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Jose Medina/THE RIDER

During the Oct. 20 panel discussion on former President Donald Trump's indictments, an attendee took over the screen-sharing feature on Zoom and began playing a video depicting an alleged execution in front of over 50 attendees. The event was interrupted around three times before organizers were able to end the Zoom version of the meeting and continue the discussion in person only on the Edinburg campus.

## Poli Sci Dept. requests apology

**Eduardo Escamilla**  
 THE RIDER

The UTRGV political science faculty has issued a formal request for an apology from Luis H. Zayas, provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, following "offensive" remarks he made about the department over Zoom after a guest disrupted a panel discussion with a video of an alleged beheading.

On Oct. 20, the Political Science Department hosted a panel discussion on the recent indictments facing former U.S. President Donald Trump on the Edinburg campus. The discussion

was broadcast over Zoom.

Moments after political science Lecturer Maylin M. Hernandez finished a presentation, a video of an alleged beheading was displayed on screen by an attendee using the alias, "John Jeff."

"This is not part of the agenda," political science Lecturer Robert Velez, one of the panelists, said when the video appeared on the screen. "Did we get hacked or something?"

Faculty immediately responded to the virtual disruption by removing the culprit from the Zoom meeting. The culprit made multiple attempts to take over the meeting as host.

"Disgraceful, utterly disgraceful, what a freaking mess," the provost said while the video played on the screen. "... More of a reason why political science is a viper pit."

Velez pulled the plug on the Zoom session and decided not to broadcast the panel discussion.

"We were running [the Zoom meeting] to connect with students who couldn't be there in person," political science Professor Nicholas Kiersey told The Rider during an Oct. 30 interview. "But also, we had opened it up, given the topical nature of what was being discussed, to the community."

Kiersey said the meeting was See **REQUEST**, Page 2

# 4 Republican senators slam Biden's immigration policy

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**

SPANISH EDITOR

Four Republican senators gathered in Mission's Anzalduas Park after a tour of the U.S.-Mexico border and criticized the Biden administration's policy on immigration, which they say is leading to the sexual abuse of women and children by cartels.

On Oct. 27, U.S. Senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz led their Senate colleagues Mike Lee (R-Utah), John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) and Pete Ricketts (R-Nebraska) in both night and daytime tours of the border with law enforcement on land and water. Barrasso did not attend the news conference.

Cornyn said the Rio Grande Valley is one of his favorite places to visit.

"This is a vibrant part of our state," he said. "Unfortunately, it's being spoiled by the Biden administration's reckless policies that do nothing to deter illegal immigration and facilitated the death of 108,000 Americans last year alone, and hundreds of thousands of lost children, lost to sponsors in the interior of the United States with unknown outcomes."

Cornyn said 108,000 Americans lost their lives as a result of drugs coming across the border, including 71,000 from fentanyl alone.

"Fentanyl is a leading cause of death of 18-to-45-year-olds in the United States, the leading cause of death from drugs," he said. "This is manufactured ... in Mexico and smuggled across the border into the interior."

The senators visited the U.S. Border Patrol's Ursula Central Processing Center in McAllen and met with the National Border Patrol Council, State of Texas Border Czar Mike Banks, local law enforcement and South Texas landowners to discuss the impact of the Biden administration's border policies on Texas communities.

The senators received briefings from leaders of the U.S. Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley Sector and the U.S. Customs & Border Protection's Office of Field Operations Laredo Field Office on efforts to secure the U.S.-

Mexico border.

"South Texas is an extraordinary place and South Texas is paying the price for the disaster of the open borders under the Biden administration," Cruz said during the news conference. "On this trip, we came down, five senators altogether. We started the trip by going to the Border Patrol station and joining their midnight muster."

He said Border Patrol agents' jobs are made "impossible" by the political leadership of President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas.

Cruz said within an hour of their night tour they encountered a group of 20 people, predominantly women and children.

In the group, there were two girls, ages 13 and 16, and a 15-year-old boy who were unaccompanied.

"We asked them about the violence they faced," Cruz

See **TOUR**, Page 3



Fatima Gamez Lopez/THE RIDER

During a news conference Oct. 27 at Mission's Anzalduas Park, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) said the Rio Grande Valley is one of his favorite places to visit, but "unfortunately, it's being spoiled by the Biden administration's reckless policies that do nothing to deter illegal immigration." Also shown (from left) is U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas).

## UTRGV welcomes Medicine and Oncology chair

**Yamilet Galvez**  
 THE RIDER

The UTRGV School of Medicine has welcomed Dr. Everardo Cobos as the chair of the Medicine and Oncology Department.

Cobos, a professor of medicine, is also director of the Cancer Service Line at UTRGV.

"I'm a physician," he said. "I've been a physician for more than 40 years. I'm a cancer specialist, and I've been a cancer specialist for about 35 years. I've also been in academic medicine both in Texas Tech School of Medicine, UCLA School of Medicine and now here at UTRGV."

Cobos is a veteran and completed medical training while also being in the military.

"I did my training in the military, at military academic hospitals at Letterman Army Medical Center in San Francisco and Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, Washington," he said. "And, I fulfilled my military obligation. ... I transitioned into full-time academic medicine at medical schools in the U.S."

Cobos shared his vision for the future of the oncology department and its role in the School of Medicine.

"I think the Rio Grande Valley is underserved in terms of cancer services and cancer expertise," he said. "The population has expanded significantly. But, there are still large gaps in cancer care and a lot of patients in our community many times find themselves in a situation where they have to leave the Valley ... for care. The fact that UTRGV has made a commitment in cancer, it is important to meet that need."

Michael B. Hocker, dean of the School of Medicine and senior vice president for UT Health Rio Grande Valley, said the new chair will maintain a strong commitment to patient care, research excellence and medical education.

"When I recruited Dr. Cobos, we had a selection process by which we put the search committee together and recruited," Hocker said. "I'd say this is one of the ... really important chairs to recruit for medicine, as internal medicine is usually one of the strongest

See **CHAIR**, Page 3

## 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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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Today Meet the Deans

Students can meet their academic college or school dean and Student Government Association representatives from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. Students can network with other students and ask their dean questions pertaining to their area of study during the event, which is hosted by the SGA.

### Distinguished Speaker Series

**Nirupama Rao, India's former ambassador** to the U.S. and other countries, will be the guest at the **Distinguished Speaker Series**, scheduled at 7 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Doors open at 6 p.m. The event, hosted by the **Office of Student Activities**, is free to the UTRGV community.

### Friendsgiving Bracelets

The **Center for Student Involvement** invites students to make **Friendsgiving friendship bracelets** from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus and from 3:30

to 5 p.m. Tuesday in Liberal Arts Building North Room 107 on the Edinburg campus. **Free snacks and goodies** will be provided.

### Tuesday Free Coffee

The **Center for Student Involvement** will serve **free coffee** from 9 to 10 a.m. in the Student Union on the Brownsville campus. Students must bring their ID.

### Mock Trial Fundraiser

The **Mock Trial Competition Team** will host a fundraiser from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in the University Library on the Edinburg campus.

### German Club

**RGV German Club** members will meet from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. in Main Building Room 2.502 on the Brownsville campus.

### Wednesday Filipino Student Association

The **Filipino Student Association** will meet to discuss club activities from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room

1.102 on the Edinburg campus. **Food will be provided.**

### Free Lunch

The **Catholic Student Association** will provide **free lunch** to UTRGV students, faculty and staff from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in the Newman Student Catholic Center on the Edinburg campus. The event will take place every Wednesday until the end of the semester.

### Environmental Awareness

The **Environmental Awareness Club** will meet from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in Student Union Room 2.418 on the Edinburg campus to discuss **fundraisers, field trips and symposiums.**

### Thursday Popcorn Sale

The **Student Accessibility Council** will sell **Deanan popcorn** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the University Library on the Edinburg campus.

### Free Lunch

The **Baptist Student Ministry**



## POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Oct. 24 and 30.

### Oct. 24

**4:26 p.m.:** An employee reported losing his ring while working in the Dining & Ballroom Complex on the Edinburg campus.

**6:06 p.m.:** An employee reported a minor injury during a training session in the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office Firing Range in Edinburg. The employee declined emergency medical services.

### Oct. 25

**10:50 a.m.:** An employee reported that gaming equipment from a closet in the Brownsville Student Union Game Room went missing Oct. 20. The case is under investigation. **At 1:05 p.m.,** an employee reported gaming equipment was also found to be missing from the closet Oct. 24.

**11:31 a.m.:** An employee on the Edinburg campus reported receiving concerning emails from a student. A request was made with the McAllen Police Department and, after further investigation, a McAllen Police Officer contacted the student and determined she was not a

danger to herself or others.

**7:25 p.m.:** An employee reported someone possibly vaping inside the University Library on the Edinburg campus. Officers checked the area but found no one.

### Oct. 26

**9:12 a.m.:** A Parking and Transportation employee reported a suspicious vehicle in the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center parking lot in Brownsville.

Officers checked the surrounding area but did not find the vehicle. University Police notified security at the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center.

**9:40 a.m.:** A student reported that someone had damaged her vehicle's tire while it was parked in Lot E-9 on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

**1:11 p.m.:** An employee reported that a student checked out a laptop computer during the summer semester of 2021 and has not returned it. The case is under investigation.

### Oct. 27

**12:45 p.m.:** A non-affiliated

minor and her parent reported an assault by contact that occurred Oct. 26 on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

**1:20 p.m.:** A student organization member reported that a flyer advertising a political event hosted by Turning Point USA was torn down in the Music, Science & Learning Center on the Brownsville campus. The case is under investigation.

**8:54 p.m.:** A non-affiliated man

reported he had filed a harassment report with the Edinburg Police Department regarding a comment that had been made on his Facebook blog by a student.

The non-affiliated man reported he had approached and talked to the student Oct. 27 near West Kuhn Street and Sugar Road in Edinburg. University Police determined no crime occurred during this interaction.

### Oct. 28

**9:52 p.m.:** An employee reported falling after tripping on a tree root while walking on the



### REQUEST

Continued from Page 1

interrupted by what he believes were impostor accounts.

"They began streaming ISIS beheading videos ... showing what can only be described as pretty gross visual imagery of innocent people being beheaded," he said.

Circumstantial evidence suggested complaints had been made before the event by individuals who were under the incorrect impression of the discussion being biased or against Trump, according to Kiersey.

"The people in the decision chain thought [the complaints] were concerning enough to appoint a uniformed UTRGV officer at the door of the event, which I had never seen at any political science event before," Kiersey said.

In an Oct. 30 interview with The Rider, Assistant Chief of Police Esmeralda Guerra, said it is common to have a police presence during public speaking events at UTRGV.

Guerra also stressed the incident itself is not being considered a cyberattack as the event was open to multiple individuals who were allowed to share the link.

University Police is investigating a lead on the person who downloaded the video.

"We did obtain an [Internet Protocol] address with the assistance of the university's [Information Technology] department," she said. "But, we don't have a name or a person that was totally responsible for this."

The Rider asked Guerra if the person responsible for the disruption would face any legal repercussions.

"We are taking all necessary measures to conduct a thorough investigation ... to determine if a crime occurred and if so, what crime did occur," she replied. "So, right now, we are speaking to multiple people that were involved. ... [We must] work through all the facts and then make a final determination whether a crime occurred or not."

After Zayas made the comments, attendees speculated whether the provost was aware if he was muted or not.

The Rider asked Kiersey how

the political science faculty interpreted his comments.

"They were seen as offensive," he replied. "They were seen as basically undermining the legitimacy and standing of the faculty in front of the students of the university."

The Rider requested an interview with Zayas on Oct. 30, but in an email sent Oct. 31 he declined, saying he was "unable to comment as this allegation is currently being investigated by the university."

This reporter then asked Zayas via email who was leading the investigation. As of press time Friday, Zayas had not responded.

"If you're working hard as a professor to teach students and you're trying to build credibility with them as an expert in your field, it's not exactly great to have the provost say something like that," Kiersey said. "It's discouraging and ... I would say it was a demoralizing remark."

The remark led to the Political Science department requesting

Brownsville will serve a **free lunch** from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Main Building Room 1.003 (Patio Plumeria) on the Brownsville campus.

### Psychology Club

**Psychology Club** members will meet from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 2.130 on the Edinburg campus.

### Friday Cycle Fit

**University Recreation** will host an **indoor cycling class** where attendees will pedal through hill climbs, sprints and other challenging drills. The class will take place from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. in the University Recreation Center on the Edinburg campus. All experience levels are welcome.

### Sunday Mass Celebration

The **Catholic Student Association** will **celebrate Mass** from 3 to 4 p.m. in the St. Newman University Chapel, located at 1615 W. Kuhn St. in Edinburg.

--Compiled by Alfredo Garcia

grass near the Health & Physical Education I building on the Edinburg campus. The employee sustained minor injuries but declined emergency medical services.

### Oct. 29

**12:47 p.m.:** A student reported having a no-contact order in place against another student. However, the student's sister attempted to communicate with her via email. The student was advised to notify Student Rights and Responsibilities about the incident.

### Oct. 30

**12:39 p.m.:** An employee reported that a group of students was vaping inside the University Library on the Edinburg campus. Upon contact with the students, one individual admitted to vaping a tobacco product. The student was given a warning for violating university policy.

**6:04 p.m.:** An employee reported that the wind swung her door open as she was exiting her vehicle in Lot E-37 on the Edinburg campus and struck a parked vehicle, causing minor damage. The owner of the parked vehicle was notified.

--Compiled by Rebeca Salinas

a formal apology from Zayas, according to Kiersey. Political Science Associate Professor and Interim Chair Dongkyu Kim assigned two faculty members to write a draft of the letter requesting:

--an apology to the students and faculty present during the event --that Zayas be part of an open dialogue with the Political Science faculty over the remark.

A draft was sent to the political science faculty on Oct. 26 and the final version to the provost the next day.

Kiersey said it is best to turn over a new page.

"The provost is within his rights to be horrified at the visual imagery ... but what we felt was that the provost, the way he was reacting to it, was almost like he thought we had staged the videos, which we did not," he said.

Kiersey said the end goal is for Zayas to clarify the impression he has of the Political Science department and build a stronger relationship between the two parties.

"We want to be friends with him," he said. "We want to be able to work with him. We all share the same priority, which is teaching our students and giving them the best classroom experience we can give them."

# UTRGV Research VP receives NASA Ambassadorship

**Ali Halloum**  
THE RIDER

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration recently named UTRGV's Associate Vice President of Research Operations Thomas Spencer as a Solar System Ambassador.

Spencer was selected as an ambassador after a rigorous selection process that serves to determine an individual's qualifications and public speaking skills necessary for the ambassadorship.

The Rider asked Spencer how he felt after being selected as an ambassador.

"Space and space sciences was so meaningful to me as a child growing up," Spencer said. "Being able to share that with another generation of students at UTRGV and an entire community of UTRGV of the Rio Grande Valley, this is just a wonderful opportunity for me."

His colleagues, including Can Saygin, dean of the Graduate College and senior vice president for Research Operations, were ecstatic about Spencer's selection by NASA.

"Well, Dr. Spencer has shown great leadership in terms of how much value he adds to research operations," Saygin said. "He oversees a very fairly large group of staff members, and so I'm glad to see him being recognized at this level, and I know he's gonna keep doing what he does best for the institution."

The Solar System Ambassador program is a public engagement effort by NASA to bring the latest advancements in science and space exploration to the public. There are about 1,100 Ambassadors across the United States, all of whom are volunteers.

Volunteers are not selected often, either. The application to become a Solar System Ambassador only opens once a year in September.

The selection process is rigorous, as volunteers not only need to be knowledgeable in the areas of science and space, but also need to have good public speaking skills, as ambassadors travel to several locations including schools and libraries to engage with the public on matters of space exploration and scientific advancement.

Spencer was named as one of only five Solar System



PHOTO COURTESY JESUS ALFEREZ/UTRGV RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS

Ambassadors in the Rio Grande Valley, and the only one in Edinburg. The other four work in Brownsville.

The Rider asked Spencer how the ambassadorship will impact the university and the Rio Grande Valley.

"Our College of Science has some fantastic researchers that are doing amazing work," he replied. "What I think this will

my support of the program and of UTRGV might make some of those connections and [it] might be able to change the life of a student who might go into space sciences because of this, and it's just an amazing opportunity."

Saygin elaborated on the positive impact that Spencer's latest achievement will have on UTRGV.

"As we're trying to add a

The Rider asked Spencer what he looks forward to most as an ambassador.

"Well, what I'm looking forward to is being able to share," he replied. "I might read an article about something cool that's being done with the Webb [Space] Telescope, but that's just for me. But with my hat as an ambassador, sharing that and making sure that other people see it, too, and getting that kind of opportunity and information in front of people is why I did this."

Spencer hopes to inspire students, whether at UTRGV or at a local school.

"That's why I do it, and that's what I wanna get out of it," he said. "It's an opportunity to give back some of the cool things that I learned as a kid and being able to, like I said, pass that on to the next generation."

The Rider reached out to NASA for comment on Spencer's selection as a Solar System Ambassador. As of press time Friday, NASA had not replied.

"Space and space sciences was so meaningful to me as a child growing up," Spencer said. "Being able to share that with another generation of students at UTRGV and an entire community of UTRGV of the Rio Grande Valley, this is just a wonderful opportunity for me."

--Thomas Spencer

on being named a NASA solar system ambassador

be able to do is call attention to that. We have some people who have done some amazing work and are doing some amazing work.

"And there might be students or potential students for UTRGV that might be able to get to work in one of those labs, that might be able to work directly hand in hand with some leaders in space science and this program. And

new label on who we are as an institution, research and research recognition is really important," Saygin said. "So, anything that helps with research recognition is gonna help build institutional brand."

"So his recognition at the personal level adds a lot to the institution, so it's great that he was able to take UTRGV's name out there and make it visible."

"South Texas sees the thousands of children abused, sees thousands of women sexually abused, sees the dead bodies. We saw pictures, picture after picture after picture. Eight hundred fifty-three people died last year crossing illegally into this country."

He said he believes the risk of terrorism in the U.S. today is greater than it has been at any point since 9/11.

During the news conference, Lee said the majority of the women and girls brought to the U.S. are sexually assaulted along the way and forced into the sex trade.

"This is slavery," Lee said. "This is involuntary servitude. This is indentured servitude, and we can't let it happen."

He encourages people to not make the "dangerous journey" to the U.S.

"Please do not send your wives, sisters and daughters for this horrific journey to be sexually abused by coyotes and cartels," Lee said in Spanish. "We hear story after story of traffickers kidnapping women and children."

He said in 2019, the New York Times documented dozens of encounters of these women. He mentioned the story of a mother of three children from Guatemala.

"For many weeks, the men she paid to bring her safely to the United States drugged her with pills and cocaine," Lee said. "They

didn't even allow her to go out to bathe."

He said the woman said she was "raped so many times that they stopped seeing us as human beings."

"These women and girls are human beings," Lee said. "... We have to protect them. It's something we can't accept. Not here in this country. Not today or ever."

Ricketts said during the news conference the number of immigrants crossing is affecting the country.

"When we talk to the Customs and Border Patrol folks ... the first thing they say is change the policy," he said. "They're spending more time processing people than actually guarding the border. This must end. ... And it will only end when ... Joe Biden takes responsibility for the human suffering he is causing right here in our own country and changes these policies."

Cruz said there are roughly 110,000 illegal immigrants in New York City.

"New York City is a hell of a lot bigger than McAllen, Texas," he said. "Just in the Rio Grande Valley sector, Border Patrol agents have detained over 1 million illegal immigrants in the last two and a half years. If 110,000 is destroying a giant metropolis like New York, what about the devastation here in South Texas?"

## CHAIR

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departments in the School of Medicine."

Subhash Chauhan, a School of Medicine professor and founding director of the South Texas Center of Excellence in Cancer Research, said Cobos is not only a physician, but "was actively participating in research and clinical trials."

"I think he is outstanding at what he does," Chauhan said.

Cobos will share his role in two departments.

"He's also equally important because he has a dual role," Hocker said. "So not only is he overseeing one of our bigger departments, he also is a hematologist and oncologist, and he is meeting the efforts and the development of the cancer center we will open in 2024. So, he has two very important roles within our School of Medicine."

The dean said the selection process took five to six months and explained what stood out about Cobos as a candidate.

"He's really attractive to our school because he was born and raised on the border," Hocker said. "He's practiced and got part of his training within the border. He's been a huge advocate for border health and understands the challenges that we face in the Rio Grande Valley."

Cobos wants to ensure the oncology department stays up-to-date with the latest advancements in cancer treatment and research.

"Not only are we teaching, but we are researching new methods on how to treat cancer," he said. "An academic oncologist wears three hats: They take care of patients using the latest technology and research, they do research themselves and they teach the aspects of cancer care to doctors in our community."

"I think that a lot of people would agree that an academic oncologist is at the forefront of cancer expertise. The fact that we will now have that in the Valley is a step in the right direction."

Hocker described Cobos as "salt of the earth."

"And someone you want taking care of you if you were sick whether it was with cancer or internal medicine," he said. "And I couldn't be more pleased to have him leading our charge in those efforts."

A Cancer and Surgery Center is scheduled for completion at a new UTRGV academic campus in McAllen. The building is expected to be completed in late 2024, and the first patient will be provided with outpatient cancer services in January 2025.

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## TOUR

Continued from Page 1

said. "The look on those kids' faces was horrifying. For me, the most disturbing part of the conversation was a little girl ... who was 10 years old."

The 10-year-old was accompanied by a man "who said he was her father, with his arm draped forcefully around her," he said.

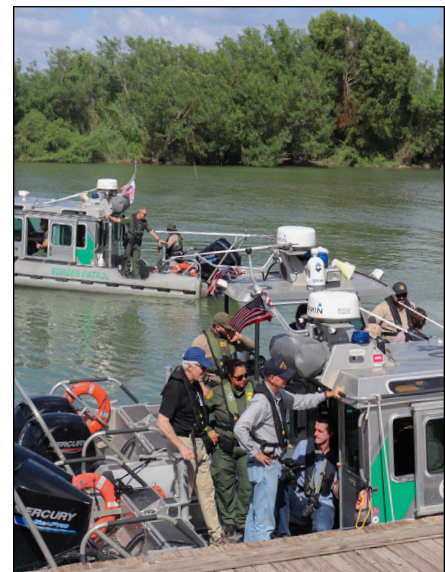
"And, it was obvious to anyone who's ever seen a father and daughter, these two were not related," Cruz said. "At one point, when we asked about her mother, we saw her look [at] the man who was claiming to be her dad, wondering what the answer [was] supposed to be."

During the Trump administration, children were regularly DNA tested who were accompanied by an adult and 30% of children DNA tested were found not to be related to the person, he said.

"One of the first things Joe Biden did was end the DNA test because, apparently, Democrats don't care if that 10-year-old girl is related to the adult man that the cartel handed her over," Cruz said.

He said it was "horrifying" to know that there is a chance the teenage girls were being taken off to be trafficked for sex.

"This is a humanitarian crisis," Cruz said.



Fatima Gamez Lopez/THE RIDER U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Pete Ricketts (R-Nebraska) wait by the Rio Grande for a Border Patrol agent to tie the U.S. Border Patrol SAFE Boat Oct. 27 at Anzalduas Park in Mission.



# YAQUERO VOICE

What is your favorite season of the year and why?



"I think spring is my favorite season of the year simply because everything sprouts. It's all green and the flowers are blooming in. The butterfly garden right behind me, right here, has always some very nice smells. You can see the butterflies and the dragonflies flying around, and it just adds a very nice vibe to it."

**Sebastian Ramirez**  
biology junior



"My favorite season of the year is winter. I like it because I like cold places, and the fresh of this time."

**Rafael Lopez Isaguirre**  
cybersecurity freshman



"My favorite season is winter, since it gives you a colder weather and it is during the holidays."

**Ricardo Martinez**  
biology junior



"My favorite season is winter because I am a really hot person, and the heat just keeps overwhelming on me, and the winter is just a nice breath of fresh air that allows me to wear jackets, when I normally can't."

**Juan Abarca**  
computer science sophomore

--Compiled and photos by Azenett Valdez and Alfredo Garcia

# Chivo loco sin riendas



**Silvana Villarreal**  
A&E REPORTER

The sensation of feeling greasy, exhausted and economically broke is nothing compared to the memories I will have for the rest of my life. Not to mention the huge pile of dirty clothing waiting to get done when I get back home. The feeling I get when I step onto a bus, ride a train, sit in a car or get on a plane is pure thrill.

It is hard to believe that this past summer gave me the first opportunity to get on a plane.

Whether I am sitting next to my family or a person whose story I don't know, the journey there is incomparable.

No one is waiting for me; hundreds of communities and people are living their lives and moving on. However, the time will come when I finally start telling people, "Yeah, I've been there. It was magical."

Through museums, I get to

feel the anguish and loneliness of Van Gogh, feel Frida Kahlo's passion, experience the life of Maximilian I of Mexico and see the heartbreaking story of Anne Frank.

Through sidewalks, I get to walk the day-to-day life of hundreds of people.

Through restaurants, I get to feel generations of people, taste recipes passed down and witness the start of new traditions.

Taking a road trip and looking out the window, I get

because of the way I dress and talk.

I believe it is magical how we use cars to go everywhere in the U.S., but as soon as we leave the country, we become reliant on sketchy taxi cabs and trains where we are most likely to become victims of pickpocketing.

But just imagine standing in the middle of *Sagrada Familia* in Barcelona admiring the architecture and the history, dancing your way through the colorful parade of Mardi Gras in New Orleans while drunk people attempt to regain their balance or riding a camel along the Dead Sea while exploring the ruins of Jerusalem.

Any of these, no matter how far or how close it is, would be a dream come true.

I see the glamorous and realistic sides of traveling as one.

Both give you unforgettable experiences and stories to tell.

As my mom puts it, I am a "chivo loco sin riendas" who takes any opportunity to get out of town, and I will proudly wear that name if it means I get to travel.

Note to future self: Always have the means for your next meal. Traveling is expensive.

As my mom puts it, I am a "chivo loco sin riendas" who takes any opportunity to get out of town, and I will proudly wear that name if it means I get to travel.

to see leaves changing color, mountains overcoming the skyline, a small herd of deer and feel a slight breeze of cool air.

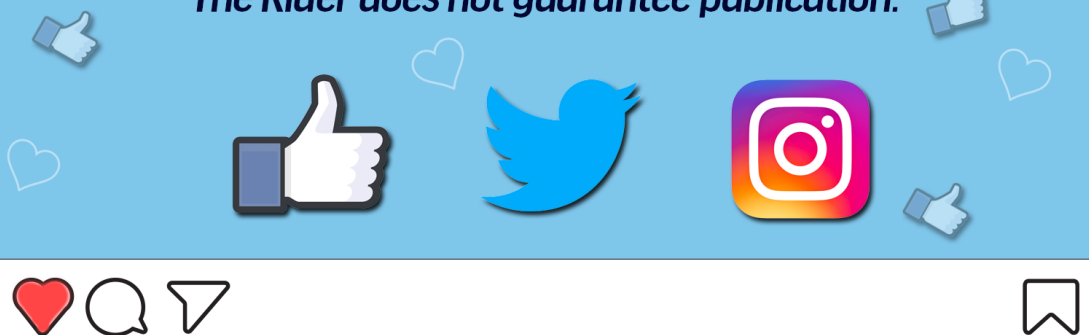
To take a plane and have a large man take over half of your space by manspreading while a small child kicks the back of your seat is a positive kind of annoyance.

I believe it is magical to go to a different country and be charged the "American tax"



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# Flores a estudiantes: involúcrense



Angel Ballesteros/FOTO RIDER



Angel Ballesteros/FOTO RIDER

Nombre: Pauline Charlot

Carrera: Negocio

Clasificación: Estudiante de posgrado

Fecha de graduación: Otoño 2025

Ciudad natal: Burdeos, Francia

**Actividades extracurriculares:** “[En] mi tiempo libre hago algo de música. Toco el piano. [...] Hago algunos videos. [...] Veo series [y] escucho música”.

**¿Cuáles son las diferencias entre tu ciudad natal y los Estados Unidos?** “Creo que en Francia, es más fácil, cómo, moverse por el país. Cómo aquí, si no tenemos coche, es muy difícil. Pero en Francia, hay muchos [...] trenes y podemos viajar por el país muy fácilmente. Y para lo académico, creo que es más difícil en Francia. Tenemos muchas tareas que hacer. Tenemos que escribir mucho”.

**Si solo pudieras comer un alimento por el resto de tu vida, ¿cuál sería y por qué?** “Sería pasta porque me encanta. Cómo, todo tipo de pasta. La cocina italiana y francesa es muy buena para mí. Son los mejores. Así que sí, podría comer pasta todos los días”.

**¿Qué hay en tu lista de deseos?** “Viajar [a] todos los países del mundo. Me encanta viajar. Así que sí, para checar todos los países, será increíble. América Latina, realmente quiero hacer un viaje por carretera allí. El año pasado estuve en México durante un semestre haciendo una pasantía. Fue, cómo, mi mejor experiencia. Lo disfruté mucho. Tengo muchas ganas de volver. Y estoy muy interesada en hacer un viaje por carretera en América Latina”.

**¿Quién es tu ejemplo a seguir?** “Mi familia. Cómo, mi madre es realmente un modelo a seguir porque es muy trabajadora. [...] Mis padres son realmente inspiradores”.

**¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás?** “Porque en Francia también estoy en una escuela de negocios. Así que era lógico, pero más específico, elegí clases de mercadotecnia. Desde la escuela secundaria, [he] querido descubrir la mercadotecnia y siempre he estado en, cómo, pasantías en mercadotecnia y siempre me ha gustado mucho. Cómo si quisiera trabajar en [...] una agencia de mercadotecnia”.

**¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales?** “Creo que ir a conocer gente. [...] Es realmente una buena experiencia, como descubrir muchas cosas [sobre] ti, pero también [...] otras culturas y otras personas que vienen de todas partes. Así que es [...] una buena experiencia para tener en nuestra vida”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez

una inspiración para la gente del Valle. No importa de dónde vengas ni tus antecedentes, puedes lograrlo”.

Flores alienta a la comunidad a mantener vivo el sueño americano.

“El sueño americano está vivo”, dijo. “Todos ustedes son el sueño americano. Pero tenemos que protegerlo. No podemos simplemente sentarnos y pensar que siempre estará ahí”.

**“Todos ustedes son el sueño americano. Pero tenemos que protegerlo. No podemos simplemente sentarnos y pensar que siempre estará ahí”.**

-- Mayra Flores, excongresista del partido republicano

Flores le preguntó a la audiencia cuántas personas tienen familia en México.

“¿Vas con tanta frecuencia como antes?” Le preguntó a la audiencia mientras movían la cabeza diciendo no. “Porque tienes miedo. [...] Todavía tengo familia en Burgos [Tamaulipas, México]. Y no voy tan a menudo como quisiera”.

Flores dijo que el cartel le ha quitado la oportunidad a las personas para ir a México.

“No sólo tienen aterrorizadas a las personas de México”, dijo. “Ahora, los mexicano-estadounidenses ni siquiera podemos visitar a nuestros seres queridos porque tenemos miedo”.



Angel Ballesteros/FOTO RIDER

El estudiante de segundo año de ciberseguridad de UTRGV Christopher Hernandez (izquierda) y el estudiante de segundo año de ciencias políticas Diego Dominguez escuchan el discurso de Mayra Flores durante la conferencia de Turning Point USA organizada el 30 de octubre en el edificio de Ciencias del campus de Edinburg.

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**  
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

Mayra Flores, excongresista del partido republicano, habló ante más de 50 personas sobre el sueño americano e inmigración el 30 de octubre en el edificio de Ciencias en el campus de Edinburg.

El evento organizado por Turning Point USA en UTRGV estuvo abierto para la comunidad del Valle del Río Grande.

“Gracias por permitirme compartir la historia de mi sueño americano”, dijo Flores. “Espero inspirarlos a todos a involucrarse porque no importa de qué lado estemos en la política. Creo que necesitamos más gente y liderazgo”.

Animó a los asistentes a seguir sus sueños.

“Estoy aquí para decirles que no importa cuál sea su origen”, dijo Flores. “Si trabajan duro pueden lograr cualquier cosa. Y por qué no, también pueden postularse para el Congreso. [...] Y quién sabe, tal vez también puedan convertirse en presidente algún día. No dudo de ti”.

El país necesita estadounidenses cotidianos que se postulen para cargos públicos, dijo.

“Realmente creo que haremos un trabajo mucho mejor”, dijo Flores. “Necesitamos una representación equitativa. Y creo que [...] nos faltaba eso, no sólo aquí, sino también a nivel estatal en Washington. Personas que realmente representen los valores, no sólo un partido político”.

Flores ganó una elección especial para el Distrito Congresional 34 en el 2022, pero perdió el lugar ante el demócrata Vicente Gonzalez en las elecciones de mitad del periodo más tarde ese año. Ahora está postulada para el mismo lugar.

Jolene Lucio, estudiante de primer año en finanzas, dijo que Flores fue muy auténtica en su “presentación, su discurso y la forma en que se presentó”.

Omar de la Mora, residente de Mission, asistió al evento.

De la Mora dijo que nunca le interesó la política hasta hace poco por la inflación.

“Desde que la economía y todo empezó a subir, quise involucrarme”, dijo. “... Pensé que no me iba a gustar. Pensé que iba a ser aburrido, pero me está gustando. Estoy más interesado en eso. Y quiero hacer un cambio”.

De la Mora dijo que lo que le gustó de Flores es que es mexicano-estadounidense.

“Es difícil para la gente, especialmente para las minorías”, dijo. “[Debería] ser

# Poet Laureate silva's work 'powerful and inspiring'

**Silvana Villarreal**  
A&E REPORTER

The College of Fine Arts hosted a three-day Distinguished Artist Series on both campuses that included readings, discussions and an insight into ire'ne lara silva, the 2023 Texas Poet Laureate.

The Edinburg native has published five collections of her poetry: "Furia: Poems," "Flesh to Bone," "Blood Sugar Canto," "Cuicacalli," and most recently in 2021 "FirstPoems: Ani'mal, INDÍGENA, and Furia." Her new book of poetry, "The Eaters of Flowers," will be published January 2024 and centers on the aftermath of losing her brother.

silva said the practice she revisits most often when writing poetry and believes is more effective than talent and networking is being

stubborn as to who to listen to and when to follow one's own vision and voice.

She said that along with identifying as ChicanX and LatinX, Tejano and conjunto music have also been sources of inspiration and influence for her stories.

"There's not been a day in my life when I don't think about my identity, when I don't take pride in it, where I don't learn from it," silva said.

Evolving is not something the poet uses to describe her writing through the years, but a spiral where recurring themes constantly resurface.

Themes that are found in her books are grief, mortality, loss, healing, nature and more.

"It's circling the same themes, but my thoughts and my experiences keep changing because I keep living and I keep changing," silva said.

"So, it's not so much that it's evolving or that it's moving in a line. It's a big spiral."

Joshua Parra, a vocal performance junior who attended the event on Wednesday, was interested in learning more about the poetry field.

"It's quite



Silvana Villarreal/THE RIDER

ire'ne lara silva reads a poem from her 2015 book, "Blood Sugar Canto," before a group of students, faculty and staff last Wednesday in the Performing Arts Complex lobby on the Edinburg campus: "i know this is selfish i have already been given more than others more life more strength more freedom more health more love more time but i can't help wanting more sometimes i hold my feet my calves in my hands stare at my fingers i cannot comprehend my body without them *oh cuerpecito mio*"

incredible to see a prominent figure in our community to be recognized as she is," Parra said. "It's very cool to see people down here being recognized for something good and prominent."

Emmy Pérez, chair of the Creative Writing Department at UTRGV and Texas Poet Laureate of 2020, said the department wanted to keep the tradition of hosting poet laureates after having Ada Limón, 24th Poet Laureate of the United States, and Lupe Mendez, 2022 Texas Poet Laureate.

"I hope that they get to hear her beautiful poetry and to come away feeling inspired about the role that poetry and art can play in our lives, whether we create it ourselves or just enjoy it," Pérez said about silva's

"beautiful, powerful and inspiring presentations."

The Distinguished Artist Series is part of FESTIBA (the Festival of International Books and Arts), which is all about encouraging and celebrating the community's brilliance, she said. FESTIBA continues through the end of November. The series included music, dance, art and literature.

"I think it's important that the community here sees its own achieving such wonderful literary accomplishments," Pérez said.

She said silva often describes her own poetry as medicine and when others read or hear her poetry, they can feel the medicinal aspects of the work with them.

"It's like a good song, but better because [in a] good song you need the music," Pérez said. "If you just read the lyrics, they don't alone

suffice. But for ire'ne, you can just read one of her poems in her book and it's like the whole band is there."

The first part of the Distinguished Artist Series took place Oct. 30 and featured a reading and *plática* on silva's artistic practice in Cortez Hall on the Brownsville campus. On Tuesday, the event moved to the Visual Arts Building in Edinburg for a reading, question-and-answer session and a reception. The series ended Wednesday with a reading, a question-and-answer session, book signing and reception in the Performing Arts Complex lobby on the Edinburg campus.

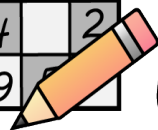
silva and Chicago graphic artist Jennifer Chavez's upcoming project is a comic book titled "The Thirteen Origins: Vendaval," scheduled for publication in April.

Silvana Villarreal/THE RIDER

Texas Poet Laureate 2023 ire'ne lara silva talks about her fifth collection of poetry to be published in January 2024 titled "The Eaters of Flowers," and comic book "The Thirteen Origins: Vendaval," to be published in April 2024. silva spoke last Wednesday in the Performing Arts Complex lobby on the Edinburg campus as part of the Distinguished Artist Series, which was hosted by the College of Fine Arts.



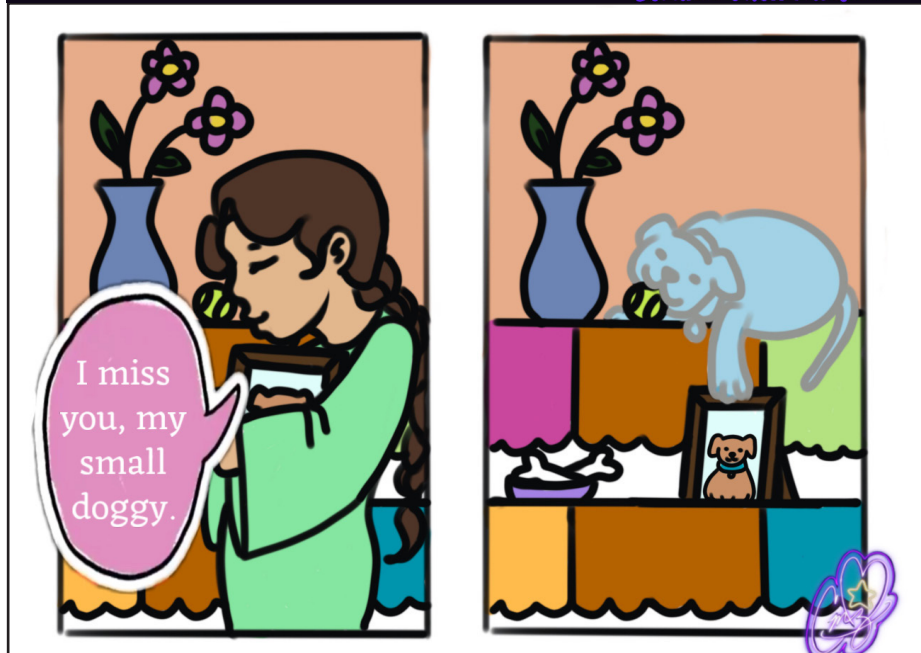
## SUDOKU



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Oct. 23 puzzle answer key:

3	4	6	9	2	1	5	7	8
8	1	5	7	4	3	2	6	9
9	2	7	8	5	6	4	3	1
7	9	2	1	6	8	3	4	5
1	5	3	2	7	4	8	9	6
4	6	8	5	3	9	1	2	7
6	8	9	3	1	2	7	5	4
2	7	4	6	8	5	9	1	3
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**KADE HACKEROTT**



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS  
Kade Hackerott is a junior guard/forward for the UTRGV Women's Basketball Team. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in marketing and is from Wichita, Kansas. Hackerott has spent her summers in the Rio Grande Valley since 2020 after moving with her parents, but this is her first year with the UTRGV program.

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

**A:** "I like to relax. I like to do nothing. I like to read, bake and watch TV. I'm a big TV watcher. [I] binge watch shows and movies."

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

**A:** "I'm rewatching 'Money Heist.' I love 'Money Heist.' [It] really just kind of depends on show recommendations I get. I'll usually check out, like, at least a couple episodes. I kinda started 'American Horror Story' [and] 'Scream Queens.'"

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

**A:** "I kind of like all but probably pop music. I'm a big Taylor Swift fan, which people will laugh at, but I think she's awesome. I do like rap. I do like country so, kind of, a little bit of everything, just depending what mood I'm in."

**Q: What do you like about the Rio Grande Valley?**

**A:** "Everyone is really nice. I feel like no matter where I go, people are very friendly and very nice. I would say the weather. It gets a little hot sometimes, but other than that, it's mostly nice year-round. Being able to play here and being close to my family is a big bonus, so that's huge."

**Q: Who is one of your role models?**

**A:** "I think, more so, it's just the influence of the people I'm around. Surrounding myself with good people, I don't know if there's just one certain person."

**Q: Would you want to keep playing or do something with your degree?**

**A:** "I honestly have no idea where the future will lead me. I thought about getting into coaching, but now I'm not sure. I don't really know. We'll just see where life takes me."

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

**A:** "[For] the season, I just really want to help my team win. I know that's not necessarily personal but, like, it is because I can do my part to help the team win, you know? I obviously want to play well, but, again, at the end of the day, it's just for the team to win. ... Do what I can to help us win, be a good leader, be a good teammate and all that stuff."

**Q: Do you have any fun facts about yourself?**

**A:** "Peanut M&M's are the best M&M's."

--Compiled by Jose Medina

# UTRGV golf facility on the way for Vaqueros

**Jose Medina**  
SPORTS REPORTER

Last December, construction of the new University of Texas Rio Grande Valley golf facility began on Champion Lakes Golf Course in McAllen. The new building, which is part of \$85 million to be invested in UTRGV Athletics, will act as a base of operations for the men's and women's golf teams.

The Vaquero Golf Center, located on the northwest corner of the driving range, will include locker rooms, offices, study areas, lounge space, hitting bays and even a kitchen.

The golf coaching staff's office space is currently in portable buildings near the UTRGV Victory Center.

Men's Golf head coach Houston Moore said the team is grateful to have the opportunity to have the new UTRGV golf facility.

"I think it's gonna be a tremendous asset moving forward for the program," Moore said. "Another tool we have in our box that we'll be able to use on a day in and day out basis. ... The guys are going to be spending a lot of time out there. It's somewhere that they can call home. It's somewhere to help build our culture and move this program in the right direction."

He also said it would help them on the recruiting side of things to attract more athletes to the program.

The men's and women's sides of the facility will be "mirrors" of each other and will be the same. They will share a study room for the student athletes to be able to do schoolwork.

The locker rooms will have bathrooms and showers, as well as lounge areas.

The facility will include two hitting bays, which will be able to keep track of data from the hits.

Moore said there will be technology in the bays that are able to read and process information on the swings.

"So we'll have some launch monitors in there, and they actually read the balls itself," he said. "So there's no technology inside the golf ball, a piece of tech will be out a certain amount of feet from where you're standing. ... And then every time you hit a golf shot, that piece of tech reads what your club did and how it affected the ball, and it'll pop up on a TV there inside the hitting bay, and you'll get all the information a college golfer would



Angel Ballesteros/THE RIDER

The upcoming UTRGV golf facility is located at the Champion Lakes Golf Course in McAllen, about 15 miles from the Edinburg campus. The facility will include locker rooms, office space for coaches and hitting bays.

want or would need to help improve his game."

Assistant Athletic Director for Communications Daniel Elizondo said the bays will allow athletes to hit out to the range while protecting them from sun, rain and other elements.

"Basically, they can hit golf balls from indoors," Elizondo said. "They'll hit out

that and adapt to however they want to play."

Redshirt junior golf player Taj Sutherland said the team practices on the course about three times a week and they have seen the construction progress.

"So, we kind of have been able to see the whole process of being built," Sutherland said. "So, it's been really cool. And it looks like it's pretty much constructed now. ... Interior looks like it needs the most work from this point forward. But yeah, it looks really cool."

He said the team is looking forward to having a facility and practice aids that will allow them to get better at the game.

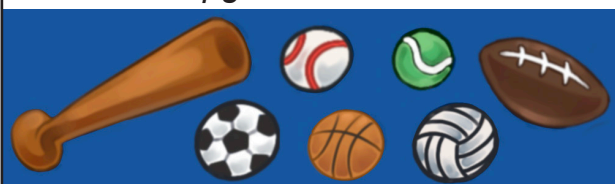
"It'll help with the development of the team," Sutherland said. "Just kind of be able to allow ourselves to get to the next level that I think we're capable of with the facility."

Moore said the biggest feature of the facility is being located on the golf course.

"We'll be able to walk out, hit golf balls on the range and then also be able to walk inside and be able to hit golf balls in the shade," he said. "So, that's the biggest amenity being right there on the golf course."

Moore said he roughly estimates the facility to be open in early spring.

## Athletics Upgrades: Last in a Series



towards the driving range. They don't have to be out in the sun or when it's raining, they can hit from inside and do that."

Asked about the technology in the bays, he replied it allows for swing data to be recorded and conveyed.

"It's a system for golf that it tracks your swing, how fast your swing is," Elizondo said. "It tracks ball flight and ball speed leaving the clubface. So it's just technology that they use that helps them to learn about their golf swing and ... how they can change



The UTRGV Women's Golf Team practices swings Sept. 5 at Los Lagos Golf Course in Edinburg.

Ryan Lugo/THE RIDER

**MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
6:30 p.m. today  
vs. Southwestern  
Adventist University  
AT THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

**THIS WEEK IN SPORTS**  
**VOLLEYBALL**  
6:30 p.m. Thursday  
vs. Tarleton State University  
2 p.m. Saturday  
vs. Abilene Christian University  
AT THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**  
6:30 p.m. Friday  
vs. Florida  
International University  
AT THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

# The Dream By: Jenna Cooper



Mara had just arrived home from a long day at school, and she was exhausted. Even though she had five pending assignments, Mara decided to get ready for bed. As she walked over to her dresser to pull out some more comfortable clothes to sleep in, Mara passed by her bookshelf, which had a look-a-like doll on the top shelf that her mother had brought her when she was eight years old. Mara was always scared of that doll. Every time she saw it, she remembered the time she was playing with it as a little girl, and she swore she saw it move on its own. Pushing the frightful memory away to the back of her mind, Mara went to sleep.

Suddenly, Mara was eight again and playing with her doll, and like before, the doll moved on its own. Little Mara screamed and ran to her parents in the living room to tell them what she had seen, but of course, they didn't believe her. Mara's stepfather then gave her an old handheld camera; he told her if she managed to catch any paranormal activity in her room on camera, then he would believe her. Anxious and scared, Mara went back to her room with the camera and started recording. After walking around her room with the camera and seeing nothing, she convinced herself it was all in her

head, but she still wanted to go over the camera footage to be completely sure. As Mara was going over the footage, she noticed a blurry see-through figure near the doorway. As she looked up from the camera and to the doorway, she saw two, opaque black arms reach out around the wall and onto the doorframe. Slowly, the figure peeked its head out from behind the wall; its face was a deep, pitch black and shiny almost like the shell of a bug, and it had silver and grey swirls for eyes. And then she woke up.

Startled by her nightmare, Mara woke up, her heart pounding and in a cold sweat. She told herself it was only a bad dream and fell back asleep. When she fell back asleep, she was in a strange room.

The room had three walls and a ceiling, but the fourth wall was the ocean shore. Mara was walking along the shore with two of her friends, Gracie and Rob; she was very anxious and was telling Gracie and Rob some nonsense not even she fully understood. Mara told Gracie and Rob about a "spider demon," who could shape-shift to look and sound like her, but it was not her. She told her friends the safe word to know it was her was "strawberry," and as soon as she said what the safe word was, the only door to exit the room slammed shut and huge waves from the ocean started flooding the room. Mara and her friends were banging their fists against the closed door and yelling at the top of their lungs for help. Finally, Mara's mother came to their rescue and opened the door. Gracie and Rob rejoiced, but Mara took a step back and said, "That's not my mom!" Suddenly, she woke up again.

Mara woke up even more frightened than before. It wasn't unlike her to have such vivid dreams, but having two nightmares in the same night was unsettling for her. After tossing and turning in her bed for what must have been at least an hour, Mara fell asleep again. This time when Mara was asleep, she was back in her childhood bedroom, back in the same scene where the doll had moved, but only this time she wasn't eight anymore. As Mara looked

up at her surroundings, she saw the figure from the doorway in the first nightmare standing right in front of her. The figure, or "spider demon" as she had previously referred to it, had a long torso attached to eight spider legs; it had the same shiny opaque black, shell-like skin and swirls for eyes, but this time, its mouth was open, revealing the rows and rows of teeth inside almost like a leech. All Mara could think to do in the moment was pray. As she began praying under her breath, the spider demon crawled towards her at an alarming speed. Paralyzed with fear, Mara couldn't run; she couldn't even move. The spider demon ran up to her and hit her in the center of her chest, but before she could feel the pain from the blow, she woke up.

When Mara woke up, she was in some sort of sleep paralysis and couldn't move. There was a strong, sharp pain in her chest. It felt like what she imagined being impaled with very sharp, very heavy glass would feel like. Mara tried to scream, but she couldn't open her mouth or make even the smallest sound. It started getting harder and harder to breathe. Mara thought she might suffocate. Again, the only thing Mara could think to do was pray. As Mara began praying in her head, she suddenly realized she could move and breathe again, but she still felt a sore pain in her chest; however, the pain was nowhere near as intense as it was before. Mara sat up in bed crying and began thanking God out loud for putting an end to whatever she experienced. However, just as Mara thought her terrifying night had come to an end, her bedroom door slowly creaked open, and she saw the same two opaque, black arms reach around the wall onto the doorframe. In disbelief, Mara watched as the same spider demon from before peeked its head out from around the corner. Mara thought to herself that she must still be dreaming. However, this time she didn't wake up.



## Special Constitutional Amendment & Local Entities Elections

**ELECTION DAY**  
**Nov. 7**

**CAMERON**



**HIDALGO**



**STARR**



**WILLACY**



**Make a Plan! Vote Early**

**For questions or accommodations, contact your local elections department.**