

THE RIDER



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THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

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A&E

'Toons for tunes!'



SPORTS

Vaqueras vie for a win in Vegas



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today
SGA Candidate Meeting
The **Student Government Association** will host an informational meeting from noon to 1 p.m. for eligible candidates who applied for the **SGA Elections**. A meeting link will be sent via email.

Taco Bar
The **Campus Activities Board** will host a **Taco Bar Party** for students and faculty to enjoy **free tacos, aguas frescas** and **play loteria** from 1 to 3 p.m. on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus.

K.I.S.S. Fundraiser
The **Korean International Student Society** will sell Asian snacks, ramen and shoe charms from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Library Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

Card Game Day
The **Student Union** will host a **Card Game Day** from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Student Union Game Rooms on both campuses.

Liberal Arts Town Hall
The **Student Government Association** will give students the chance to express concerns and ideas or ask questions about the **College of Liberal Arts**. The town hall will take place from 3 to 4 p.m. today in Liberal Arts Building South Room 255 on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Wednesday in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 3.216 on the Brownsville campus.

Tuesday
Decorating Tote Bags
The **Center for Student**

Involvement and the Involvement Ambassadors will host a **tote bag decorating event** and information session from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in Music, Science, Learning Center Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus. The event will also provide tips for students on how to get involved this semester and stay up to date on campus events, student organizations and volunteer opportunities.

Secretary Training
The **Center for Student Involvement** will host an event for student organization members to learn about the role of a secretary from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in University Center Conference Room 205 on the Edinburg campus. To RSVP, visit V Link. There will be **free food**.

Mass Celebration
The **Catholic Student Association** celebrates **Mass** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday in the University Chapel on the Edinburg campus.

FSA General Meeting
The **Filipino Student Association** will host a general meeting about club events and Goodphil season from noon to 2 p.m. in Science Building Room 2.102 on the Edinburg campus.

Border Seminar
Ronald Rael, a professor of architecture at the University of California Berkeley, will present a lecture titled **“The U.S.-Mexico Border Regime: Trauma, Hospitality, Art, and Protest”** at 5 p.m. in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus and via Zoom. Rael is the author of **“Borderwall**

as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S.-Mexico Boundary.” The lecture is part of the **Boston University Center on Forced Displacement’s Sawyer Seminar Series** and is sponsored in part by the **UTRGV Department of Public Affairs and Security Studies**. To register, visit www.eventbrite.com.

Wednesday
BIG Leadership Challenge
The **Student Leadership Academy** will host a session on communication, teamwork and listening from 10 to 11 a.m. in Student Union Room 2.20 on the Brownsville campus and from 2 to 3 p.m. the same day in Student Academic Center Room 1.101 on the Edinburg campus.

Free Lunch
The **Catholic Student Association** hosts a **free lunch and fellowship** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. every Wednesday in the Newman Catholic Student Center in Edinburg.

Science Town Hall
The **Student Government Association** will give students the chance to express concerns and ideas or ask questions about the **College of Science**. The town hall will take place from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.113 on the Brownsville campus and from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday in Science Building Room 1.288 on the Edinburg campus.

Thursday
Adviser Series
The **Center for Student Involvement** will host an adviser series

titled **“Emotional Intelligence”** for current and new advisers, faculty or staff interested in advising a student organization from noon to 1 p.m. in Student Union Sage Room 2.406 on the Edinburg campus. To register, visit V Link. There will be **free food**.

General Meeting
The **Economics and Finance Society** will conduct a **general meeting** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Building Room 113 on the Edinburg campus.

Free Lunch
The **Baptist Student Ministry** will serve **free food** from noon to 2 p.m. in Music, Science Learning Center Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus.

Friday
Student Senate Meeting
The **Student Government Association** will meet from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in Music, Science Learning Center Room 1.112 on the Brownsville campus.

Anthropology Meeting
The **Anthropology Club** meets from 1 to 2 p.m. each week in Health Affairs Building East Room 1.122 on the Edinburg campus to discuss business and events. All majors are invited to participate.

Student Fee Advisory Committee
The **SFAC** will conduct a meeting regarding departmental presentations from 1 to 4:30 p.m. online. To register contact the Office of the Dean of Students at dos@utrgv.edu or (956) 665-2260.

--Compiled by *Silvana Villarreal*

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Feb. 23 and 28.

Feb. 23
4:26 p.m.: A student on the Edinburg campus reported that another vehicle was bearing the same Texas temporary paper tags as her vehicle and had been issued parking citations. The UTRGV Parking and Transportation Department removed the parking citations from her account and flagged the paper tags for further investigation.

7:04 p.m.: UTRGV Communications reported observing three men climbing the U.S. Border Fence behind the Interdisciplinary Academic Building in Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus via closed-circuit TV cameras. The U.S. Border Patrol was notified and responded to the location along with UTRGV officers. Two of the men, who are from Mexico, were apprehended by the Border Patrol, while the third was not located.

Feb. 24
3:45 p.m.: A staff member at the UTRGV Center for Innovation and Commercialization in Weslaco reported \$1,000 missing from her wallet. The staff member last remembers having the money on Tuesday and discovered it missing on Friday. The wallet was in multiple locations during this time period. The case is under investigation.

Feb. 25
8:04 p.m.: During a basketball event, a boy, 12, entered restricted areas of the Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus without authorization. There had been ongoing conduct issues with the boy during Athletics events, according to Athletics staff. The boy was issued a criminal trespass warning for Athletics events and was subsequently released to the custody of his parents.

Feb. 26
5:26 a.m.: An officer assisted the National Guard in identifying a vehicle matching the description for which the

Brownsville Police Department was on the lookout. The vehicle and driver were located at a nearby gas station. The Brownsville police were notified and reported that was not the vehicle and operator for which they were searching.

11:18 p.m.: A student riding an electric scooter fell, causing injury to her head in Lot E-16 on the Edinburg campus. Emergency medical services arrived, evaluated the student and transported her to a hospital for further evaluation.

Feb. 27
1:18 p.m.: Officers received a report from a resident assistant of the Village Apartments on the Edinburg campus of a strong odor of marijuana in a dorm. The officer spoke with the residents and was given consent to search. The search yielded drug paraphernalia and two of the residents were issued court appearance citations for possession of drug paraphernalia (a class C misdemeanor).

1:32 p.m.: A female student suffered

a seizure while exiting the Liberal Arts Building North on the Edinburg campus. Emergency medical services arrived and transported the student to the hospital for further medical evaluation.

6:22 p.m.: A student reported that she had observed a male student in the University Library on the Edinburg campus that she had previously filed a report on for making her feel uncomfortable. After further investigation, no criminal elements were found.

Feb. 28
2:36 p.m.: Officers spoke with a non-affiliated man who was causing a disturbance in the lobby of the Student Services Building on the Edinburg campus. A records check revealed the man had a lengthy criminal history. Officers issued the man a criminal trespass warning, and he left the area without further incident.

--Compiled by *Arisbeth Rodriguez*



THE RIDER

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THE RIDER

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UTRGV No. 2 nationally in affordability

Teresita Dominguez
THE RIDER

UTRGV has been ranked second in the nation in affordability and seventh best public university in the nation by an education research company.

The objective of Degreechoices, founded in 2021, is to focus on the economic factor of the school in question, according to Carly Brown, head of university and media relations for the organization.

“There’s been a lot of ink spilled on how expensive schools have gotten and it’s becoming harder and harder to pay back debt,” David Levy, the architect of the ranking system, told The Rider in a Zoom interview Feb. 28. “I think students are asking themselves more, and also parents and taxpayers, is it worth it? And I think a lot of the ranking systems out there aren’t sort of zooming in on that sort of economic perspective.”

Levy said other ranking systems take into consideration factors, such as endowment size, test scores and rate of alumni. This information can be useful, but Levy believes that it is not something that should contribute to choosing between one school or another.

“I think the point of Degreechoices in the space that we’re in ... is to give students and prospective students a really clear idea: This is what the economic outlook looks like for this school for this program without loads of other layers kind of built into it, which you don’t get a choice in choosing how that affects the scoring of a school,” Brown said.

Writing and Language Studies Professor Randall Monty worries that the economic ranking does not reflect other factors UTRGV and other



Aura Velasquez/THE RIDER

Students walk near the Lozano-Banco Bridge on the Brownsville campus last Tuesday. UTRGV has been ranked the No. 1 public university in Texas and second in the country in affordability, according to degreechoices.com.

universities are known for, such as its first-generation college students.

“It’s a family connection university,” Monty said. “That is important but is not reflected in those economic-only data. Even though that ranking looks pretty good, ‘Hey, No. 7 in the country,’ there’s a lot of things we’re doing well that don’t get accounted for.”

The professor said he and his wife graduated from legacy institution

University of Texas-Pan American and their daughter, from UTRGV.

The return a student may expect on their education investments should be an important factor in attending college. The mission at Degreechoices is to help students analyze the economic track records of different universities, according to its website.

“We wanted it to be this sort of really straightforward, transparent, no fluff

way for students to be able to see that,” Brown said. “It’s something that people have been waiting for ... a lot of schools have known this internally, that their school delivers for students but they haven’t really had a way of proving it, or showing it without having to collect a load of data from loads of different colleges.”

Michelle Chino, a freshman

Edinburg declared *Grupo Frontera’s* hometown



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

Grupo Frontera performs one of its Billboard Hot 100 songs “No Se Va” at the Promenade Park Amphitheater in Edinburg. The group performed four songs after the proclamation ceremony naming March 1 as Grupo Frontera Day.

Andrea Flores
THE RIDER

Edinburg officials delivered a proclamation at the Promenade Park Amphitheater last week to declare Wednesday as *Grupo Frontera* Day and the city as its hometown.

The amphitheater opened to the public at 7 p.m. City officials issued the proclamation at 8 p.m. The

council members thanked the public for coming to witness the recognition.

“*Frontera* is one of the reasons why Edinburg is a music city, and we will continue to celebrate with them as the city continues to grow,” said Place 3 Councilmember Johnny Garcia.

Place 1 Councilmember Daniel “Dan” Diaz explained

how the event came to be.

“I had a phone call from a young lady by the name of Connie Alfaro, testing facilitator at J. Economedes High School and she said, ‘I would love it if you guys would recognize the group,’” Diaz said. “They were working on it, *trabajando*, and it finally evolved. *Lo que están mirando aquí ahorita, sin ella*

Brownsville’s past and present

Natalie Lapsley
THE RIDER

During the Feb. 27 meeting, the Brownsville City Commission listened to a presentation about a lack of framework for temporary closure of streets and public spaces.

“Without a clear permitting framework for the temporary closure of streets and public spaces, downtown stakeholders have expressed concerns about the lack of predictable event management permitting,” reads a Feb. 27 memo to the commission from Rick Vasquez, Brownsville planning and redevelopment director.

As downtown Brownsville “grows” and becomes “revitalized,” the number of requests for road closures in the interest of private and public events increase, Allan Garces, downtown manager, told the commission during the meeting.

“We’re starting to see activation of the Market Square area more and more,” Garces said. “We’re starting to see event requests more and more in the downtown area.”

Although road closures currently require traffic control plans, there is no policy in place permitting event management and temporary street closure. Garces said in the next

45 days, the Downtown Management Office staff plans to prepare a draft of policy recommendations for the commission to review and receive feedback from downtown businesses and the public.

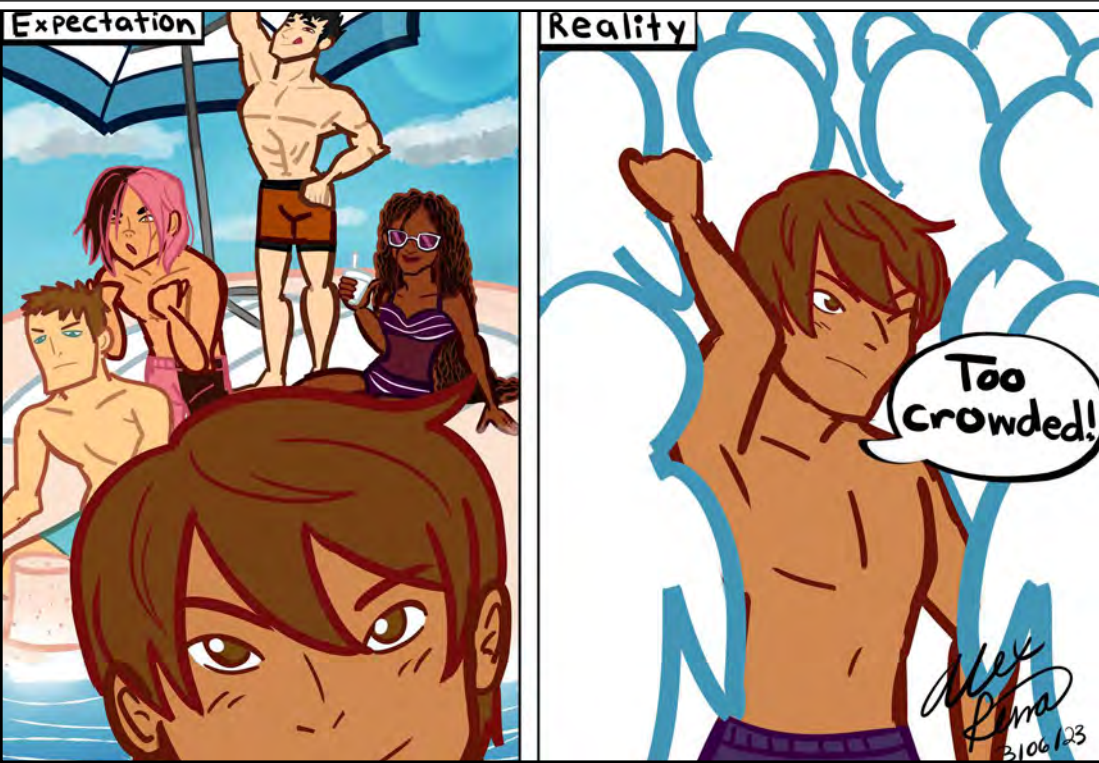
Brownsville Mayor Trey Mendez added it is important to take into account traffic flow as well as parking availability when deciding which streets to close for events.

“And then, on street closures for private events, I think there should be a fee associated for that,” Mendez said. “I think there should be some sort of way to stop it from happening every day just ‘cause, right.”

“I think some of those are being taken advantage of. I’ve seen that. So, I think having a fee associated with that ... I think individuals that are asking for it would be more conscious of that.”

District 3 City Commissioner Roy De los Santos added that instead of continuing to require event hosts to hire engineers to develop traffic control plans, the city should create those plans with in-house engineers.

De los Santos also urged the Downtown Management Office staff to involve the Brownsville Police



What are you looking forward to during Spring Break?



JarSarah Whitehurst
finance freshman

"I'm looking forward to taking a break from school, because it's been lots of work. I am also looking forward to travel, you know, just really explore the world and just [have a] fun time on spring break."

"I'm just looking to take this spring break very relaxed, catch up on some readings and some final assignments. Not ideal, but I've got to get it done."



Angel Flandes
history senior



Christopher Gonzalez
biology junior

"To have fun, to meet new people, to take a break from school, especially since midterms are next week. Help my mental health and, I guess, get more in shape."

"Visitar a mi familia, pasarla bien y no hacer cosas malas".



Alvaro Castro Jr.
estudiante de ultimo año de ciencias biomédicas

—Compiled and photos by Daniela Martinez Salazar

Faith without religion



Blanca Castillo
PHOTOGRAPHER

A force moves us all. A force you cannot see but is there to comfort you when no one else is.

This force pushes us to keep fighting to make our dreams become reality. It is a force that connects us. We all feel this energy, whether you are in the United States or in another part of the world.

The only difference is that we make sense of this force depending on the culture we live in. That is the reason there are so many different religions, yet they are all similar in some way.

They all derived from ancient texts that were hard to understand in the first place. We cannot believe wholeheartedly in these ancient texts that have been translated over and over for centuries.

What we should be doing is connecting them all together

to figure out the real Truth.

Following and believing in one religion keeps us in a box. It divides and causes hostility among the human race.

The majority of us believe in the same force; we just have different names for it.

However, we keep insisting that our "God" is the right one and try to convince the world of this. Instead, we should be listening to people's testimonials from all different types of backgrounds, so that we can try to truly understand the energy we know is guiding us.

Once you let go of religion, and instead be guided by faith, a world of knowledge will open up for you.

Once you let go of religion, and instead be guided by faith, a world of knowledge will open up for you. Knowledge that will teach you how to live life the way it was intended.

Can you imagine what the world would look like if we just stopped arguing and started working together to heal it, both physically and mentally? We would be able

to create heaven on earth. Instead, we focus too much on these labels: Catholic, Christian, Mormon, Muslim, etc.

There is a little bit of truth sprinkled into each of these religions. Now, let us learn from each other and uncover the Truth.

What does faith look like? Having faith is knowing that there is something greater than you that is working in your favor. Having faith means seeking out this greater energy and allowing it to guide you on your quest for knowledge of the unseen.

This force will take you where you need to go, even if it's against your will. It will bring people into your life that are going to better it or reveal a cycle that you need to break. It will teach you hard lessons, so you can start aligning with your higher self.

It is important to remember that everything is happening for you, not to you.

It does not matter what you call this force (Yahweh, Allah, Brahma, your spirit guides, etc.). It is going to make moves in your life, regardless.

The question is: Are you going to fight it? I can assure you, fighting it only makes things harder.

WACKY WEB POLL

WOULD YOU RATHER SPEND A WEEK IN THE FOREST OR A REAL HAUNTED HOUSE?

89%	11%
FOREST	HAUNTED HOUSE

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Edinburg declarada ciudad natal de Grupo Frontera



Jose Medina /THE RIDER

El alcalde de Edinburg, Ramiro Garza Jr. lee una proclamación para Grupo Frontera antes de su actuación a las 8 p.m. en el Promenade Park Amphitheater. La ciudad declaró el 1 de marzo como Día del Grupo Frontera.

Andrea Flores THE RIDER

Los funcionarios de Edinburg entregaron una proclamación en el Promenade Park Amphitheater la semana pasada para declarar el miércoles como el Día del Grupo Frontera y la ciudad como su ciudad natal.

El anfiteatro abrió al público a las 7 p.m. Los funcionarios de la ciudad emitieron la proclamación a las 8 p.m. Los regidores agradecieron al público por acudir a presenciar el reconocimiento.

“Frontera es una de las razones por las que Edinburg es una ciudad musical, y continuaremos celebrando con ellos a medida que la ciudad continúa creciendo”, dijo el concejal de Place 3, Johnny Garcia.

El concejal de Place 1, Daniel “Dan” Diaz, explicó cómo se llevó a cabo el evento.

“Recibí una llamada telefónica de una joven llamada Connie Alfaro, facilitadora de pruebas en la escuela secundaria J.

Economedes, y me dijo: ‘Me encantaría que reconocieran al grupo’, dijo Díaz. “Estaban trabajando en eso, trabajando”, y finalmente evolucionó. Lo que están mirando aquí ahorita, sin ella no pasa esto.”

Grupo Frontera se formó el 16 de febrero del año pasado en Edinburg, según la proclamación, que fue leída por el alcalde Ramiro Garza Jr.

“[La banda], que tomó algunas de las canciones más populares y le agregó el toque norteño y cumbia, y

considerando que Grupo Frontera es uno de los grupos más frescos y únicos de los últimos años, habiendo logrado tanto en solo un año, Grupo Frontera está conquistando la industria

“Todos teníamos nuestros trabajos habituales, y creo que el mayor obstáculo fue saltar y decir: ‘Sabes qué, dejemos nuestros trabajos habituales y dediquémonos a nuestra música’,”

--Julian Peña Jr.
Percusionista

de la música con su carisma y su original sonido norteño”, leyó Garza. “También están batiendo récords en sus plataformas de redes sociales, con TikTok. Su video musical de ‘No se va’ tiene más de 250 millones de visitas en YouTube”.

El grupo tiene tres temas en el Billboard Hot 100, que son “Bebe dame”, “Que vuelvas” y “No se va”, que interpretó en el anfiteatro.

El vocalista principal Adelaido Solis es alumno del Distrito Escolar

Independiente Consolidado de Edinburg y habló después de recibir la proclamación.

“A todos los que están escuchando en este momento, me gustaría decirles que todo esto comenzó con un sueño, por amor a la música”, dijo Solis. “Si quisieras continuar en lo que sea, en tu carrera musical, te diré que sigas tus sueños. Así es como empezamos. Sin un sueño, realmente no hay nada, realmente, en la vida. Así que sigue tus sueños porque se harán realidad”.

En una entrevista con The Rider, el percusionista Julian Peña Jr. dijo que uno de los obstáculos que enfrentaron cuando el grupo comenzó fue su trabajo.

“Todos teníamos nuestros trabajos habituales, y creo que el mayor obstáculo fue saltar y decir: ‘Sabes qué, dejemos nuestros trabajos habituales y dediquémonos a nuestra música’”, dijo Peña. “Fue tomar la decisión de que realmente queríamos convertirnos en músicos”.

Cuando se le preguntó qué significa la cumbia y la música norteña para el grupo, Solis dijo que los géneros son algo con lo que todos han crecido.

“Es algo que siempre ha estado presente en nuestra cultura”, dijo. “Ya sea aquí en Edinburg o donde tenemos nuestras raíces en General Bravo, Monterrey, [Nuevo León, México], Reynosa, [Tamaulipas, México], donde sea, la música cumbia siempre estará presente”.



Nombre: Dante Beukes

Carrera: inglés

Clasificación: Estudiante de segundo año

Fecha de graduación: Primavera 2025



Jesse Valencia /FOTO RIDER

Ciudad natal: Windhoek, Namibia

Actividades extracurriculares: “Soy parte del equipo de ajedrez aquí en UTRGV. Esa es la razón principal por la que estoy aquí. Entonces, soy parte del equipo de ajedrez. Yo juego tenis aquí. Sí, eso es más o menos”.

¿Qué diferencias encuentras entre tu ciudad natal y los Estados Unidos? “¿Dónde empiezo? Por supuesto ... es muy diferente. También hay muchas similitudes, ¿verdad? Porque Estados Unidos tiene esta influencia en la cultura y los medios en el mundo. Entonces, también hay similitudes. Mi país está bastante occidentalizado. ... En mi país estamos más relajados. ... Aquí, parece que la gente solo quiere trabajar, trabajar, trabajar, trabajar, trabajar, ¿verdad? Donde en mi país, [es] más relajado. ¿Algo como eso? No sé. Quiero decir ... hay muchas diferencias, por supuesto, pero tal vez esta sea la principal”.

¿Cuáles son tus metas? “Bueno, quiero convertirme en un gran maestro de ajedrez. Ese es el título más alto en el ajedrez”.

¿Quién es tu modelo a seguir? “Mis padres han tenido un gran impacto en mí. ... Son personas muy trabajadoras y muy diligentes. Entonces, yo diría que mi mamá y mi papá”.

¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás? “Creo que las artes liberales son muy importantes en la sociedad actual. ... Elegí la literatura en inglés porque creo que se trata de personas, la literatura se trata de personas. Se trata del mundo. Entonces, por eso estoy estudiando literatura”.

¿Qué películas o programas te gustan? “Estoy viendo ‘Peaky Blinders’ y es bastante buena. También estuve viendo ‘Breaking Bad’ recientemente. No diría que son, como, mis favoritos, pero son lo que he visto recientemente”.

¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales? “Es muy importante construir ... conexiones, ¿verdad? Porque cuando eres un estudiante internacional, vienes aquí y no conoces a nadie. Por lo tanto, es muy importante hacer nuevos amigos y acercarse a las personas y hablar con las personas porque nunca se sabe cómo pueden ayudarte más adelante, ¿verdad? Especialmente porque realmente no tienes un sistema de apoyo cuando vienes aquí. Entonces, necesitas construirlo tú mismo”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez

¿Tienes una historia que contar?
Cuéntanos que te gustaría ver en **THE RIDER**
882-5143 or 665-2541

'The pillar of student success'



Daniela Martinez Salazar/THE RIDER

Balaji Rajagopalan, a candidate for UTRGV provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, speaks about the team accomplishments and key opportunities the university has during an open forum Feb. 28 in the PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón on the Brownsville campus.

Silvana Villarreal

THE RIDER

The third candidate for UTRGV provost and vice president for Academic Affairs drew a group of 33 faculty and staff members during an open forum last Tuesday on the Brownsville campus, where he spoke about the value of bringing inclusive excellence,

economic development and student success.

"Opportunities that I see as UTRGV continues to strengthen the pillar of student success, but at the same time enhance the research distinction of the institution," said candidate Balaji Rajagopalan. "Economic development continues to be an important area that UTRGV can continue to engage with

the community, bring faculty, research expertise, student success, all of this to bear when put together the right way."

Rajagopalan, who also addressed UTRGV employees on the Edinburg campus Feb. 27, has been serving as dean and professor at the College of Business at Northern Illinois University since 2016, and vice president of the Northern

Illinois Research Foundation since 2022.

He previously served as director and professor at the Black School of Business in Pennsylvania State University at Erie from 2013 to 2016.

College of Engineering and Computer Science Professor Mahmoud Quweider told the candidate the biggest issue he might face would be finding a place for Brownsville under the Edinburg campus spotlight.

"Most of us are interested in what's your vision for Brownsville in contributing to that whole mission," Quweider said. "We are in our eighth year of merger but it seems that nobody is able to identify the role for Brownsville versus that of Edinburg. Sometimes we're being relegated to a community college for Edinburg. Sometimes we're being a breeding ground where they take the best of our [Brownsville's] resources."

Rajagopalan did not answer the question because "it's nearly impossible" for him "to answer the question on the specificity," he said. However, he suggested a solution based on his previous experience regarding similarities he faced at Penn State.

"Not think integratively as UTRGV, not location specific," he said. "I think it's important if we believe that UTRGV is

one. There is nothing that can happen at any campuses, including the largest campus at Penn State, without the smallest of the campuses engaging in a discussion."

Rajagopalan spoke about student success in his current institution and programs that are available for students, from providing programs to form technological capabilities to engaging students in experiential learning opportunities.

"If we can create courses that are at the intersection of disciplines ... if we can create courses that involve the students to go abroad as part of the course, it's crossing the boundary so they can actually experience multiple cultures," he said. "So these are things that we have done."

Bilingual and Literacy Studies Associate Professor Kip Hinton asked the provost candidate if his mission approach would change because of the scale difference between the number of students in Northern Illinois University and UTRGV.

"Being true to those fundamental principles of inspiring people, being authentic, trying to get resources that are needed. I do not see changing in a significant way just because the scale," Rajagopalan said. "I think that the impact is wider."

Paw-fect way to help furry friends

Julien Juarez

THE RIDER

The UTRGV Communication Department is holding a pet food drive through Friday on the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses, with a portion of donated supplies given to three nonprofit organizations.

The Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley; Yaqui Animal Rescue, located in Sullivan City; and the Brownsville Animal Defense adoption center will receive the donations.

Donations being accepted include general cleaning supplies, bleach, paper towels and a variety of animal feed.

Students on the Edinburg campus may drop off donations from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Wednesday in Liberal Arts Building South Room 172 and at the same location from 2 to 6 p.m. Thursday. Donations will also be accepted from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday in Liberal Arts Building South Room 165.

Students on the Brownsville campus may drop off donations from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday in Main Building Room 1.102A.

Alyssa Cerroni, a communication lecturer, told The Rider how the pet food drive got its start.

After finding out that the Rio Grande Valley has one of the highest rates of

stray animals in the nation, Cerroni said she would do all she could to help lost animals.

Eight years ago, the department set up the first pet food drive on campus, which continued until COVID-19 hit in 2020.

This year, however, Cerroni made the decision to bring back the drive to "help furry friends in need."

She would like to donate 100 individual items to each of the organizations, and while items, such as toys and dog beds "will be gladly accepted," an emphasis is put on cleaning supplies, as both Yaqui Animal Rescue and Brownsville Animal Defense use Dawn dish soap, paper towels, puppy pads and gloves in order to keep the facilities clean.

Esmer Garcia, rescue coordinator of Yaqui Animal Rescue, said that food and cleaning supplies are used every day.

Asked what else the community can do besides donating to the rescue, Garcia replied, "We do accept volunteer work."

"It has to be ... by appointment," she said. "[Volunteers] would need to call the ranch director, [Melissa Garza], just to set it up. ... Awareness. ... Letting people know about our organization, letting people know about adoption. Please don't buy from breeders.



Aura Velasquez/THE RIDER

Tony Lopez, director of Brownsville Animal Defense, holds Rocky, a rescue dog, in front of the center's sign last Tuesday. The adoption center is requesting dry Pedigree puppy food and wet dog food donations. The center is located at 1740 Old Port Isabel Road in Brownsville.

We have wonderful animals who need homes. Some dogs have been with us for nine years."

There are other ways that allow the Yaqui Animal Rescue to continue operation, including the transport of a few animals at a time to less populated shelters across the nation.

Garcia stays in contact with shelters nationwide that help the rescue when it is at maximum capacity, which is mostly year-round.

The overpopulation of the rescue is in part due to the expectations of adopters looking for hyperspecific breeds of dogs, when the only ones available at the shelter are the "mangy dogs," she said.

"We're picking up the little black mutts," Garcia said.

Although the rescue itself does not have influence or authority over individuals who break animal protection laws, it still gets calls from people who have witnessed animal cruelty.

"If you see something, say something," Garcia said. "Always. ... Just call it in [to the police]."

The Brownsville Animal Defense tackles the stray population for dogs in the Valley. B.A.D. works with veterinary clinics, volunteers and plans months in advance for the spaying and neutering of dogs.

For more information on the pet food drive, visit @utrgv.commdpt on Instagram.

Spring break mode: on

Fatima Gamez Lopez
SPANISH EDITOR

Spring break, which for UTRGV students will be from March 13 through 18, is that time of the year for college students to kick back, relax and leave their work behind to enjoy a week off.

The Superhero Project and Student Rights and Responsibilities will host UTRGV Spring Break Luau 2023 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday on the Student Union lawn on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Thursday on the Chapel Lawn on the Edinburg campus. Students will be able to enjoy free music, food and games.

“The purpose of the event is just to kind of kick off spring break for students,” said Maria Morin, program manager for Student Rights and Responsibilities at UTRGV. “It’s intended to provide information ... from the various departments that we have here on campus, as well as community partners.”

Morin encourages students to attend the event to learn more about how to “party safe, party smart.”

“Our main objective is to provide, you know, information in a fun way,” she said. “So students can ... know that ... they can party ... during spring break, but we also want them to party smart, to be smart about that.”

Jason Robles, a marketing junior, said he will spend his spring break at the beach with his friends.

One of the top attractions in the Rio Grande Valley is South Padre Island, which will be the destination for thousands of spring breakers from Texas and across the country in search of a good time, music and people.

Clayton’s Beach Bar and Grill, “the largest beach bar on the Texas Coast,” will host numerous concerts.

Kicking off, rapper Lil Wayne takes the stage Saturday. On March 13, DJ and music producer Steve Aoki is scheduled to perform.

In a Facebook post last Wednesday, Clayton’s announced that rappers Nardo Wick and DaBaby are scheduled to perform on March 15 in place of rapper Kodak Black.

“Broward County Judge Barbara Duffy issued the warrant and wrote that Black had violated the conditions of his pretrial release for an oxycodone trafficking charge from July,” according to the Associated Press news.

DJ Acraze is scheduled to perform March 17.

Finishing the spring break 2023 lineup of concerts will be rapper GloRilla, who will perform at the bar on March 18.

Tickets range from \$20 to \$199 and can be purchased at claytonsbear.com. Doors open at 8 p.m.

For more information on the concerts, contact Clayton’s at (956) 761-5900.

A family friendly option can be found at the Market by the Bay from 4 to 7 p.m. March 17 at Jim’s Pier.



PHOTO COURTESY SOUTH PADRE ISLAND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The community will be able to enjoy the sunset with arts, gifts, and live music. Admission is free.

Sea Turtle Inc., a center with the mission to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured sea turtles, educates the public and assists with conservation efforts for all marine turtle species.

The center is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday at 6617 Padre Blvd. on South Padre Island.

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$6 for senior citizens and military members, and \$4 for children.

For more information, visit www.seaturtleinc.org.

Some UTRGV students shared their plans for the break.

Raymond Bas, a nursing graduate student, said he will enjoy his free time.

“For spring break, I’m probably going to be working,” Bas said. “I’m excited not to have class and to have more free time. But other than that, it’s pretty much it.”

Asly Mendoza, a business administration freshman, said she is looking forward to relaxing from classes.

“Honestly, I have no plans,” Mendoza said. “Just do something fun and get to, like, rest from school, especially from all the assignments I have been doing. A lot of stress.”

I WANT TO MAKE:

COMICS!

MANGA!

THE WINDOW IS CURRENTLY OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS. ONLY A SELECT FEW WILL BE CHOSEN. TO PUBLISH YOUR WORK ALONGSIDE OURS WOULD BE AN HONOR.

We are currently searching for artists/writers to create and share their own works! Our goal is simple ...**to produce quality works ANYONE can enjoy.**

Enough said.

It should be noted that we are still a forming entity, but don't let that discourage you. This is an opportunity to secure your place. We're working hard to make this real. As we do that, this is **YOUR** chance to prove yourself.

**INTERESTED?
ANY QUESTIONS?
CONTACT US:**

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'Tunes for Toons!'

Omar E. Zapata
A&E EDITOR

The UTRGV Symphony Orchestra starts its spring concert season Friday with "Tunes for Toons!" an exploration of the use of classical music in cartoons, giving audience members a new perspective.

Starting at 7 p.m. in the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Center in Brownsville and continuing at 7 p.m. Saturday in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex in Edinburg, the concert will feature tunes from four cartoons, such as "Rabbit of Seville" and "Tom & Jerry at the Hollywood Bowl."

The events will feature classical music, such as "The Barber of Seville" by Gioachino Rossini and "Ride of the Valkyries" by Richard Wagner.

Norman Gamboa, UTRGV Symphony Orchestra director and a School of Music lecturer, told The Rider that the concert performance was initially programmed for a Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District elementary school for educational purposes.

"It was very successful and, after that, we started getting a lot of requests from other places to perform it," Gamboa said.

Initial plans for a faculty concert fell through and he decided to make "Tunes for Toons!" the first of two spring concerts.

"It's a very different type of concert since the idea was ... that we're going to show kids how the everyday cartoons they watch on TV uses classical music," Gamboa said. "So, classical music is not something so foreign to them. They just don't think about it."

Gamboa said two things they had to work on were copyright laws and political correctness, since the cartoons are from the 1950s and some things might be deemed offensive in today's environment.

During the concert, a clip of a cartoon will be followed by the UTRGV Symphony Orchestra performing a classical piece of music.

Omar David Molina, a graduate performance student, plays the double bass in the orchestra and told The Rider he believes the concert will be fantastic.

Molina said children and adults watching cartoons are unconsciously already listening to classical music and he believes it will give them an interesting perspective.

"Having in mind that this is an educational concert, but obviously being professional, I think the orchestra's responsibility and commitment from everybody is pretty high," he said. "... I think the string players are pretty combined with the woodwinds, with the brass section and with the percussionists ... to get better and reach a high quality of performance."

Molina welcomes everyone at



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER

Graduate student Andrew Stahlman conducts the UTRGV Symphony Orchestra last Tuesday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus in preparation for "Tunes for Toons!" The concert is a program of orchestral masterpieces by Richard Wagner, Gioachino Rossini, Ottorino Respighi and Johann Strauss II used in cartoons, such as "Tom and Jerry." "Tunes for Toons!" will be performed by the orchestra at 7 p.m. Friday in the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Center in Brownsville and at 7 p.m. Saturday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

UTRGV to join and become immersed in the fantastic world of symphony orchestra.

"I like the fact that they are standard pieces of orchestral repertoire," Gamboa said. "A lot of it, they don't get played much anymore. And I will say it is one of the most audience-friendly programs that we have performed. The

music is well-known. ... Everybody is going to recognize it. The fact that we're going to be alternating with the video and the music is also nice because it gives a different dimension to the whole performance."

Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the box offices of the respective concert venues.

Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

Danielle Perez
ONLINE EDITOR

Aries-People around you are happy about how you've been holding up. However, sometimes, they question if it is only a front, since you haven't talked about your feelings. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable and reflect on what has happened. Be honest with those you trust; they only want the best for you.

Leo-Many of you have a lot going on right now, whether it be love, work or financially. No matter what it is, take a moment to breathe and ground yourself. Nothing is more important than mental health. Align your priorities with yourself first, then other factors, next. Remember, time will heal all. Trust the process.

Sagittarius-A recent challenge has finally been accomplished. The universe was testing you to see if you had the strength to believe in yourself. Therefore, now you understand what it's like to keep pushing through obstacles. At the end of the day, you will reach your goal if you don't give up.

Libra-Hiding how you feel is getting old. Be open and expressive about what is happening within. If nobody knows what's going on, there are no ways that they can help or support you. Get yourself out of hermit mode and start acknowledging your emotions.

Gemini-A recent change has made you feel powerful and in control. The universe is proud of how brave you've been and how far you've come. Keep this momentum and do what makes you happy. Remember to not rely on others, but on yourself to achieve your goals.

Aquarius-Being comfortable is a good thing; however, getting out of that zone can help you develop other characteristics. By doing this, you will realize things you were unaware of. Be open to all other opportunities instead of shutting them down because they aren't familiar to you.

Scorpio-A major change is about to happen in the next couple of days. Keep yourself in check by determining the kind of life you want to live. Remember change is inevitable, so what needs to happen will happen.

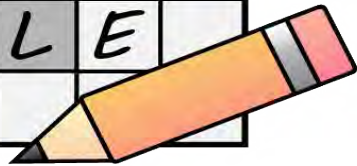
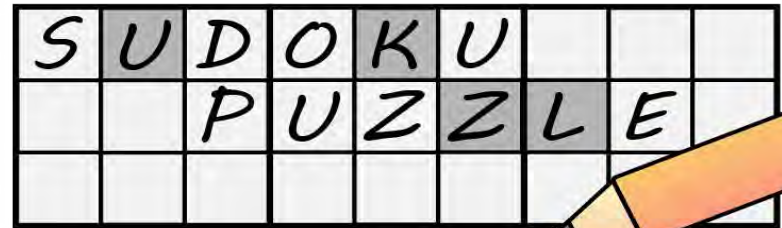
Pisces-Use the energy your birth month has granted you to do something fun. Encourage yourself to celebrate your accomplishments and future endeavors. Love yourself as much as possible, and be who you are at all times. Enjoy what the world has to offer.

Cancer-Getting older carries different responsibilities. It is OK to feel pressured about jobs, relationships and living situations. Take time to decide your next moves. Do not rush into anything you aren't sure of because it can lead to further complications. Take it easy, Cancer.

Taurus-Allowing other's perspectives to interfere with your own, happens often. For that reason, tune out others and focus on your own perception. You are so close to achieving your goal, so don't lose sight of it. Believe in yourself in order to manifest what happens next.

Virgo-March is full of fortune with St. Patrick at your side. You never know what you may encounter, and this month may be full of luck for you. Be positive and optimistic during this time to manifest your winnings. Revel in the fortunes that may come your way. Lucky numbers are 10, 36, 42.

Capricorn-Although timing may seem like a distraction in your situation, it is not. What is happening right now is meant to test your power. Staying committed all the way through will make you stronger. Afterward, you'll be able to overcome anything.



Last week's puzzle answer key:

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

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



Vaqueras vie for a win in Vegas



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

UTRGV sophomore guard KaCee Kyle points across the court during the Feb. 22 game against the Tarleton State University Texans in the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus. The Vaqueras defeated the Texans 66-58, clinching a spot in the Western Athletic Conference Tournament in Las Vegas.

Jose Medina

SPORTS REPORTER

The UTRGV Women's Basketball Team earned a spot in the Western Athletic Conference Tournament with a win over Tarleton State University on Feb. 22.

The team's current record is 6-12 in conference and 12-17 overall, with the first round of the WAC tournament starting today at the Michelob ULTRA Arena in Las Vegas.

Head coach Lane Lord said in a post-game interview Feb. 22 that the team was proud of their effort and had "punched [their] ticket to Vegas."

In a Feb. 27 phone interview with The Rider, Lord was asked how it felt to be going to Vegas for the tournament. Lane replied it was the most "exciting" time of the year since it is March Madness.

He said he is glad to be a part of it, and thought they have been playing well, saying how they won two games in a row.

"We feel like we're in a good spot," Lord said.

He said before they even start thinking about the WAC Tournament, they have to finish off the regular season.

"And then, you know, hopefully, we'll have some momentum going into

the WAC Tournament," Lord said.

Asked if there were any particular schools he was excited to compete against, he said they could not know for sure who they would be playing against, but he would be excited to play the Texas schools.

"Because, you know, we're starting to form those rivalries, and they've been in our league now a couple years," Lord said. "And so I'd say

Asked if there were any particular players to keep an eye on, he replied sophomore guard Iyana Dorsey just surpassed her 1,000 career points at the game against Sam Houston University on Feb. 25.

"She's had three 30-plus-point games," Lord said. "And I believe 10 games over 20 [points]. So, just a really, really terrific guard that we have. And she's also a really good defender. So, you know, we're really going to need her to have a great tournament."

He also said freshman forward Charlotte O'Keefe had been excelling during her freshman year, as well as junior forward Zariah Sango and graduate center Burcu Soysal.

Lord said they want to stay as long as they can in the tournament and are aiming to win the whole thing.

Asked for any final thoughts, he replied, "Well, if anybody has never had the chance to go to WAC Vegas, it's one of the greatest college sports events in the country."

He said the atmosphere is great with all 12 teams competing, and it would be exciting to have the band, cheerleaders and dance team supporting them.

To follow the Vaqueras' tournament journey, watch on ESPN+. For final scores, visit goutrgv.com.

"Chemistry is good, and we're playing well together."

--Lane Lord

UTRGV Women's Basketball head coach

that's probably the No. 1 thing, to play against the other Texas schools."

He said the whole team is healthy and all are currently playing for the first time all year.

"Fourteen players [are] playing and I think our camaraderie is really good right now," Lord said. "Chemistry is good, and we're playing well together."

Athlete of the week
Sam Johnson II



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

Freshman sprinter Sam Johnson II is on the UTRGV Men's Track and Field Team. Johnson graduated from Klein High School in Klein, a community north of Houston, where he built his track career until he won bronze at the 2022 Class 6A Track & Field State Championships. Johnson is pursuing a bachelor's in business.

Q: What are some of your favorite foods?

A: "I try to stay on the healthier side, try to have a balanced meal. So, I'll try, like, salmon, and then I'll have greens like asparagus, or green beans with that, and mashed potatoes. I try to stay on that or, like, grilled chicken. I like to balance out my meals a lot. Rice, too. Rice, too."

Q: What does a normal day look like for you?

A: "Uh, a normal day, is kinda, like, in the mornings I go to class, and then, a bit earlier around 12, I go to the training room, get treatment, and then come to practice for a couple hours. And after that, I head to the weight room, and then I go to study hall a little bit after to get some homework done."

Q: When you first started, how hard was it to balance your sport, your academics and your social life?

A: "It was a little rough at first, but I feel, like, once I got started getting in the flow of things, I transitioned well."

Q: Who or what motivates you to keep playing?

A: "I'm very determined and motivated. And also, back at home, my mom, she ran track in college, so she's someone I look up to."

Q: What do you like most about playing for UTRGV?

A: "I definitely like our team dynamics. ... We really [have] become a family in general, and so I just like how we will spend time with each other, even outside of track too. ... So, we're very close-knit, and of course, I love coach [Shareese] Hicks. ... She coaches me, and just leads me in the right direction so I can be the best [athlete] possible."

Q: Is there anything you'd like to say to the good people at home?

A: "Just that I love and I appreciate everybody, and, yeah, that's about it."
--Compiled by Julien Juarez

Baseball
6:30 P.M. Friday vs. California Baptist University
6:30 P.M. Saturday vs. California Baptist University
Noon Sunday vs. California Baptist University
At the UTRGV Baseball Stadium

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS
Women's Tennis
Noon Friday vs. St. Mary's University
At the Orville I. Cox Tennis Center

Women's Golf
Today UTRGV Invitational
Tuesday UTRGV Invitational
At the McAllen Country Club

SGA appoints first fine arts senator

Andrea Flores
THE RIDER

The Student Government Association has appointed Gregorio Zúñiga, a music freshman, as the first senator for the College of Fine Arts for the spring semester.

Zúñiga spoke before the senate's vote on his appointment during the Feb. 24 meeting.

"I feel like the fine arts are very underrepresented, and we should really represent ourselves, really go out and try to make a change we want to see in the world," he said. "I feel that we should really go towards making our situation better since there's a lack of funding ... for the [College] of Fine Arts."

Zúñiga said he wants to show that it is possible to voice one's opinion and make other people's situation better.

"If I become senator, I

will not just be representing myself, I will be representing my colleagues who are also in need of help and ... representation," he added.

SGA President Jonathan Dominguez administered the oath of office to Melanie Gutierrez, who became the new chief justice during the Feb. 10 senate meeting.

Gutierrez then administered the oath of office to Alfonso Delgado and MD Mozadded Hossen, who were appointed senator for the Robert C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship and senator for the Graduate College, respectively, during the Feb. 10 senate meeting.

Kimberly Escalante, vice president for Internal Affairs, presented the president's report and said the results of the library survey that was conducted last semester are posted on



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER

Rey Ramos (left), associate vice president for Student Success, informs members of the Student Government Association about a project that is in the works, an office for Pre-Professional Development, during a senate meeting Feb. 24 on the Edinburg campus.

the SGA's social media.

Escalante said the team has finished making its questions for the IT Department survey

and the questions would be sent at the end that day.

Jose Herrera, vice president for External

Affairs, spoke about recent interviews for a new provost.

"In a sense, we just have

postbaccalaureate nursing major, said the university's financial accessibility allows her more flexibility.

"I wouldn't have to worry about taking a full-time job," Chino said. "I'd be able to survive off of [a] part-time [job]. Also, the help with financial aid. Right now, I don't have financial aid. I paid out of pocket. But compared to bigger universities where you would pay a lot more, it's very helpful."

UTRGV President Guy Bailey told The Rider last Wednesday that the rankings benefit the university because it has been "very successful" in what it set out to do, "creating a very high value in education."

"What I mean by that is this: Value is a combination of quality plus price," Bailey said. "That high ranking tells you that we have a very high quality for

a very good price. That's really what we set out to do. The other thing about these rankings is they focus on the success of our students once they graduate. You're ranked highly if your students graduate with very little debt, and they can quickly pay off any debt they have once they graduate and that's exactly what they are able to do."

Through Degreechoices, UTRGV was ranked —

--No. 1 public school in Texas, with the University of Texas at Austin placing second and Texas Woman's University placing third.

--No. 2 most affordable national university, with City College of New York in first place and the University of Florida in third.

--No. 7 best public school in the country, with the Georgia Institute of Technology in fifth place and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in sixth.

Levy said the company uses two metrics, payback and earnings, to determine the economic score. Degreechoices focuses specifically on economic return and investment, particularly, how far someone's dollar will get them at different universities.

They gather this information off the websites, the Integrated Postsecondary Education System and the U.S. Education Department College Scorecard.

Payback is determined by how much an average student will receive from the Free Application for Student Aid and an assumption on the average time to graduate, based on the U.S. Education Department data, according to Levy. They then come up with a total cost the average student pays the school.

Levy then looks at the marginal earnings.

"[We,] basically, look at the amount

of money earned from a student after leaving the school, after a certain amount of time, minus what they would make if they [had] just got a high school diploma."

Bailey is proud of the rankings, saying what they have been aiming for has shown to be successful.

"We're very proud because what we've done has been intentional," he said. "When we see these kinds of rankings, we know that the intentions that we've had [have] been successful. Anytime that you intend to do something and you actually achieve it, you have some pride there."

UTRGV is hoping that prospective students will look to the university for high value education.

"If students are looking for value in higher education, they'll look at UTRGV because we offer the best combination of quality and price anywhere in Texas," Bailey said.

no pasa esto."

Grupo Frontera formed on Feb. 16 of last year in Edinburg, according to the proclamation, which was read by Mayor Ramiro Garza Jr.

"[The band], who took some of the most popular songs and added the Norteño, cumbia twist, and whereas Grupo Frontera is one of the freshest and most unique groups of the last few years, having accomplished so much in just one year, Grupo Frontera is taking the music industry by storm with their

charisma and their original Norteño sound," Garza read. "They are also breaking records in their social media platforms, with TikTok. Their music video for 'No se va'—that has over 250 million views on YouTube."

The group has three songs in the Top 100, which are "Bebe dame," "Que vuelvas" and "No se va," which it performed at the amphitheater.

Lead vocalist Adelaido Solis is an Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District alum and spoke after receiving the proclamation.

"To everyone listening right now, I would like to tell you that all of this

started with a dream, for the love of music," Solis said in Spanish. "If you would like to continue in whatever, in your music career, I will tell you to follow your dreams. That's how we started. Without a dream, there is really nothing, really, in life. So follow your dreams because they become true."

In an interview with The Rider, percussionist Julian Peña Jr. said that one of the obstacles that they faced when the group was first starting was their jobs.

"All of us had our regular jobs, and I think the biggest obstacle was actually jumping in and saying, 'You know what,

let's leave our regular jobs and dedicate ourselves to our music,'" Peña said in Spanish. "It was making the decision that we really wanted to become musicians."

Asked what cumbia and Norteño music means to the group, Solis said the genres are something that they have all grown up with.

"It is something that has always been present in our culture," he said in Spanish. "If it's here in Edinburg or where we have our roots in General Bravo, Monterrey, [Nuevo Leon, Mexico], Reynosa, [Tamaulipas, Mexico]—wherever—cumbia music will always be present."



Verilu Infante/THE RIDER

A sign welcoming people to the "historic" city of Brownsville is located on US 77/83 and Woodruff Street. The sign was completed in January 2003 by SSP Design, "a private practice specializing in site planning, landscape design and parks/open space planning," after it was "engaged by the Brownsville Beautification Committee to create a welcome sign to [complement] a bougainvillea display garden" located at the site, according to sspdesign.com.

Department in traffic control plans to ensure security during events.

The commission also heard a presentation by Juan Velez, historic preservation manager, on Brownsville's 2023 Historic Preservation Plan, which consists of 113 properties organized into three schedules.

The Historic Preservation Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of schedule A, which has 103 properties, a taxable value of \$18,059,893 and a general fund impact of \$108,813, and schedule B, which has two properties, a taxable value of

\$1,187,046 and a general fund impact of \$8,213.

Schedule C has eight properties, a taxable value of \$1,620,049 and a general fund impact of \$7,438.

Not all properties in the third schedule will "achieve conformance to City of Brownsville Municipal Code," according to the presentation.

"[The Planning and Zoning Commission] and [the Historic Preservation Commission] did recommend approval of schedule C with the exception of [properties] five and six," Vasquez said.

Asked by Mendez why the two properties did not conform to city code, Velez replied they "do not have any kind of preservation activity" and that the commission

needs to "distinguish between maintenance and preservation, rehabilitation."

Vasquez said when Velez reviews each property's eligibility for inclusion in a preservation plan, he follows nine ordinance-adopted criteria, including whether a property holds significance historically or architecturally in the Rio Grande Valley or the City of Brownsville.

"[Velez will] go one by one and if they're compliant, they'll be in schedule A and if there's a deficiency, they would fall into [schedule] C just to ... be transparent with the commission," Vasquez said. "And then, [the commission] can make a decision whether they're included or not included."

our vice president [for Internal Affairs] covering the position," Herrera said. "So, we are going to be doing these interviews since we were invited by the Office of Provost and, hopefully, after reviewing the candidates, we can finally get that position."

Dominguez provided a reminder that student travel fund applications are closed for the semester. Students can still apply for travel funds for events

taking place in June and July.

During the adviser's report, Program Coordinator Kourtne Hernandez announced that seven interns will join the SGA's First Year Internship program this semester. As of Feb. 24, the SGA had 12 applications for its general elections.

Hernandez also announced that Academy Award-winning actress and activist Marlee Matlin will be featured in the Distinguished Speaker Series at 7:30 p.m. March 22 in the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Center in Brownsville.

Students can submit potential questions for her through a V Link form.

Juana Jimenez, SGA senate secretary, provided the Academic Affairs Standing Committee report on behalf of Chair Kassandra Garcia. Jimenez announced that Meet the Deans, an event during which students can interact with their college dean, will take place from noon to 1 p.m. March 22 in the Student Union on the Brownsville campus and at the same time March 28 in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus.



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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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