said. "There's dark sides to it, but it's important that we acknowledge them and learn from them. That way, we can go on and become greater versions of ourselves."

Aguayo said.

The prospective volunteer must be at least 21 years old, attend a two-day training and pass background checks. Volunteers do not have to be fluent in Spanish. Aguayo said all languages are needed and helpful.

The Harlingen Young center holds two training sessions every year. This year's trainings will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 4 and 5 and Aug. 19 and 20 in person.

If a prospective volunteer misses a training session, Murray encourages them to

begin the application process anyway.

"Before I started volunteering, I was very hesitant because I was coming from a different background," said Janette Gonzalez, a child advocate supervisor and advocate. "I was primarily with adults. The two-day training helped me so much."

"If anybody is hesitant about being a volunteer because they don't have [a] background working with children, I can tell you from my personal experience from when I started volunteering that there was someone with me every step of the way."

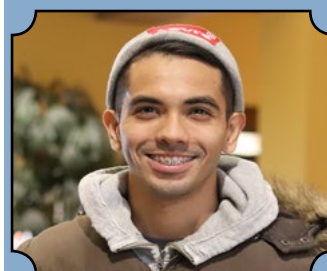
Helping a child who is going through this difficult process may bring feelings of hopelessness at times, but Aguayo said the center is supportive of its volunteers.

"We create a space for them," she said. "They could share with us, you know, what they're feeling and what they're thinking. We have opportunities to check in with us. We have appreciation events for [the volunteers]. It's definitely very rewarding and the feeling ... as though you're helping in a way, is really special."

For more information and to access the volunteer form, visit theyoungcenter.org.



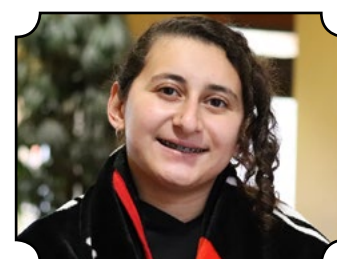
What makes you laugh the most?



Jared Cortez
computer science senior

"Oh my goodness, I think myself. I'm just full of thoughts. ... Sometimes I would be in a classroom and a thought would pop out, but I can only hear it, so I am not allowed to laugh. So, I'm just chillin' there, holding it. But, yeah, I guess myself."

"My mom makes me laugh the most. She always tries to embarrass me, but I join in, so we embarrass each other, basically, and make everyone laugh."



Samantha Rasco
chemistry freshman



Daniel Sampayo
archeology freshman

"My friends. My friends are the ones who make me laugh the most. Honestly, whenever I hang out, I honestly just have the best time with them, and I always laugh and smile with them. So, I would genuinely go for my friends."

"I think it's my siblings. 'Cause I am a very serious person, so my siblings try anything to get me out of my comfort zone to make me laugh."



Adelaida Matamoros
special education freshman

Leave your comfort zone

When I got to high school, I ventured out of my comfort zone more, allowing me to try and experience new things, which was a blessing.

I'm not saying to always do something that makes you uncomfortable or something that ruins your mood.

I often think about the choices that led me to try something new. I gained a new experience that I thought might've been uncomfortable but has turned out to be the best job I've had.

I think about the people I would not have met, the things I would not have learned, the experiences I would not have lived and I'm grateful I took a chance.

Even if things don't turn out the way you want, you can learn from the experience and it will make you a stronger person, overall.

The more you venture out and try new things, the less fazed you will be when confronted with unfamiliarity.

Some people thrive off the grittiness and perseverance from placing themselves in unfamiliar situations.

I wish I could be more like those people, ready to face and adapt to whatever situation gets in their way.

If you have an opportunity present itself or if you see a chance at something you want, try to pursue it and don't be afraid of a little discomfort.

The more you venture out and try new things, the less fazed you will be when confronted with unfamiliarity.

I just think you shouldn't be afraid to try new things and experiences solely because you've settled with your current routine.

I got my job at The Rider newspaper by taking a chance and applying for a position in a place where I didn't think I would fit in.

I had never thought about working for any type of media, much less a newspaper, but working here has been one of the best experiences of my life.

It has enhanced my college experience so much and opened new opportunities.



Jose Medina
SPORTS REPORTER

How do you feel at this very moment? Are you at peace and comfortable?

The alternative is to feel uncomfortable, but why would someone want that?



I think you should not be afraid to leave your comfort zone. Few things in life are achieved without people leaving their comfort zone.

Nothing in life is free, and most of the time the cost is a little hard work and discomfort.

Most people wouldn't necessarily want to put themselves in an uncomfortable position for a chance at getting a reward.

In middle school, I didn't want things to change or to leave my comfort zone. I always sought the same routine and the safety of familiarity.

WACKY WEB POLL
WOULD YOU RATHER BE THE GOOD OR EVIL TWIN?

 58% EVIL TWIN	 42% GOOD TWIN
--	--

Visit us online at utrgvrider.com to participate →

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.

--Compiled and photos by Daniela Martinez Salazar

Ayudar a dar voz



Conviértete en Voluntario Defensor del Niño

Damos la bienvenida a voluntarios de todas las culturas, profesiones, razas, origen y trasfondo social.

Requisitos De Voluntario

- Bilingüe (preferiblemente en español)
- Capaz de borrar verificaciones de antecedentes
- Mayores de 21 años

Próximas fechas de capacitación para voluntarios en Harlingen:

PRIMAVERA

-4 de marzo de 2023
-5 de marzo de 2023

OTOÑO

-19 de agosto de 2023
-20 de agosto de 2023

Fuente: www.theyoungcenter.org/volunteer.

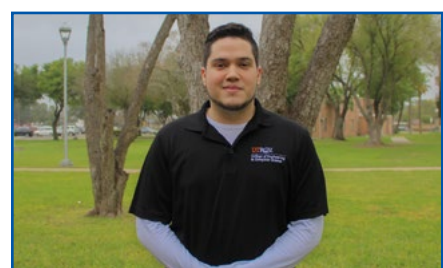


Nombre: Luis Daniel Campos Leon

Carrera: Ingeniería mecánica

Clasificación: Estudiante de último año

Fecha de graduación: Primavera 2023



Fatima Gamez Lopez /FOTO RIDER

Ciudad natal: Maturín, Venezuela

Actividades extracurriculares:

“Ahorita soy el presidente de la Sociedad de Hispanos Profesionales en Ingeniería [en UTRGV]. Es una sociedad que se encarga de ayudar a los estudiantes ... más que nada para su mérito académico y para incluir su mérito académico en su búsqueda de trabajo. ... También traemos a otras compañías [de] fuera como somos una institución al servicio de los hispanos. Muchas compañías están interesadas en venir a nuestra escuela y hablar con nuestros estudiantes para ver el talento que tenemos aquí, que tenemos mucho, gracias a Dios. También soy parte del Consejo Asesor de Estudiantes de Ingeniería. Es como el grupo estudiantil que se encarga de todas las organizaciones de ingeniería y participa mucho en la comunidad”.

¿Cuáles son las diferencias entre tu ciudad natal y los Estados Unidos?

“Siempre que me preguntan cómo de dónde soy me identifico un poco de todas partes porque pues viví en Venezuela, viví en México y he vivido aquí ya por mucho tiempo. ... Hay muchas cosas que son diferentes, como la comida. ... Aquí, casi nunca hay comida venezolana. ... Lo que más me gusta a mí son las hallacas y también las arepas. ... Mucha gente compara [arepas] cómo las gorditas pero son muy diferentes y las hallacas son como los tamales veracruzanos pero también son muy diferentes [en] la manera que se preparan y la manera en la que saben”.

¿Quién es tu modelo a seguir?

“He tenido muchos modelos a seguir en los últimos años. He estado rodeado de gente maravillosa pero el que más me ha afectado ha sido mi abuelo y, especialmente, mi papá. Mi papá también tomó una difícil decisión de venirse a otro país sin conocer a nadie, iniciar una vida nueva y eso me ha ayudado mucho. Me ha dado mucha fuerza para salir adelante por todos los sacrificios que ha hecho”.

¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás?

“De niño me gustaba mucho comprar carritos y así pero lo que era peculiar era que me encantaba desarmarlos. Me encantaba editar cada detalle de los carros y, a veces, [los] cambiaba y le pegaba otras cosas de otros carros. ... Así que elegí mi carrera porque es algo que me veo diseñando partes de un motor o haciendo ese tipo de cosas de sistemas así grandes.”

¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales?

“Que va a estar un poco difícil porque regularmente vas a tener que cambiarte de país o vas a venir a un ambiente totalmente desconocido pero que las recompensas son infinitas. ... Que tengan perseverancia y que tengan también dedicación. Que va a valer mucho la pena cuando terminen”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez

Teresita Dominguez

THE RIDER

El Centro Joven para los Derechos de los Niños Inmigrantes, un programa que aboga por los derechos y los mejores intereses de los niños inmigrantes, está buscando defensores de niños voluntarios.

El programa sirve como aliados de confianza para estos niños mientras están en proceso de deportación, abogando por sus mejores intereses, y defiende la creación de un sistema de justicia inmigrante dedicado a los niños que garantice la seguridad y el bienestar de cada niño, según su sitio web theyoungcenter.org.

“Si alguien sabe de un niño que está [detenido] en un centro que necesita [la] ayuda de un defensor de niños o que sabe que podemos ayudarlo, remite a ese niño a nuestro sitio web y a nuestra organización”, dijo Lillian Murray, coordinadora de voluntarios del centro, que está ubicado en Harlingen.

“Esencialmente, nuestra oficina recibe alrededor de [300] a 400 referencias al mes, pero debido a que somos un personal pequeño y tenemos muy pocos voluntarios, realmente dependemos de tener voluntarios para poder cumplir con la gran cantidad de [referencias]”, dijo Murray. “La cantidad de niños a los que podemos ayudar realmente depende de los voluntarios que tenemos disponibles”.

Estos voluntarios pasan tiempo con un niño inmigrante no acompañado y lo defienden mientras él o ella está sujeto a procedimientos de deportación, según su sitio web.

Los voluntarios son la parte más importante de la organización, según Miriam Aguayo, abogada gerente de la oficina de Harlingen.

“Son la persona que está allí para ellos muchas veces, tal vez en un

momento en que necesitan al menos una persona ... para estar de su lado en un momento en que son muy vulnerables”, dijo Aguayo.

El posible voluntario debe tener al menos 21 años de edad, asistir a una capacitación de dos días y aprobar las verificaciones de antecedentes. Los voluntarios no tienen que hablar español con fluidez. Aguayo dijo que todos los idiomas son necesarios y útiles.

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-- Miriam Aguayo
abogada gerente de la oficina de Harlingen

El centro Harlingen Young realiza dos sesiones de capacitación cada año. Los entrenamientos de este año serán de 9 a.m. a 3 p.m. 4 y 5 de marzo y 19 y 20 de agosto de forma presencial.

Si un posible voluntario se pierde una sesión de capacitación, Murray lo alienta a comenzar el proceso de solicitud de todos modos.

“Antes de comenzar como voluntaria, tenía muchas dudas

porque provenía de un entorno diferente”, dijo Janette Gonzalez, supervisor y defensora de defensores de niños. “Estuve principalmente con adultos. El entrenamiento de dos días me ayudó mucho.”

“Si alguien duda en ser voluntario porque no tiene experiencia trabajando con niños, puedo decirles desde mi experiencia personal, desde que comencé a ser voluntaria había alguien conmigo en cada paso del camino”.

Ayudar a un niño que está pasando por este difícil proceso puede generar sentimientos de desesperanza a veces, pero Aguayo dijo que el centro apoya a sus voluntarios.

“Creamos un espacio para ellos”, dijo. “Podrían compartir con nosotros, ya sabes, lo que sienten y lo que piensan. Tenemos oportunidades para registrarse con nosotros. Tenemos eventos de reconocimiento para [los voluntarios]. Definitivamente es muy gratificante y la sensación ... como si estuvieras ayudando de alguna manera, es realmente especial”.

Para obtener más información y acceder al formulario de voluntariado, visite theyoungcenter.org.

--Traducido por Fatima Gamez Lopez

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Daniela Martinez Salazar /GRÁFICA RIDER

'Valleyisms': a conversation about masculinity, class and family

Omar E. Zapata

A&E EDITOR

"Valleyisms," an exhibit about class, masculinity, family and the Rio Grande Valley by UTRGV art senior Juan José Delgado, is on display in the UTRGV Visual Arts Building Gallery in Edinburg.

Delgado said the works depict the Valley from how he perceived it as a child and now.

The exhibit features paintings with mediums of acrylics and watercolors. The paintings range from personal emotional paintings, such as "Pepe Feeling Sad in the Truck," to a self-portrait, "Forging of the Self," and a series of miniature paintings that Delgado created from traveling throughout the Valley.

"I have a series [of paintings] that I mirrored as in the contrast of the men in my life growing up, how I compared my father to other men," Delgado said. "How I saw the things that are dominant in my life and in the Valley since I perceived it then."

The exhibit is sponsored by the Office of Engaged Scholarship and Learning. Delgado, a native of Edinburg, said the idea for "Valleyisms" came from wanting to explore and research identity. With a minor in cultural anthropology, he said he started by looking at how cultures operate in a family function and how they perceive gender roles and masculinity.

Delgado said he centered his research for the exhibit on the Valley.

"[The Valley] was something that stood out to me," he said. "Growing up in the Valley was very distinct. It was home. It was something that I recognized always that was my constant in my life, even though we traveled through different states and worked in different towns."

Working as a migrant farmworker, Delgado said he noticed how other cultures lived and interacted in the United States and started making distinctions in his home region and family.

Having certain imagery that locals consider to be unique to the Valley, such as palm trees and orange groves, Delgado said a lot of other "Valleyisms" are just systems of poverty.

"As a migrant farmworker ... we've traveled to Louisiana, Georgia and ... we've seen these little houses on cinder blocks



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

Standing before a portrait of his father, titled "Pepe Feeling Sad in the Truck" (acrylic), art senior Juan José Delgado speaks about his work last Wednesday in the UTRGV Visual Arts Building in Edinburg.

and, so, some [people] that maybe feel that the Valley has this as an iconic imagery ... I think it's part of the American experience," he said. "It's not necessarily a Valleyism. So, I see Valleyism as more of a state of mind."

To arrange a gallery visit outside business hours, call 665-7030 or email jesmil.maldonado01@utrgv.edu.

Wanting to dig deeper for the project, Delgado asked himself, "Why am I the way I am? Why do I believe the things that I do? Is it beneficial?" this led him to think about masculinity and his father.

Paintings of his father, his beloved Ford F-150 pickup truck, his uncle's Chevy pickup truck and his fruit stand business is what came out of it, with Delgado navigating a range of emotions through the process.

Admiring those men in his life, Delgado compared and contrasted them and masculinity for his project. Although his uncle was involved in his family, his father was the opposite.

"He was very emotionally absent," he said about his father. "He wouldn't share feelings. ... He rarely interacted

with [the family]."

"Pepe Feeling Sad in the Truck," based on a picture on his birthday from his mother, Delgado said it was the most emotion that he saw in his father.

"He would deny himself that expression of emotion and, as an artist, I express myself with emotion about everything," Delgado said, holding back tears. "Trying to understand how passionate I can be about him, somebody that showed me little or no emotion ... this is my form of making peace with that. It's something that I wrestled with. He provided for us, but he was never there. This is what I know of him. I know more details about that truck than I know about him."

Delgado's wife and fellow artist Dominique Delgado told The Rider she is proud of his first solo exhibition. Being married for five years, Delgado, an African American woman, said with their ethnicity, culture and upbringing being different, through his art she was able to learn more about him, his family and the Valley.

"I think it's a really heartfelt, touching exhibit," Dominique Delgado said of her husband's work. "I also think to have conversations of masculinity and manhood and to have men define ways of being masculine, embodying masculinity and the roles that they want to play is extremely important. ... I feel like all of those conversations can be sparked by the art in this exhibit."

Being with him step by step for the project, she said she encourages UTRGV students to step out of their comfort zone and check out the exhibit in the Visual Arts Building, located at 2412 S. Clossner Blvd.

"And to question their own perceptions of masculinity and to consider the relationships that they have with the men in their family," Dominique Delgado said. "And whether those relationships are satisfactory, or whether those relationships have some room for improvement. And if they do have room for improvement, what would they like that improvement to be."

"Valleyisms," which opened Jan. 23, will close with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Feb. 17. Admission is free. The gallery is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

Danielle Perez

ONLINE EDITOR

Aries-Listen to your inner child this week by doing activities you used to do as a kid. It is a good way to reinforce creativity and self-care into your routine. Change your mindset and start thinking freely instead of having a negative view.

Leo-Keep the vision you have about your future in mind in order to manifest it into your next chapter. Don't be discouraged by those around you. Instead, be motivated and prove them wrong. This is your life, so do whatever it takes to be where you want to be.

Sagittarius-Now that you have established an idea of what you need to do, take the opportunities presented and do everything you can to acquire it. Use the energy and tools you have and create a positive lifestyle. Keep the motivation going and do not give up.

Libra-In order to maintain a balance between yourself and work life, be reminded that money is not the answer to everything. There are many doors waiting to be opened in the near future, so find what matters more to you. Forget people who are selfish and befriend those who are willing to help.

Gemini-Take this week to figure out your goals by setting some time aside to self-reflect. Envision what you think you need and start developing it into your routine. Once you have that clear goal, do everything in your power to make it happen. Soon, your life will turn itself around.

Aquarius-Avoid letting others affect your energy before it starts to take a toll on you. Be your own person by being confident in your actions. If you contemplate your decisions, it will disrupt your flow. Therefore, focus on your purpose and what you need to do to get there.

Scorpio-It is time to let go of bad habits and start incorporating positive ones. Your routine will never change if you keep ignoring what needs to be fixed. Develop a new schedule that will help you achieve your goals and stick to it. Major improvement will soon start to happen.

Pisces-Despite all of the challenges that are in your life at the moment, push through and be the best version of yourself. The universe gives its strongest soldiers the toughest battles to help build them. So, whatever comes your way, don't think negatively about it.

Cancer-Although you have lost friends, you have also gained friends. Remind yourself that sometimes people are no longer in our lives because they don't serve a purpose in it anymore. Next time something arises, don't beat yourself up for it.

Taurus-Your life may be going in a different direction that you did not expect and that is OK. Sometimes what we want to happen does not happen for specific reasons. Maybe the time is not perfect yet. Be patient and keep giving it your best. Eventually, you will get there.

Virgo-Many days can be stressful and tiring; therefore, find an outlet that will help relieve the tension within. Maybe consider a day off to reenergize and get back on track. Don't lose yourself in all of the tasks you need to do. Always take care of your well-being first.

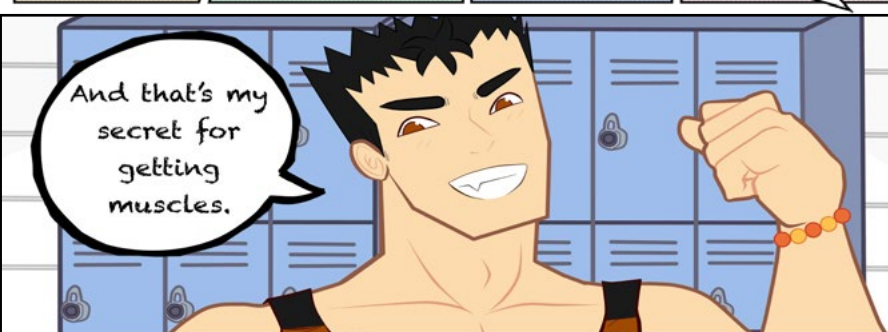
Capricorn-Feeling anxious is normal, so don't feel ashamed of it. Instead, talk to someone about what is making you feel that way. Perhaps communicating about it can help relieve some of it. Avoid feeling alone when these moments arise. Seek help to alleviate the situation.



Last week's puzzle answer key:

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

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





Charlotte O'Keefe



Aura Velasquez/THE RIDER

Freshman forward Charlotte O'Keefe plays for the UTRGV Women's Basketball Team. O'Keefe is from Overland Park, Kansas, and graduated from Saint Thomas Aquinas High School. She plans to change her major to finance and hopes to work in something related in the future.

Q: What do you do for fun outside of basketball?

A: "Right now, I don't have a lot of free time, but I do enjoy playing tennis with my friends when we do have free time. Recreationally, I've never played tennis before but I've started picking it up due to a few friends on the tennis team."

Q: What movies or shows do you like?

A: "My favorite show ever is 'Gossip Girl' and 'The Office.' I enjoy both of those. 'Gossip Girl,' I started watching during quarantine, so I had all the time in the world. It's a long series, around, like, seven seasons, 20 episodes or so a season and almost an hour an episode. ... 'The Office,' same thing. Once you're hooked, then, after the first or second season, it just takes up a lot of your time for a couple months."

Q: Would you want to keep playing basketball or do something else?

A: "After these four years here, if the opportunity presents itself, then yeah, for sure. I would definitely look into it. Right now, I'm more interested in going and getting a job, then, hopefully, working my way up through a company or, hopefully, making my own company."

Q: What has been your proudest moment?

A: "Well, my basketball [moment] is easy. It was winning state my junior year. That year, my little sister was on the team and we beat a team that was undefeated for two years. Getting this scholarship here, I was pretty proud of [being a D1 athlete]."

Q: What do you like about UTRGV?

A: "I really like the [Rio Grande] Valley. I just like how everyone is so nice and welcoming here and so friendly and easy to talk to. I love my coaching staff that I have here. Honestly, it's cool because how the athletes here are friends with each other and I have so many friends on different teams. ... Here, we all live in the same place and it's just so easy to meet people and everyone is so nice and welcoming."

--Compiled by Jose Medina

Football ticket deposits soar



PHOTO COURTESY KRISTELLA CRUZ

UTRGV head football coach Travis Bush stands on the grounds of the H-E-B Park Dec. 15. UTRGV Athletics has surpassed 1,300 season ticket deposits for the university football team's inaugural season in 2025, less than six weeks after accepting deposits.

Jose Medina

SPORTS REPORTER

Ticket deposits for the inaugural season of the UTRGV football program have reached 1,300, Intercollegiate Athletics officials say.

The deposits are \$25 per seat and will be applied toward the cost of the ticket once they are available, with a deposit limit of 30 seats per person.

In an interview with *The Rider* Jan. 30, Vice President and Director of Athletics Chasse Conque said he knew there would be good support for football in the Rio Grande Valley.

Conque said the department did not have a set goal for ticket deposits. However, he was pleasantly surprised and said his expectations were surpassed.

"As we sit here today, we've actually surpassed the 1,300 mark," Conque said. "So, just in the last week or so we've sold an additional 300 season tickets, which is phenomenal."

He said they are a bit ahead of schedule. "We announced it about five weeks after the announcement of coach [Travis Bush's hiring]," Conque said.

In an interview with *The Rider* the same day, Bush said the ticket deposits show the excitement and support in the

Valley for the football program, which is scheduled to begin in 2025.

"It's exciting seeing the Valley rally behind this program already," he said.

Bush said the support has been phenomenal everywhere they have been and that there are still more people who want to get involved.

Asked about the significance of reaching 1,000 deposits within six weeks, Vince Volpe, deputy director of Athletics and chief revenue officer, replied, "It speaks to the Rio Grande Valley, really."

Volpe said the Valley is excited about UTRGV Athletics as a whole, but notably ready for a university football program.

He noted that a significant block of seats will be held for students.

"We want to thank the student body," Volpe said in an interview last Tuesday. "We wouldn't be at this point that we're talking about selling 1,300 season tickets in six weeks without the student approval and the process that we went through about 15 months ago."

UTRGV Athletics is committed to having a season ticket option for as low as \$99. Conque said the department wants to ensure there is something for everybody.

"We want to make sure it's affordable entertainment for families and people throughout the Valley," he said.

Conque said that as 2025 approaches, fans will be able to select their seat and will receive their physical ticket.

"So, as we go into the first football season, they'll have their tickets as we prepare for kickoff," he said.

Asked how the ticket sales will help the football program, Conque replied it will help take care of student athletes as well as cover early purchases for the football program.

He said there is a laundry list of things that need to be purchased for the first time, such as "helmets and shoulder pads."

Conque referred to ticket sales as the lifeblood of the program.

"The revenue that we can get from ticket sales and corporate partnerships will directly go back to support our student athletes," Conque said. "Help the team travel, nutrition, scholarships."

UTRGV Athletics is also committed to playing games in the Upper and Lower Valley.

Conque said the department will continue to strengthen its relationship with H-E-B Park in Edinburg and Sams Memorial Stadium in Brownsville, which will serve as venues.

For more information on how to place a deposit for tickets, visit utrgvtickets.com.

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS AT THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

Men's Basketball

6:30 p.m. Thursday vs. University of Texas at Arlington

6:30 p.m. Saturday vs. Stephen F. Austin State University

Women's Basketball

4 p.m. Saturday vs. Abilene Christian University



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