

THE RIDER



THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

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Vaqueros step up to the plate



*Alley 2/13/23
Pena*

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Today
German Club Meeting
The **German Club** will teach German from 5 to 6:15 a.m. in Main Building Room 2.502 and from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. in Main Building Room 1.502 on the Brownsville campus.

Flower Bouquet Sale
Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity will sell **flower bouquets** from noon to 12:30 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

Sex-Education
Access for Sex-Education will host a **tabling event** from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus and at the same time and place Wednesday.

Homemade Goods
The **American Society of Civil Engineers** will sell **homemade goods** and **refreshments** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

Tuesday
Grams Sale
The **Health and Kinesiology Club** will sell **Valentine's**

Grams from noon to 1 p.m. in the Science Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

Holy Mass
The **Catholic Student Association** will celebrate **Mass** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Chapel on the Edinburg campus.

Valentine's Day Fundraiser
The **American Sign Language Club** will sell **candy flowers** and **ASL sign "I Love You" keychains** from noon to 2 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

HOST Club
The **Hospitality and Tourism Management Student Organization** will sell **chocolate-covered strawberries** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg 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 Union Room 2.20 on the Brownsville campus and from 2 to 3 p.m. in the Bronc Room on the Edinburg campus.

Free Lunch
The **Catholic Student Association** will serve a **free lunch** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Newman Catholic Student Center in Edinburg.

Valentine's Dance
The **Student Union** will host a **Valentine's Day Dance** from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Student Union PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón on the Brownsville campus and from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursday in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus.

Thursday
Free Lunch
The **Baptist Student Ministry** will serve a **free lunch** at 12:15 p.m. in Main Building Room 2.402 on the Brownsville campus.

General Meeting
The **Economics & Finance Society** will host a **general meeting** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Room 118 on the Edinburg campus.

Game Time
Christians at RGV will host **Game Time** from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room

1.105 on the Brownsville campus and from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in Student Union Room 2.418 on the Edinburg campus.

Just Dance
The **Korean International Student Society** will host a **Just Dance night** from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus.

Rom-Com on the Lawn
The **Campus Activities Board** will screen the movie **"Valentine's Day"** from 6 to 8 p.m. on the lawn outside Troxel Hall on the Edinburg campus.

Friday
Film Screening
The **University Library** will screen **"Barbara Lee: Speaking Truth to Power"** from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the University Library on the Brownsville campus. The event is part of the university's observance of **Black History Month.**

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.

--Compiled by Daynara Gutierrez

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Feb. 1 and 7.



Feb. 1
10:02 a.m.: A student reported that he nearly struck a pedestrian who was crossing the intersection of West Van Week Street and Nevarez Drive in Edinburg.

5:55 p.m.: Officers were dispatched to the Science Building on the Edinburg campus in reference to a female student who fainted. The student was later transported by emergency medical services to the hospital for further evaluation.

8:34 p.m.: Officers spoke with a student who wanted to report that she had a verbal disagreement with a male student during class in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship building on the Edinburg campus. After further investigation, it was determined that there were no criminal elements present. A report was taken for documentation purposes.

Feb. 2
8:39 a.m.: An officer was dispatched to the UT Health RGV Multispecialty Clinic on the Edinburg campus in reference to a male patient making threats toward staff members over the telephone. Later that day, UTRGV CID investigators obtained an arrest warrant for the suspect, who was arrested by investigators on the outstanding warrant Feb. 3 in the parking lot of a local business in Edinburg. The suspect was booked into the Edinburg Municipal Jail without further incident.

9:17 a.m.: An officer was dispatched to the first-floor women's restroom in

the Life and Health Sciences Biology Wing on the Brownsville campus in reference to a handwritten note that was left in one of the bathroom stalls by an unknown person. The area was checked for the unknown person and university resources were contacted.

8:49 p.m.: An officer conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for disregarding an official traffic control device in Lot E-36 on the Edinburg campus. When the officer spoke with the female driver, a current student, an odor of marijuana was coming from inside the vehicle. A subsequent search of the vehicle, based upon probable cause, revealed marijuana paraphernalia, which was seized. The operator was issued a court appearance citation for possession of drug paraphernalia (a class C misdemeanor).

Feb. 3
1:06 p.m.: The UTRGV Police Department received a report regarding a male student who had made concerning comments to a professor on the Edinburg campus. The student, who resides off campus, was contacted by the Alton Police Department and determined to not be a threat to himself or others.

1:29 p.m.: A public safety officer was dispatched to Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus to assist a student with a vehicle unlock. While attempting to unlock the vehicle, the driver's window shattered.

3:23 p.m.: A student on the Edinburg campus reported she had bought textbooks from a person on Facebook but later realized that the books were not the ones needed for her classes. The student said she contacted the seller, who agreed to refund her money but has not done so. A report was made for documentation purposes.

Feb. 5
10:12 a.m.: A UTRGV police officer observed three adults attempting to conceal themselves behind bushes near Sabal Hall and the University Library on the Brownsville campus. U.S. Border Patrol was requested and subsequently arrived and apprehended the three adults, who were migrants from Mexico.

7:01 p.m.: Officers were dispatched to the Casa Bella Apartments on the Brownsville campus regarding a welfare concern. Upon arrival, two female students were found to be highly intoxicated and were transported to the hospital by emergency medical services. Hours later, both students were discharged from the hospital and released to their parents.

10:41 p.m.: An officer on patrol came upon the scene of a vehicle-pedestrian collision on the 900 block of International Boulevard in Brownsville. Emergency medical services and Brownsville police were notified and responded to the scene. The pedestrian was subsequently transported to a local hospital for medical treatment. None of the parties are affiliated with UTRGV.

Feb. 6
12:05 p.m.: A police officer was dispatched to the eBridge Center for Business & Commercialization in Brownsville after it was reported that a man was seen taking pictures of several women in the area. The man was no longer in the area upon the arrival of officers. The case is under investigation.

1:36 p.m.: An officer spoke with an employee on the Edinburg campus who wanted to report an email that she received from her student that she found concerning. After further investigation,

it was determined that no criminal elements were present. A report was made to document the incident.

2:46 p.m.: A student in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship building on the Edinburg campus reported that, during a class, another student threatened to punch him. The case is under investigation.

3:23 p.m.: A student in the Liberal Arts South building on the Edinburg campus reported that, during a class, another student threatened to punch him. The case is under investigation.

Feb. 7
1:21 p.m.: An officer was dispatched to the Facilities warehouse on the Brownsville campus in reference to missing property. An employee reported two rechargeable tool batteries missing from the warehouse. The reporting party is unsure if the batteries were checked out by staff members or stolen.

4:19 p.m.: A staff member at Emilia Schunior Ramirez Hall on the Edinburg campus reported that an unknown woman had fallen from an electric scooter and sustained minor injuries. The staff member said she provided the woman with a first-aid kit. The injured woman declined emergency medical services and police assistance and left the area.

4:36 p.m.: An officer was dispatched to Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus in reference to a welfare concern. A resident assistant received third-party information about a female resident who made alarming comments. Officers spoke with the student, who denied making such comments, and determined she was not a threat to herself or others.

--Compiled by Arisbeth Rodriguez

THE RIDER

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

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'Drop the charges'



Verilu Infante/THE RIDER

Rebekah Hinojosa, a Brownsville resident and activist, listens to public comments about her arrest and calls for an investigation of Brownsville Mayor Trey Mendez for "abuse of power" during last Tuesday night's city commission meeting. Hinojosa said she was targeted because of her work as an activist and that her arrest was politically motivated.

Reprinted from utrgvrider.com

Natalie Lapsley

THE RIDER

Chanting erupted outside Brownsville City Hall last Tuesday, when members of the community gathered before the City Commission meeting to protest the charges against resident and activist Rebekah Hinojosa.

Hinojosa said she was arrested Feb. 16, 2022, and charged with a class B misdemeanor for allegedly defacing the "controversial BTX mural, paid for by Elon Musk," on the side of the old Capitol Theatre building in downtown Brownsville.

Sara Stapleton Barrera, Hinojosa's criminal defense attorney, joined her client as well as over a dozen other

protesters in asking for the charges to be immediately dropped. The group also collectively called for an investigation of Brownsville Mayor Trey Mendez, who attended the meeting via Zoom, for "abuse of power."

"I was subjected to a politically motivated arrest," Hinojosa said during the public comment period of the meeting. "... Without allowing me to properly dress and without providing a warrant, they arrested me, took away my prescription eyeglasses, subjected me to interrogation without a lawyer and held me in jail for over 26 hours. All this on a single alleged charge of class B misdemeanor graffiti.

"Immediately after my release ... the mayor of Brownsville, Trey Mendez, singled out and publicly attacked me

by publishing a photo of me from the Brownsville Police Department in a post on his official Facebook page, setting me up for criticism and potential harm from his constituents."

Hinojosa believes she was targeted because of her "work speaking out against the destructive impact that SpaceX is causing in the [Rio Grande] Valley's environment and community."

The group also delivered two boxes of petitions, which amassed over 1,700 signatures in support of dropping the charges against Hinojosa.

During the protest, Stapleton Barrera said the evidence against her client was "underwhelming" and that the graffiti, which read "gentrified" and "stop SpaceX," was an act of free speech.

Plus and minus

Bills seek tax-free college textbooks, pay boost for public school employees

Brigitte Ortiz

THE RIDER

A Texas state representative and senator have filed separate bills to raise pay for public education employees and implement a tax-free holiday on textbooks for university or college students.

House Bill 164, which calls for exempting textbooks purchased, used or consumed by university and college students from sales and use taxes for limited periods, was filed by state Rep. Terry Canales (D-Edinburg) on Dec. 14, 2022.

The bill would provide a weeklong, tax-free holiday for textbooks at the beginning of the semesters to provide college and university students financial relief.

Canales said students can pay up to \$1,000 for textbooks per semester. Students are paying between \$80 and \$100 in sales taxes, with the proceeds split between state and local governments, he said.

"But that [\$80 to \$100] did not come out of [students'] pockets," Canales said. "It came from a loan. And so the reality is once you start adding banking fees, interest, etc., it's hard to fathom why our state subsidizes education or our community college and universities while taxing the tools that the students are using in the process. So, it's a small but common sense step in the right direction to make college a little bit more affordable."

To view bills filed, visit capitol.texas.gov/reports/general.aspx

He said committee assignments were given last Thursday and the bill will get referred to a committee where the speaker will determine whether it pertains to it.

"This [bill] will probably go to State Affairs or Ways & Means, which are two very, very high-level committees, which have lots and lots of bills," Canales said. "Getting the bill heard in those committees is often difficult. But nevertheless, we're going to give it everything we've got."

ECISD superintendent urges removal of STISD taxing authority

Andrea Flores

THE RIDER

The Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District is pushing for legislative change to remove South Texas Independent's School District's taxing authority and use "existing funding models to equalize per-student funding."

During the Feb. 7 Edinburg City Council meeting, ECISD Superintendent Mario Salinas provided a presentation on the differences in funding between ECISD and STISD.

"[STISD] provides one of the educational services to our community, so it is not about disparaging the school," Salinas said. "It's about presenting the facts."

The first of two desired legislative changes is the removal of "taxing authority for South Texas ISD based on voter approval from each independent school district across the three-county area," according to the presentation. This would decrease the amount of taxes property owners pay in Hidalgo,

Cameron and Willacy counties.

The second change requested is to "utilize existing funding models to equalize per-student funding to mirror average funding amounts per student found in Region One," according to the presentation.

In an interview with The Rider last Wednesday, Amanda Odom, STISD administrator for Public Relations & Marketing, said public school districts in "South Texas are forming a coordinated effort to support or promote potential legislation that would eliminate South Texas ISD taxing authority, thereby effectively eliminating South Texas ISD."

Odom also said the information provided on the ECISD presentation is not accurate, such as the lack of an Interest & Sinking rate. The I&S rate is a tax that provides funds "for payments on the debt that finances a district's facilities," according to the Texas Education Agency's website.

Odom said STISD is working on providing the correct data.

South Texas ISD was created 60 years ago in response to the

lack of services for students in special education by ECISD and other Rio Grande Valley school districts, Salinas said during his presentation. The Texas Legislature allowed STISD the authority to tax five cents per \$100 valuation.

However, Salinas said STISD no longer follows its original mission but its taxing authority remains. He said the district serves few students with special needs and only provides services for half a school day.

The enrollment average for students with special needs is 10.3% for all three counties. Of STISD's 4,251 students, 3.88% receive special education. Meanwhile, 11% of ECISD's 34,000 students receive special education.

"Over time, changes in legislation mandated that students with special needs be mainstreamed and served in their home districts," Odom explained.

Salinas said some residents of Hidalgo, Cameron and Willacy counties may be required to pay property taxes for two school districts. This means that even if a family does not have a child enrolled



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER

The Edinburg City Council presents a 'Proclamation Recognizing February 2023 as Black History Month' certificate of recognition during its meeting last Tuesday. Receiving the certificate are Melissa Peña (from left), Magdiel Castle, Sharon Smith and Marsha Terry, co-founder and co-president of the Edinburg Juneteenth Jubilee Committee. Back row: Al Gatlin.

in STISD, they may still have to pay a property tax for the school.

Salinas said it is ironic that STISD continues to levy a tax rate of five cents per \$100 on property owners in the Valley, who he said are among the poorest in the state.

As of the 2021-22 school year, ECISD's tax collection per

student was \$2,543.52, totaling \$84,301,889. By comparison, STISD has 700 Edinburg city students enrolled, and the average tax collection per student is \$6,000, totaling \$4,200,000.

"We think that's inequitable when you compare South Texas ISD

Netflix Cracks Down on Password Sharing.

Not like a show survives a season, anyway.



How would you describe your ideal Valentine's Day plans?



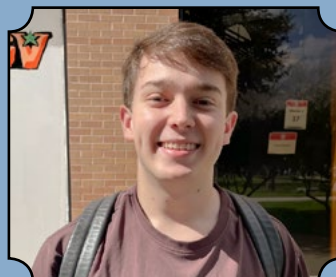
Nathan Cavazos
graphic design junior

"My ideal Valentine's Day plans would probably just [be], you know, being chill with someone. You know, at their place or my place. You know, just hanging out, eating some food. I don't know, pizza or something really nice. Just watching a movie."

"Because Valentine's [Day] is my birthday, I'll probably just go out to eat with, like, my boyfriend and maybe my family."



Adalee Riojas
mechanical engineering sophomore



Ryan StClair
computer science freshman

"My ideal Valentine's Day plans would be just being with your significant other and just having a good time. Whatever it is that you may be, like going on a date, if that's what they want. Just whatever [is] making the other person happy."

"Pasarlo sola. Estar con quien más quieres, con unas florecitas, unos chocolatitos. Algo así, Algo tranquilo".



Adriana Fuentes
estudiante de tercer año de ciencias políticas

--Compiled by Landon Burns and Aurora Acevedo
--Photos by Landon Burns

Daddy's little girl



Fatima Gamez Lopez
SPANISH EDITOR

Whenever I see a father-daughter relationship, I always ask myself, "How would it feel to be treated like daddy's little princess?"

I did not grow up receiving that treatment. I come from a Hispanic family where many times, it can be difficult for a father to show his affection for his children.

As a young woman, I need to be reminded how much someone loves me because I doubt if they really care about me otherwise.

My father is one of the best human beings I know. He has also taught me how I want to be treated. The relationship I have with my father is not bad, but it is not the best either.

I don't think I ever had those nicknames that a father gives his daughter. "My princess," "my little girl," "mi niña." Sometimes, those little words matter a lot.

My father is a hard-working person. For as long as I can

remember, he has worked long hours every day of the week to provide everything for my family.

He starts his day between 4 and 5 a.m. to get ready for his first job, which is from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Then he gets home around 2:30 p.m. He rests and leaves again around 3:30 p.m. for his second job, where he doesn't have an arrival time. Sometimes, he can get home at 10 p.m. or midnight, depending on how much work he has.

I feel my dad has missed many memories and his job will always come first. He wants to give me, my brother and my mother a good life. But as my mother says, "You will always be replaceable in a job. You leave and the next day, they hire a new person to fill your spot."

In my house, Thursdays are family days because my dad doesn't work in the afternoon. My brother and I fight to choose where we go to eat. It is the day when we can go out as a family and just spend time with each other.

For me, spending time with the family on Thursday afternoon with my dad is enough.

Sometimes I feel like I don't have many memories with my father. I didn't receive the daddy's princess treatment because my father doesn't usually share his emotions.

He is a reserved person.

Sometimes I feel that, because of him, I am the way I am. It is difficult for me to show my emotions. Now that I'm older and in a relationship, it can be hard for me to open up with my significant other and tell him how I feel.

It shouldn't be hard. I must not follow that pattern. I must break it. But why is it so difficult for me?

I don't deny that my dad loves me. I know that he loves me, my brother and my mother, but his way of loving is different.

Someone recently told me that my relationship with my father defines what I look for in a relationship. Depending on the way my father is with me, I look for my significant other to be the opposite way and replace something my dad couldn't provide. I kept thinking about it and asked myself, "Why am I looking for someone to protect me? Someone to make me feel loved."

I don't want to imply that my father is a bad person because he is not. I know that everyone has different ways of loving and showing affection. But many times, replacing love with material things is not enough. Sometimes all I want to hear is "I'm proud of you" or "Esa es mi hija."

I want to be daddy's little princess.

WACKY WEB POLL

WOULD YOU RATHER BE SINGLE OR HAVE A DATE ON VALENTINE'S DAY?



80%
HAVE A DATE



20%
SINGLE

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.

Legado naranja y verde

Fatima Gamez Lopez
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

“¡Sí, se puede, sí, se puede!” gritaron los miembros y el personal de La Unión del Pueblo Entero fuera de la sede de LUPE en San Juan el 1 de febrero cuando le dieron la bienvenida a Tania Chavez Camacho, la nueva directora ejecutiva y presidenta de LUPE y LUPE Vota.

Después de más de 45 años al servicio de LUPE, Juanita Valdez-Cox se retiró oficialmente el 30 de diciembre. Chavez Camacho fue nombrada nueva directora ejecutiva el 1 de febrero.

LUPE fue fundada por el difunto líder laboral estadounidense y activista de derechos civiles Cesar E. Chavez en 1989 y establecida en el Valle del Río Grande en el 2003 por Valdez-Cox con la creencia de que cuando las personas trabajan juntas, pueden generar cambios.

Chavez Camacho se unió a LUPE en el 2012. A lo largo de su mandato, ha ocupado diferentes cargos en la organización, como coordinadora de conciencia comunitaria, directora de análisis de gestión, desarrollo de fondos y estrategia de sistemas, entre otros.

“Soy una inmigrante de Veracruz, México”, dijo Chavez Camacho durante su evento de bienvenida. “Me enorgullece mucho el ser hija de unos padres empresarios. ... Mi educación y crianza [no] fuera posible gracias a los miles de taquitos que mi mamá y mi papá vendieron en la calle y también a [las] muchas, muchas fritas de chicharrones. Fue algo que ellos me brindaron para que yo tuviera una educación, porque ellos no tuvieron ese privilegio”.

Durante una entrevista con The Rider, Chavez Camacho dijo que la institución heredada de UTRGV, la Universidad de Texas-Pan American, fue “la plataforma principal” donde aprendió su conjunto de habilidades.

“LUPE realmente me ha dado la oportunidad de poner en práctica mucho



FOTO CORTESÍA LA UNIÓN DEL PUEBLO ENTERO

Tania A. Chavez Camacho, la nueva directora ejecutiva de LUPE, La Unión Del Pueblo Entero, se para frente a una multitud el 1 de febrero durante su evento de bienvenida. LUPE es un programa que construye comunidades más fuertes y saludables donde los residentes de las colonias usan el compromiso cívico para el cambio social.

de lo que aprendí en la universidad”, dijo. “Cuando llegué a LUPE ... pude perfeccionar esas habilidades. Creo que [eso] es lo que me permitió tener éxito aquí. Porque estaba trayendo algo a la mesa que agregaba capacidad al trabajo de LUPE”.

Chavez Camacho se graduó de UTPA en el 2010 con una licenciatura en finanzas. Luego obtuvo una maestría en administración de empresas en el 2012 y una segunda maestría en comunicación.

Durante la bienvenida, Daniel Diaz, director político de LUPE y LUPE Vota, compartió su experiencia de haber conocido a Chavez Camacho desde que fue contratada por la organización.

“La conocimos como una líder estudiantil [en el Consejo de Asuntos de Minorías]”, dijo Diaz. “Teníamos el placer de tener a Tania en el equipo y otros jóvenes líderes para tener la preparación para ... ayudar a miles de jóvenes a aplicar para

DACA. ... En ese tiempo recuerdo cuando se anunció DACA. ... [Chavez Camacho] ayudó a miles de jóvenes a aplicar para DACA. También lideró por años esfuerzos de alcance para LUPE en todo el Valle, escuelas [y] comunidades”.

Chavez Camacho dijo que su plan es hacer crecer la organización.

“Entonces, creo que, definitivamente, estamos investigando cómo hacemos crecer nuestro alcance político”, dijo. “Sabemos que el Valle del Río Grande es una comunidad que ha sido desatendida ... en muchos aspectos. Entonces, creo, ahí es donde queremos trabajar en los próximos meses. Solo trato de tomarme un tiempo para evaluar brevemente dónde estamos. Luego descubrir cuáles son los ... servicios que implementaremos para seguir creciendo”.

Durante el tiempo que trabajó con



Nombre: Manuel Monge Mata

Carrera: Música

Clasificación: Estudiante de posgrado

Fecha de graduación: Primavera 2023



Isabel Morales / FOTO RIDER

Ciudad natal: Cartago, Costa Rica

Actividades extracurriculares: “Acá en la universidad estoy participando en el EAP, Equal Arts Productions, tratando de hacer un poco de lo que es sonido y música. Siempre he querido intentar actuar ... algo pequeño, por lo menos [para tener] la experiencia”.

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

“Puedo verlo desde muchas perspectivas. Empecemos por la cual yo creo sería más importante para mi país que es la cuestión ecológica. Costa Rica es un país sumamente verde. La primera vez que salí de Costa Rica y la primera vez que llegué a los Estados Unidos y bajarme de un aeropuerto y, pues, no ver montañas en ningún lado me hizo [sentir] sumamente inseguro. Fue una sensación de vulnerabilidad. Yo soy del Valle Central de Costa Rica. Entonces, [ahí] uno ve para el norte y hay montañas y uno ve para el sur y hay montañas. Entonces, todos los días me levantaba y veía para un lado y para el otro y veía montañas y, pues, aquí no. Por lo menos, si he visto algunas partes verdes, pero no tantas como allá”.

¿Qué hay en tu lista de deseos? “En deseos con relación a mi carrera, a la música, es poder tener contacto y conversaciones con músicos de diferentes países. Poder dialogar sobre diferentes perspectivas de la música”.

¿Quién es tu modelo a seguir? “Yo fui criado como católico. Aun así, no soy muy religioso ni mucho menos. [San] Francisco de Asís y [Santa] Clara de Asís fueron figuras que realmente han impactado o moldeado parte de lo que es mi ser. De lo musical hay muchos. [Ludwig van] Beethoven [es] mi compositor favorito. Puede ser muy cliché pero, para mi, musicalmente, fue un genio”.

¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás? “Pues, yo elegí estudiar música, creo, que desde niño. Yo no me acuerdo [pero] cuentan mis papás que en mi ciudad ... había una de las primeras escuelas de música municipal. Cuentan mis papás que cuando íbamos al centro de paraíso caminando ... pasábamos frente a la escuela de música ... y que, aparentemente, yo les dije que yo quería estar ahí. Esa es la historia que me cuentan. Desde entonces, he estado en la música”.

¿Qué películas o programas te gustan? “Me súper encanta ‘Star Wars’. Para mi, ‘Star Wars’ es casi religioso. Realmente, sigo todo lo que sale de ‘Star Wars’. Sea bueno, bonito, malo, o feo, igual es ‘Star Wars’. ... Me gusta también el anime”.

¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales? “Vamos a dividir esto. Lo primero es [que] hay que ser abierto mentalmente. No es casa, y cuando uno juega de visitante no es lo mismo que jugar de casa. Entonces hay que estar abierto mentalmente a muchas situaciones. Eventualmente, te va a tocar vivir situaciones que no será lo mismo a lo que es vivir en casa. Segundo, estudiar fuera de tu país es [más que] una oportunidad no solo de aprender tu carrera. Aprovechar todo, absolutamente todo”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez

Opinión

La pequeña niña de papá



Fatima Gamez Lopez
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

Cada vez que veo una relación padre-hija, siempre me pregunto: “¿Cómo se sentiría ser tratada como la princesita de papá?”

No crecí recibiendo ese trato. Vengo de una familia hispana donde muchas veces puede ser difícil para un padre mostrar su afecto por sus hijos.

Como mujer joven, necesito que me recuerden cuánto me ama alguien porque de otra manera dudo si realmente se preocupan por mí.

Mi padre es uno de los mejores seres humanos que conozco. También me ha enseñado cómo quiero que me traten. La relación que tengo con mi padre no es mala, pero tampoco es la mejor.

Creo que nunca tuve esos apodosos de un padre le pone a su hija. “Mi princesa”, “mi niña pequeña”, “mi niña”. A veces, esas pequeñas palabras importan mucho.

Mi padre es una persona trabajadora. Desde que tengo memoria, él ha trabajado largas horas todos los días de

la semana para proporcionarle todo a mi familia.

Comienza su día entre las 4 y las 5 a.m. para prepararse para su primer trabajo, que es de 6 a.m. a 2 p.m. Luego llega a casa alrededor de las 2:30 p.m., descansa y se vuelve a ir alrededor de las 3:30 p.m. para su segundo trabajo, donde no tiene hora de llegada. A veces, puede llegar a casa a las 10 p.m. o medianoche, dependiendo de cuánto trabajo tenga.

Siento que mi papá ha perdido

Cada vez que veo una relación padre-hija, siempre me pregunto: “¿Cómo se sentiría ser tratada como la princesita de papá?”

muchos recuerdos y su trabajo siempre será lo primero. Quiere darme a mí, a mi hermano y a mi madre una buena vida. Pero como dice mi madre, “Siempre serás reemplazable en un trabajo. Te vas y al día siguiente contratan a una nueva persona para ocupar tu lugar”.

En mi casa los jueves son días familiares porque mi papá no trabaja por la tarde. Mi hermano y yo nos peleamos para elegir dónde vamos a comer. Es el día en que podemos salir en familia y

simplemente pasar tiempo juntos.

Para mí, pasar tiempo en familia los jueves por la tarde con mi papá es suficiente.

A veces siento que no tengo muchos recuerdos con mi padre. No recibí el trato de princesa de papá porque mi padre no suele compartir sus emociones. Es una persona reservada.

A veces siento que, gracias a él, soy como soy. Me cuesta mostrar mis emociones. Ahora que soy mayor y estoy en una relación, puede ser difícil abrirme con mi pareja y decirle cómo me siento.

No debería ser difícil. No debo seguir ese patrón. Debo romperlo. Pero, ¿por qué es tan difícil para mí?

No niego que mi papá me ama. Sé que nos quiere a mí, a mi hermano y a mi madre, pero su forma de amar es diferente.

Alguien me dijo recientemente que mi relación con mi padre define lo que busco en una relación. Dependiendo de la forma en que mi padre es conmigo, busco que mi pareja sea al revés y reemplace algo que mi padre no pudo proporcionar. Seguí pensando en ello y me pregunté: “¿Por qué estoy buscando a alguien que me proteja? Alguien que me haga sentir amada.”

No quiero dar a entender que mi padre es una mala persona porque no lo es. Sé que todos tenemos diferentes formas de amar y mostrar afecto. Pero muchas veces, reemplazar el amor por cosas materiales no es suficiente. A veces todo lo que quiero escuchar es “Estoy orgulloso de ti” o “Esa es mi hija”.

Quiero ser la princesita de papá.

Giving color to campus life



Aura Velasquez/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Javier Soliz, public relations officer for the Rocket Launchers, adds details to the organization's window painting last Tuesday on the Edinburg campus. The window painting was part of a contest during Homecoming Week at UTRGV.



Samantha Lozano (left), Hospitality and Tourism Management Club event coordinator, and David Salinas, the club's secretary, add finishing details to their Bad Bunny-inspired window painting last Tuesday on the Edinburg campus.



Members of the Rocket Launchers paint their organization's window last Tuesday for the window painting contest held for Homecoming Week on the Edinburg campus. Shown (from left) are Christerfer Flores, Public Relations Officer Javier Soliz, Robert Dimas and Diego Cantu.



Geology Club President Vianey Yong lays down the base paint to the club's window painting, which is inspired by the movie "Everything Everywhere All at Once," last Tuesday on the Edinburg campus.

Passion, expression in every step



COURTESY PHOTO DEMETRIA SOLANA

Daniel Caballero, artistic director and dancer of the *Flamenco* Dance Company in Madrid, Spain, will be one of the main performers at “*A la Música 2023*,” alongside fellow *Flamenco* Dance Company member Nerea Carrasco at 10 a.m. today in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex in Edinburg.

Omar E. Zapata

A&E EDITOR

The UTRGV Center for Latin American Arts will present “*A la Música 2023*” a performance of *flamenco* concerts featuring dancers from Madrid, Spain, live music and the UTRGV Ballet *Español*.

Performances start at 10 a.m. today and continue at 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tuesday in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

Ballet *Español* Director and Dance Department Lecturer Sonia Chapa Gomez is one of the coordinators of the event and told *The Rider* she is excited to be able to offer a little bit of Spain to the UTRGV community.

“*Flamenco* is something representative of the country,” Chapa said. “For anyone who has not visited Spain or has never seen a *flamenco* spectacle, this will be something that they would really enjoy and ... it’s not only a visual experience. It’s an auditory experience.”

The concerts will feature Artistic Director Daniel Caballero and fellow dancer Nerea Carrasco of the

Flamenco Dance Company in Madrid, Spain, alongside Spanish singers Jose Cortez and Francisco Orozco, who is also playing percussion, and guitarist Jose Manuel Alconchel.

“*Flamenco* itself is so passionate,” said Chapa, who studied the dance style in Spain. “There’s so much strength and grace at the same time, which, I think, that depicts a lot of love. ... All the artists, the way they’re going to be performing and how they will be having that same language on stage is going to be interesting and very passionate. I think it’s a perfect evening for any couple or lovebirds that would like to spend the evening watching a beautiful *flamenco* performance with two people who are sexy, beautiful ... and are wonderful at how they move.”

Caballero, who studied at the *Amor De Dios* dance center in Madrid, Spain, has danced across Europe and some parts of the United States.

He told *The Rider* a principal message in the performance is “to have a point there between everyone, from the public to us” and transmit the love of

the art of *flamenco* from the performers to the audience.

“We can give a message and the people understand the sensibility of the dance style,” Caballero said.

He will direct and choreograph the performances and plans to give workshops to the UTRGV Ballet *Español* prior to the performances as well.

“The intention for all of this is that they express themselves,” Caballero said. “I want them to express their own message and to give something that is real, something that they believe ... not some choreography that is complex and not even understand the meaning behind it, but something they understand and that is authentic.”

Katherine Moore McAllen, director of the Center for Latin American Arts and associate professor of art history, told *The Rider* the performances and workshops are possible through four grants the center received.

The four grants are the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation, Raul Tijerina Jr. Foundation, Brown Foundation and Rea Charitable Trust, which total

Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

Danielle Perez
ONLINE EDITOR

Aries-Show love to those around you because they’ve been wanting to see it from you. Doing this will go a long way and prevent any mixed signals. Accept affection from others in any form they show you.

Leo-Be who you are around those you love. They certainly will not judge you. In fact, they love you for being you. So, it is time to stop hiding, and show others your true self again. Be free and enjoy what you love doing most. Your energy will attract what is meant for you.

Sagittarius-Don’t let the new energy disrupt your mindset. Every day is different, which does not mean your goals have to change. Sometimes, our bad days can discourage us, but remind yourself of who you want to be and how what is happening now is preparing you.

Libra-Be smart about your decisions before getting caught in the middle. Be wise and put yourself first to avoid any setbacks. Be positive and move forward instead of second-guessing yourself. Accept what is happening around you and come to terms with it.

Gemini-Stop being afraid of developing connections. You never know what a spark can turn into. Once you start letting others in, you will see how good things can be. Avoid limiting yourself to other chances. Instead, be limitless.

Aquarius-Protecting yourself is not selfish; it is self-love. Continue having boundaries that make you feel comfortable. Don’t worry about what others have to say. At the end of the day, you are looking out for yourself and no one should be judged for that.

Scorpio-Simply getting by can seem like the easiest way to go about work; however, putting effort into it will allow you to grow. Establish a good work ethic that can help you in the long run. Nothing worthy is produced by little to no effort. Start getting into that mindset.

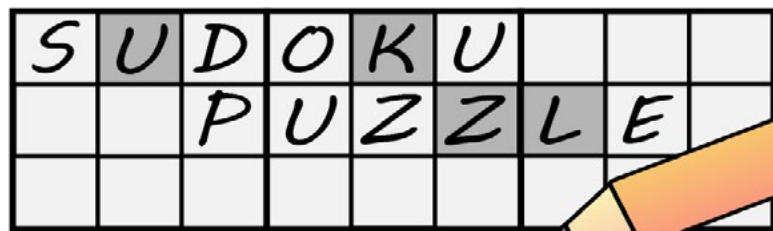
Pisces-Communication is a big component in all situations. Therefore, start being open about your emotions and share how you feel with others. Although you may think it is not necessary, discussing them can have a positive effect on your feelings.

Cancer-Caring for others is not a bad thing. However, knowing when to stop is important. Ask yourself if those individuals would do the same for you. Be real about your situation and stop letting others step all over you. If someone does not reciprocate what you do for them, it is time to let go.

Taurus-Your goals are starting to become reality. Be grateful and accepting of the opportunities you have been granted. Take advantage of what you have available before it is too late. You never know what you’re missing out on until you try.

Virgo-Don’t be afraid to share your feelings with that special someone this Valentine’s Day. It is the perfect time to be vulnerable and spread love around you. The universe encourages communication to guide your relationship further.

Capricorn-Revisit your childhood memories, as they have been on your mind lately. It is never too late to make a dream come true or to be your inner child. Your inner child will always be a big part of your life and, most of the time, it is what keeps you going. Therefore, connect with the other side of you.



Last week's puzzle answer key:

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

DIBBLE DABBLES

by Alejandro Peña



Vaqueros step up to the plate



Ahren Freeman



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

Graduate pitcher Colten Davis prepares to pitch during practice last Tuesday on the UTRGV Baseball Field on the Edinburg campus. The season will open with a game against Houston Christian University at 6:30 p.m. Friday.

Jose Medina

SPORTS REPORTER

The UTRGV Baseball Team is set to start its new season with a three-game home series against Houston Christian University beginning at 6:30 p.m. Friday.

The Vaqueros finished last season with a record of 33-25 overall and 17-13 in the Western Athletic Conference.

Asked how the players have been preparing for the season mentally and physically, graduate catcher RJ Ochoa replied their strength and conditioning coach Lucas Monroe has been training them “right” for the new season.

“Mentally, we go through this thing called Brian Cain,” Ochoa said about the recordings by the mental conditioning coach. “It’s right before practice, so we all listen to [it] and, hopefully, it gets everybody right.”

Head coach Derek Matlock said he has been trying to get the pitch count up.

“The nutrition [and] sleep part of it, too,” Matlock said. “They are locked into their nutrition and sleep. We get after them pretty good. Monroe, our strength coach, does their body fat, so we can kind of tell if they’re being slackies.”

Graduate pitcher Colten Davis said they have been doing a lot of running

and that the fall was “gruesome.”

Asked how the team gets along, Davis replied the team is pretty tight. He said there are a lot of returning players and they taught the newcomers the culture of the program.

“Everybody has bonded like brothers,” he said. “We all have each other’s back and [are] ready to go out there and compete.”

Davis said the coaches are great and they always support the players.

“They’re a second family for us,” he said. “They would do anything for us and we would do anything for them.”

Ochoa said the team gets along well and there is no fighting or arguing.

“I think our team chemistry is really off the charts,” he said. “It’s fun to be with the guys in class, and we help out each other whenever we can and pass our classes.”

Matlock is excited for the first game of the season.

“I mean, it’s the team that went into [California State University, Sacramento] and beat Sac 3 out of 4,” he said. “Something that we’ve never done.”

He also predicts the Houston Christian University Huskies will have a good offense.

“They got a Hall of Fame coach named Lance Berkman,” he said. “We’re just going to get excited for the first game. Take that game one pitch

at a time. Then, we’ll let the season roll out.”

Berkman is a six-time MLB All-Star who played 15 seasons for teams including the Houston Astros, New York Yankees, Texas Rangers and St. Louis Cardinals.

Davis is looking forward to their matchups against Grand Canyon University because that was the team the Vaqueros lost to, 5-4, in the Conference Championship in 2021, his first year with the program.

Davis says he is excited for every single game, and is going to treat every single one like a game from the World Series.

“This is the last season for us and a lot of guys from the team,” he said. “We go out there and play our hardest every game. You never know what we might do.”

Asked how he thinks the team will do compared to last season, Matlock replied “I wish I knew. I wish I had a crystal ball.”

He said the team is talented and deeper on the mound than they have been since he has been with the program.

“I think the power situation is about the same as it was last year,” Matlock said. “We got a lot of power in the lineup.”

Ochoa said he wants to win the

Ahren Freeman is a junior forward for the UTRGV Men’s Basketball Team. Freeman is from Jacksonville, Florida, and graduated from Providence School of Jacksonville. He is pursuing a bachelor’s in sociology but plans to keep playing basketball. Freeman previously attended the University of New Orleans, before transferring to Indian Hills Community College and then UTRGV.

Q: Who is one of your role models?

A: “Definitely, my pops. Just the type of man he is, he is really hardworking. He’s dedicated to what he is doing. Whenever he puts his mind to something, he makes sure he gets it done to the best of his ability. He has instilled all those traits in me. I just try to make him happy and make him proud.”

Q: What motivates you?

A: “Being able to wake up every day. I know there’s a lot of people in less fortunate situations than me. Just being around and seeing, especially now in today’s society, what goes on around the world and how people are treating each other. There’s a lot of people less fortunate than I am, so I’m just blessed to be able to open my eyes and wake up every single day.”

Q: What has been your proudest moment?

A: “Proudest moment is probably signing to a D1 school. It’s just knowing that all the hard work you put in, all through the years, high school, middle school, during summers, missing out on parties and stuff, not being able to hang out with friends from school because you’re traveling for a tournament or something. Being able to sign somewhere like Division 1, being a Division 1 athlete, like, 1% of athletes in the country are doing that. ... Knowing all the work that I’ve put in throughout the years has paid off; that was definitely a proud moment for me.”

Q: What do you like about UTRGV?

A: “Just the love everybody shows. You walk around, and you don’t even think people recognize you for real, but when you walk around they’ll be like, ‘You’re that kid that goes to UTRGV. We saw you on TV’ or ‘We saw you on this poster.’ The amount of love the people show, for being a pretty decent size area for the whole [Rio Grande] Valley itself. The area—the weather is nice. It reminds me of home, except for when it gets cold. That little cold stretch we had last week, I wasn’t really messing with that. The community, the weather, everything, I like the Valley. It reminds me of home.”

--Compiled by Jose Medina

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Men’s Tennis</p> <p>11 a.m. Friday vs. University of The Incarnate Word</p> <p>AT THE ORVILLE I. COX TENNIS CENTER</p> | <p>Baseball</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Friday vs. Houston Christian University</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Saturday vs. Houston Christian University</p> <p>Noon Sunday vs. Houston Christian University</p> <p>AT THE UTRGV BASEBALL STADIUM</p> |
|---|--|

Orange and green legacy

Fatima Gamez Lopez

SPANISH EDITOR

"¡Sí, se puede, sí, se puede!" shouted members and staff of *La Unión del Pueblo Entero* outside *LUPE* headquarters in San Juan on Feb. 1 as they welcomed Tania A. Chavez Camacho, the new executive director and president of *LUPE* and *LUPE* Votes.

After more than 45 years of serving *LUPE*, Juanita Valdez-Cox, officially retired on Dec. 30. Chavez Camacho was named the new executive director on Feb. 1.

LUPE was founded by the late American labor leader and civil rights activist Cesar E. Chavez in 1989 and established in the Rio Grande Valley in 2003 by Valdez-Cox with the belief that when people work together, they can effect change.

Chavez Camacho joined *LUPE* in 2012. Throughout her tenure, she has held different positions in the organization, such as community conscious coordinator, director of management analysis, fund development and systems strategist, among others.

"I am an immigrant from Veracruz, Mexico," Chavez Camacho said during her welcoming event. "I am very proud to be the daughter of business parents. ... My education and upbringing [was] ... possible thanks to the thousands of *taquitos* that my mom and dad sold on the street and also to [the] many, many *fritas de chicharrones*. It was something they gave me so that I could get an education because they didn't have that privilege."

During an interview with *The Rider*, Chavez Camacho said UTRGV legacy institution, the University of Texas–Pan American, was "the major platform" where she learned her skill set.

"*LUPE* has really given me the opportunity to put into practice a lot of what I learned at the university," she said. "When I came into *LUPE* ... I was able to hone in on those skills. I think [that] is what allowed me to be successful here. Because I was finding something to the table that added capacity to the work of *LUPE*."

Chavez Camacho graduated from UTPA in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in finance. She then earned a master of business administration in 2012 and a



PHOTO COURTESY LA UNIÓN DEL PUEBLO ENTERO
Tania A. Chavez Camacho, the new executive director of *LUPE*, speaks outside the organization's headquarters Feb. 1 in San Juan as staff and members listen.

second master's in communication.

During the welcome, Daniel Diaz, political director of *LUPE* and *LUPE* Votes, shared his experience, having known Chavez Camacho since she was hired by the organization.

"We met her as a student leader [at the Minority Affairs Council]," Diaz said. "We had the pleasure of having Tania and other young leaders on the team to ... help thousands of young people apply for DACA. ... I remember at that time, DACA was announced. ... [Chavez Camacho] helped thousands of youth apply for DACA. She also led outreach efforts for *LUPE* throughout the Valley, schools [and] communities for years."

Chavez Camacho said her plan is to grow the organization.

"So, I think, definitely, we are looking into how we grow our political reach," she said. "We know that the Rio Grande Valley is a community that has been underserved ... in many aspects. So, I think, that's where we want to put in work over the next few months. Just trying to take some time to briefly evaluate where we are at. Then figure out what are the ... services that we will implement in order to continue to grow."

During her time working with Valdez-Cox, Chavez Camacho felt that she was following her legacy.

"I feel that I had been mentored [by]

Juanita for so many years," she said. "It was exciting to learn that I was gonna follow those footsteps of a legacy, right? But at the same time, I was excited. Excited for what the future holds for *LUPE*. Excited to become the next political powerhouse in the community, not just for *LUPE* members, but for the entire Rio Grande Valley."

Chavez Camacho ended her speech with a quote from civil rights activist Cesar Chavez.

"We have won, but we are going for much more," she said. "Our co-founder Cesar Chavez once said, 'We have seen the future and the future is ours. Now let's do it together. *¡Sí, se puede!*'"

UTRGV awarded \$5.7 million to improve mental health at K-12 schools

Teresita Dominguez

THE RIDER

UTRGV's Department of Human Development and School Services in the College of Education and P-16 integration has received a grant of \$5.7 million to aid in hiring more Rio Grande Valley-area mental health professionals in K-12 schools.

Awarded by the U.S. Education Department under its Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant Program, the grant has been in use since January and will be disbursed over five years, according to Nancy Razo, a professor of practice and School of Psychology program coordinator.

The grant program "provides competitive grants to support and demonstrate innovative partnerships to train school-based mental health service providers for employment in schools," according to the U.S. Education Department's Office of Elementary & Secondary Education website.

"The whole purpose of the grant is to try and get schools to hire more [school psychology, social work and counseling graduate student] professionals that can provide those services in schools, rather

than having to drive out to a private practice," Razo said. "It's building those services in schools."

The department will partner with seven local school districts in the Valley–Brownsville, Edcouch-Elsa, Harlingen, McAllen, Mission, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo and Sharyland—where it will continue the work being done for the last 11 years.

"We partner with school districts to have our interns out there, our practicum students out there," Razo said.

Suzanne Maniss, the chair of and a professor in the Department of Counseling, said the focus of the grant is "to help train more mental health professionals to help address the mental health needs that are at a crisis level nationwide."

Valley schools have a shortage of social workers and school psychologists, according to the American School Counselor Association recommended ratio "of one school counselor per every 250 students." The grant will help to increase these numbers in the seven districts, Maniss said.

Twenty-four interns in school psychology, counseling and social work

UT System student regent visits UTRGV



Arisbeth Rodriguez/THE RIDER

UTRGV student leaders speak with University of Texas System Student Regent Neelesh C. "Neel" Mutyala about initiatives, such as campus life and advising, last Wednesday outside the Student Union PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón. Shown with Mutyala are Resident Assistant Francisco "Cisco" Eguia (from left), a University Recreation representative and a member of Fraternity and Sorority Life; Guadalupe "Lupita" Castellanos, Campus Activities Board vice president of membership; Cristina Vazquez, CAB traditions chair; Angelique Treviño, Secretary of Communications and recruitment and Rogelio Balli, a V Squad member.

Brigitte Ortiz

THE RIDER

Last Wednesday, Neelesh C. "Neel" Mutyala, the University of Texas System student regent, visited UTRGV

campuses in Brownsville, Edinburg and Harlingen to discuss initiatives with university leaders, including advising and campus life.

Mutyala is a fourth-year medical

City of Brownsville legislative agenda

Rogelio Chanes, Brownsville Intergovernmental Relations manager, presented a snapshot of the 88th Texas Legislative Session, so far, which convened Jan. 10 and runs until May 29. Chanes said the state budget, \$188.2 billion, has a \$33 billion surplus, a third of which is expected to go into a “rainy day” fund and help lower property tax.

The legislative agenda includes topics of development in the commercial space economy and broadband connectivity.

Brownsville is “well-positioned to become a leader in expanding the commercial space economy” due to current space investments in the region and the presence of SpaceX, according to Chanes. In Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 1, the Texas Legislature submitted an additional provision for consideration, which would create a Texas Space Commission.

In the interest of broadband

connectivity within the city, Lit Communities, a network builder, operator and consultant agency, is investing \$70 million in private funding to construct the last mile of the network, Chanes said. Legislative action includes supporting the creation of a funding program for underserved urban and rural areas, according to the presentation.

Other legislative action focuses on funding for an Emergency Operations Center, a joint tactical training facility for the Brownsville Police Department and the Texas Department of Public Safety, regional transportation infrastructure, urban growth, municipal solidarity, public health on the border and the LGBTQ+ community.

Key dates for the current session include the bill filing deadline, which is March 11, and the last day for Gov. Greg Abbott to sign or veto bills, June 18. Most bills go into effect Aug. 27, according to the presentation.

He recommends that students stay informed on bills that deal with campus safety, funding for schools and digital textbooks.

Canales advises students to not underestimate their capacity to bring change in Texas and the world they live in.

“The Legislature touches everything from the tires on your car to the fuel you put in your tank, to the buttons on your shirt, to the way people are paid, the hourly wages to education,” he said, “And so there’s no one legislator who knows everything. In fact, it’s generally the people that are the experts in those fields that we depend on.

“And so when changes need to be made, they won’t happen unless the people who are experts in those fields come and tell us. I encourage all college students to realize they have an incredible power to change the world they live in and the policies around it if they’d only speak up.”

Senate Bill 695, filed Feb. 3

by state Sen. Morgan LaMantia (D-Brownsville), would increase salary and wages paid to public school employees.

The Rider asked Lucero Saucedo, LaMantia’s legislative aide and scheduler, for an interview with LaMantia on Feb. 6, but she said LaMantia was not available.

However, LaMantia sent a statement to The Rider via email on Feb. 8.

“Our teachers are responsible for developing the next generation of leaders, and it is no question that they are underpaid in relation to the value of their service,” she wrote in the email. “The future of the Texas workforce is in their hands. As a state, if we wish to be successful in the future, we must invest in our teachers and public school employees in the present. I hope that SB 693 can be the foundation of future legislation that solidifies in the hearts and minds of our educators that the Texas Legislature truly appreciates their commitment to the students of Texas.”

Later, during public comment, she also said that “aspects of the investigation are highly problematic.”

“This idea of the social media shaming and posting people’s mugshots on the internet, right, states all over the [United States] are enacting laws that prohibit specifically this,” she said.

Juan Mancias, chairman of the Carrizo Comecrudo Tribe of Texas, also spoke in support of Hinojosa, saying her work protects “who we are.”

“A hundred and seventy years of Brownsville, but where’s your history?” Mancias said. “Go anywhere, you find nothing but Elon Musk stuff. He’s erasing your history. ... They are pillaging and they are looting these sites that are out there, and when someone like Bekah Hinojosa stands up to protect what is there, they’re not protesting. She’s protecting the rights of who we are.”

to all the other independent school districts,” Salinas said.

He also said there is a gap between how much each district receives from the government. ECISD obtains \$7,457.70 per student from government funding while STISD schools obtain \$12,611.87, according to Salinas.

“This year, property values went up more, \$2.1 billion in Edinburg,” he said. “We were forced to reduce our tax rate to the taxpayer, almost five pennies. We lost \$4 million, almost \$5 million. [STISD is] not subject to that.

“They just keep getting more and more. They’re not subject to what they call compression, bringing down your tax rate. Like, we brought the tax rate [down by] over eight pennies in the last two years to save the taxpayers of Edinburg money.”

Salinas emphasized that STISD does not provide any additional services than what ECISD already offers.

Odom said the total revenue that STISD receives is actually much less compared to other school districts that have access to other sources of revenue that it does not.

“The main argument, you know, by these efforts is that they claim that there’s a duplication of taxes for the residents in the three counties,” she said. “So our tax rate is .0492 cents, so we are capped at a nickel per \$100 valuation. Other school districts are over \$1 per \$100 valuation, so our district would cost the average homeowner approximately \$5.33 per month.”

Based on the Hidalgo County Tax Office 2022 tax rate schedule, the ECISD tax rate per \$100 value is \$1.0604.

In the Valley, 84% of children are considered economically disadvantaged, according to the Texas Education Agency’s Public Education Information Management System. In ECISD, 81.7% of the students are considered “poor,” compared with 51% of STISD students.

“This school is an elite school when you consider the wealth of that student population,”

Salinas said. “They don’t need those five extra pennies.”

The Texas Education Agency has funding mechanisms that STISD can use instead, and which will bring an equity of funding to both districts without extra taxes being collected, he said.

In an interview with The Rider Tuesday night, Salinas said that removing STISD’s taxing authority will not “kill the school.”

“They’re simply gonna have to survive with the same funding that everybody else gets,” he said.

However, Odom told The Rider in response to Salinas’ statement that “without the tax revenue, we would not be able to service the three counties that we serve.”

Edinburg Place 2 Councilmember Jason De Leon asked Salinas why the concern was just brought up to the council and the community.

Salinas replied that he was just informed about this two and a half months ago during a superintendents meeting, which STISD Superintendent Marco A. Lara Jr. also attended.

Valdez-Cox, Chavez Camacho sintió que estaba siguiendo su legado.

“Siento que Juanita me ha guiado durante tantos años”, dijo. “Fue emocionante saber que iba a seguir esos pasos de un legado, ¿verdad? Pero al mismo tiempo, estaba emocionada. Emocionada por lo que depara el futuro para LUPE. Emocionada de convertirme en la próxima potencia política en la comunidad, no solo para los miembros de LUPE, sino para todo el Valle del Río Grande”.

Chavez Camacho terminó su discurso con una cita del activista de derechos civiles Cesar Chávez.

“Hemos ganado, pero vamos por mucho más”, dijo. “Nuestro cofundador, Cesar Chavez, dijo una vez: ‘Hemos visto el futuro y el futuro es nuestro. Ahora hagámoslo juntos.’ ¡Sí, se puede!”
--Traducido por Fatima Gamez Lopez

just over \$100,000.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to experience art and cultural expression from a country with so many traditions,” McAllen said. “It will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a cultural experience on Valentine’s Day with beautiful music and stunning dancers and incredible talent from superstars in Spain.”

Tickets start at \$5 for children and

\$10 for the general public. VIP tickets include a pre-concert refreshment for \$17.50, with VIP couples’ tickets at \$35. Tickets can be purchased at the box office at the front of the Performing Arts Complex.

In collaboration with Sidebar Restaurant, which is located at 215 E. University Dr. in Edinburg, there is a special Valentine’s Day dinner and concert package that includes dinner at the restaurant before the concert. For more information on the package call, 300-5165.

conference and regional championships this season.

“I think we got the team to do it,” he said. “I just want to be here for the team, whatever they need me to do and ball out.”

Davis said the expectations for the team are as high as they have always been. He also said they, obviously, want to win the championship and regional.

“But 40 games, we want to win 40 games,” Davis said. “I expect we can do that. We have every right and every capability to do that. We just have to compete.”

Davis said one of the expectations he holds himself to is being an All-WAC player.

The Vaqueros will face off against the Huskies again at 6:30 p.m. Saturday and noon Sunday. All games will be held at the UTRGV Baseball Stadium on the Edinburg campus.

will be placed across the seven districts, according to Razo.

“We work really, really hard in producing good students and the fact that now they were going to be rewarded monetarily through financial support was just so exciting,” Razo said.

Before the grant, the department did not know which district would have an opening for internships. The grant helps by securing internships for UTRGV students within the seven districts for the next five years, Razo said.

Eighty percent will increase their knowledge to use evidence-based practices and support the positive mental health of students in K-12, according to the U.S. Education Department website.

“It’s a fantastic feeling,” Maniss said. “We’re excited about the services we’re going to be able to provide to our communities, to our school and also the training aspects that will be available to the students in the three disciplines that are involved.”

During the span of five years, Razo is hoping they will be able to produce “120 high-quality trained students to be able to provide mental health services.”

student at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. He was appointed student regent by Gov. Greg Abbott for a one-year term that began on June 1, 2022, according to the UT System website.

Some of the initiatives the student regent discussed with university leaders is financial help for students and working with community members to get students resources the university does not have.

“We talked about wellness services and then also advising initiatives, how we can improve advising, how we can put more resources towards things that are working,” Mutyala said in an interview with The Rider after a brunch last Wednesday with student leaders in the Student Union on the Brownsville campus.

He said this is his 10th official visit to an institution.

“I think there is a very unique student population here,” Mutyala said. “... It’s a very diverse population here. The students we’re serving here are very different, I think, than some of the other demographics of other parts of the state.”

During his visit, Mutyala toured the research labs and saw the facilities and the “groundbreaking” research in genetics and diseases.

“And then I got to meet with a lot of the student success, wellness folks, and that’s an important area of concern for me because one of the things that I’ve been doing as student regent is going to different universities [and] focusing on academic advising,” he said.

Mutyala is a first-generation college student, so he can relate to students whose family cannot help them or tell them what courses to take.

“Making sure that advising is, like, efficient, what we can do to improve it and how we can engage students because I think student engagement is really important,” he said. “What we’re seeing is, after COVID-19, a lot of students were virtual or away from campus and then campus life has kind of fallen apart, and this is throughout the state.”

Mutyala believes campus life is important to help students “make it through the finish line” and graduate.

“Higher education can be tough and it’s a different challenge for everyone that comes,” the student regent said.

“But education really can do a lot of good for people. I think one of the biggest things that education [does] is empower people. It gives people better jobs, economically empowers people. But also, you learn about how things work. ... You gain knowledge and you can learn alot about life.”

Mutyala said the main thing he is trying to do as student regent is make sure there is equity in the level of advising in institutions with undergraduate programs.

“Advising can be improved anywhere at any institution but, I think, at the undergraduate level it’s very important when students are transitioning from being in the K-12 system to going to have more independence and choosing a career,” he said. “There is a lot more doubt in that area and I think just ensuring that the advising process there is improved in two ways. One, trying to figure out ways to measure what works and what doesn’t work in the different universities in the System and have a way for them to share it. And the second, like, ensuring that the resources are available there for advising to make sure that there is that student adviser to student ratio.”



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