

**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT:**

Ballet Nepantla takes center stage

[utrgvrider.com](http://utrgvrider.com)

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**Politics**

## Gonzalez, Flores fight for the mic

**Natalie Lapsley**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

held Thursday in Harlingen and hosted by CBS 4, NBC 23 and Valley Central, moderator Brian Svendsen said, "In the past year, consumer prices have risen 2.4%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics."

Asked what policies they would implement to ease financial strain felt by families in the Rio Grande Valley, Flores replied that, under former U.S. President Donald Trump's administration, the country had a

stronger economy.

"It's important that we prioritize the needs of the American people and stop spending billions of dollars abroad," Flores said, adding that policies from the Trump administration should be reimplemented.

She said restaurant servers should not have their tips taxed and raising the minimum wage would put a strain on small businesses.

See **DEBATE**, Page 8

**EARLY VOTING STARTS TODAY**



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**Economy**

At the top of the debate, which was

## PINKTOBER

Students spread breast cancer awareness

**Cadence Vaughan**  
THE RIDER

October is recognized annually as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and UTRGV is getting the word out.

University Recreation hosted Power in Pink, its annual breast cancer awareness event, Tuesday on the Harlingen campus, Wednesday on the Brownsville campus and Thursday on the Edinburg campus. The event was co-hosted by Student Health Services, the UTRGV Student Food Pantry and the Counseling Center as an effort to educate students on the disease.

Michael Garcia, a kinesiology graduate student and fitness graduate supervisor for University Recreation, believes providing educational resources and information about breast cancer is important to increase awareness among students.

"Breast cancer is something that's very prominent in society and it affects a lot of different people, whether it's directly or indirectly through a family

See **PINK**, Page 8

# TOGETHER AGAIN

## From students to alumni: Bash brings Vaqueros back



Angel Ballesteros/THE RIDER

The Vaquero mascot greets alumna Diane Teter, who graduated in 1993 with a Master of Science in information systems from legacy institution University of Texas at Brownsville. The UTRGV Alumni Bash took place Tuesday afternoon in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus.

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**  
SPANISH EDITOR

Dozens of people gathered Tuesday for the UTRGV Alumni Bash, reconnecting with old friends, creating new

connections and learning about the alumni resources the university offers in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus.

"I feel like a lot of students think of the cost of attendance

as a sign that maybe UTRGV isn't inspiring to create better and greater things," said Joel Corte, who graduated in 2023 with a Master of Arts in political science. "But I think what UTRGV

understands is that if you can attend university at a low cost of attendance, you free yourself up to spend more of your attention on other facets of your life and

See **ALUMNI**, Page 3

## A new rep for the UT System

**Natalie Lapsley**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Anthony Dragun, the University of Texas System student regent, visited UTRGV Thursday to hear from students, meet with leadership and become familiar with the campus culture and needs.

Midland native Dragun, who was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott June 1, said his hope is to represent students

in a more "authentic and thoughtful way."

A fourth-year medical student at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas and a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, Dragun said his hope is to bring a "well-rounded perspective" to his new role.

"I would hope that I bring a well-rounded perspective to the role, but I also realize that ... I don't

know everything," Dragun said. "My experience at those campuses can be very different from the next guy over. ... I really would like to have a focus on career readiness."

A common interest among students across the UT System is a desire for more ways to access job opportunities as well as finding support to help put themselves through school, according to Dragun.

See **REGENT**, Page 2



Natalie Lapsley/THE RIDER  
Anthony Dragun, student regent



## 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

#### Bake Sale

The **Filipino Student Association** will host a **bake sale** from noon to 2 p.m. in the University Library Media Courtyard on the Edinburg campus.

#### Volleyball Practice

The **Filipino Student Association** will host **volleyball practice** every week in preparation for its end-of-year **competition**, **Goodphil**. To join the organization, attend its practice from 6 to 8 p.m. in the University Recreation Building on the Edinburg campus.

#### K.I.S.S.

The **Korean International Student Society** will meet to discuss **Korean culture, music and language**. Meetings are held from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday in Science Building Room 2.507 on the Edinburg campus.

#### Vote Early

The **Center for Student Involvement and Vaqueros Vote** invite students to participate in **early voting on campus** until Nov. 1 in the Student Academic Center lobby on the Edinburg campus and in Student Union Salón Gardenia on the Brownsville

campus. To view times and dates, visit [utrgv.edu/vaqueros-vote/](http://utrgv.edu/vaqueros-vote/).

### Tuesday

#### SPIE Seminar Series

The **International Society of Optics and Photonics student chapter** will host a seminar from 11 a.m. to noon to promote professional development opportunities in **applied mathematics, statistics and electrical engineering** in Mathematics and General Classrooms Room 2.412 on the Edinburg campus, at the same time in Life and Health Sciences Building Room 2.602 on the Brownsville campus and via Zoom. ID: 856 2835 8421.

#### Senator Town Hall

The **Student Government Association** will host a **session for students** to ask questions and **discuss concerns, programs and internship opportunities** within the College of Health Professions, College of Sciences and School of Nursing from noon to 1 p.m. in Health Affairs Building East Room

1.102 on the Edinburg campus and in Student Union Salon Bougainvillea on the Brownsville campus.

#### Get Involved Fair

The **Center for Student Involvement and College of Sciences** will host a **Get Involved Fair** from noon to 2 p.m. on the Science Promenade on the Edinburg campus. There will be **free food** while

supplies last.

#### Wednesday Tournament

The **Student Union** will host a **“Super Smash Bros Tournament”** from noon to 1 p.m. in the Game Room on the Brownsville campus and from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Game Room on the Edinburg campus. Register through V Link or at the game rooms for a chance to win VBucks. Participants must present a valid student ID to play.

#### Boxing

The **University Recreation Center** hosts **boxing classes** from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. in UREC Studio 2 on the Edinburg campus.

#### Zumba Toning

The **University Recreation**

**Center** hosts **Zumba classes** with **body-sculpting exercises and high-energy cardio** from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. in UREC Studio 1 on the Edinburg campus.

### Thursday

#### Lunch with a Civil

The **American Society of Civil Engineers** will host a **“Lunch with a Civil”** series, where **professional engineers will offer advice and answer questions** from 3:15 to 5 p.m. in Engineering Building Room 1.268 on the Edinburg campus.

### Friday

#### Advisor Series: Canceling Conflict

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host a **“Cancelling Conflict”** session to review **best practices for managing student organization conflicts** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. The session is part of the **Advisor Series**. Join via Zoom ID: 823 5743 8452.

#### Pre-Party Madness

**Student Activities** will host **“Pre-Party Madness”** where students can show their spirit and enjoy an evening filled with music, games and activities from 7 to 9 p.m. in the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus.

--Compiled by Vanessa Aguilar



## POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Oct. 7 and 14.

### Oct. 7

**9:41 a.m.:** A student reported his scooter was stolen while it was secured on a bike rack outside the Mathematics and General Classrooms Building on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

**10:50 a.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a verbal disturbance in Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus. Upon arrival, a female student reported that, during a verbal dispute, a male subject used vulgar language and gestures at her and then left the area. She did not file criminal charges.

### Oct. 8

**10:25 a.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a report of empty alcohol containers found in a restroom in the Student Academic Center on the Edinburg campus.

### Oct. 9

**7:47 a.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a report of a loose dog near the Science Building on the Edinburg campus. The dog was located and turned over

to the city’s animal control.

**10:12 a.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a report of a needle found on the ground in the University Library on the Edinburg campus. The needle was picked up and disposed of properly in a hazardous material box.

### Oct. 10

**5:44 p.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a report of a student stuck in an elevator in the Music, Science and Learning Center on the Brownsville campus. A Facilities Services employee arrived to assist in opening the elevator doors and the student stated she was fine. The elevator was shut down for repairs.

### Oct. 11

**3:02 a.m.:** University Police officers assisted U.S. Border Patrol agents in the search for several undocumented immigrants near the Brownsville campus. The agents took

into custody.

**5:59 a.m.:** University Public Safety officers responded to an active fire alarm in the Clinical Education Building on the Harlingen campus. The Harlingen Fire Department arrived on scene and cleared the building for reentry.

**7 a.m.:** University Public Safety officers responded to

an active fire alarm

at the Robert and

Janet Vackar

Football

Stadium in

Edinburg.

The

Edinburg Fire

Department

arrived on

scene and

determined that

a dusty smoke

detector had triggered

the alarm.

**12:24 p.m.:** A University Police officer was notified of a low-hanging power line in Lot E-32 on the Edinburg campus. The American Electric Power company was notified and advised that they would address the issue.

### Oct. 12

**2:16 p.m.:** A student reported a man followed her to her apartment in Troxel

Hall on the Edinburg campus and asked for her contact information, which made her uncomfortable. The student said the man left the area without incident when she declined.

**8:53 p.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a student who reported a male student entered her dorm room without her consent and made an alarming comment toward her in Heritage Hall on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

### Oct. 13

**7:36 a.m.:** University Police officers observed a large amount of water with oil all over the first floor in the University Center on the Edinburg campus. Facilities Services was contacted and it was determined a circulation pump, which was connected to a water heater, had broken.

### Oct. 14

**10:29 a.m.:** A University Police officer responded to a cat trapped in a sewer drain outside the Academic Services Building on the Edinburg campus. The officer inspected the drain and discovered the cat was no longer there.

--Compiled by Rebeca Salinas

## REGENT

Continued from Page 1

As outlined in the UT System Board of Regents’ most recent meeting agenda book from August, UTRGV saw a decrease in scholarship funding.

Asked how he would advocate for scholarship funds for students, Dragun said while the UTRGV Tuition Advantage program helps need-based students with the cost of enrollment, he would have to look into direct funding for UTRGV scholarships.

The student regent also said having homegrown talent is important. “Having homegrown physicians

and homegrown professionals of all types is incredibly important because they’re more likely to stay and just serve those communities where they grew up, where they trained,” Dragun said. “There’s a difficulty retaining as students leave the area to go to some of the bigger institutions.”

He said students should be thankful for the opportunities provided.

“Students, myself included, have an opportunity to get an incredible education here at an incredible value,” Dragun said. “We just should be really thankful for that and keep pushing upwards.”

read

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### Oct. 7 puzzle answer key:

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



## Holiday Card Contest

# 'Don't think about making art, just get it done'

**Hugo A. Sepúlveda**  
THE RIDER

The deadline to submit an entry in the Holiday Card Contest, where students can show their artistic skills and have the opportunity to win up to a \$1,000 scholarship, is 5 p.m. Friday.

Patrick Gonzales, vice president for University Marketing and Communications, told The Rider about this year's contest. "We've had it every year since 2015," Gonzales said. "This will be our 10th edition of the Holiday Card Contest."

He said it is one of the oldest traditions at UTRGV and it has been exciting to see how much it has evolved in the 10 years.

Gonzales said students have designed the official holiday card for the Office of the President.

"It's all about student involvement," he said. "It helps to kind of kick off the holiday season, bringing holiday spirit to the university."

Gonzales said any current or Mathematics and Science Academy student who is in good standing can participate. The exception is students who are in dual credit courses.

"There's a president's winner and there's a provost winner, and winners each get [a] \$1,000 scholarship," he said.

Gonzales said two runners-up from each contest will receive \$500 each.

He encourages students to participate in this year's

**UTRGV  
HOLIDAY CARD  
CONTEST**

**ENTER ONLINE:  
[HTTPS://LINK.UTRGV.EDU/HOLIDAYCARD/](https://link.utrgv.edu/holidaycard/)**

<b>1ST PLACE</b> \$1,000 Scholarship	<b>RUNNER-UP</b> \$500 Scholarship	<b>RUNNER-UP</b> \$500 Scholarship
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**DEADLINE: 5 P.M. FRIDAY**

Venisha Colón/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

Holiday Card Contest.

"It always surprises me that every year one of the winners is not an art major," Gonzales said.

He said everyone would be surprised how many nonart students have actually won

the contest.

"My biggest recommendation would just be to enter and give it a try and give it a shot," Gonzales said.

Maritza Flores, a cyber security senior and the winner of the 2023 Holiday Card

Contest, said it was a "really amazing" experience.

"I've always liked to draw, and ever since I discovered that UTRGV does a holiday contest card, I wanted to participate because I wanted to show my artistic talent,"

Flores said.

She said she wanted to draw in order to inspire other beginner artists who want to draw, too.

"I was speechless," Flores said. "I did not know I was going to win, especially first place during that year. I really did not expect that at all. I was really happy that I won."

She recommends anybody who likes to draw or likes to be creative to participate.

"Especially if you are a photographer, painter, sculptors, or an artist—anybody can do it," Flores said.

She believes everybody has creativity in their own form.

"Even if it's something small, you're able to create an artwork," Flores said.

She said one of her favorite artists is Andy Warhol, and she recited one of his quotes: "Don't think about making art, just get it done. Let everyone else decide if it's good or bad, whether they love it or hate it. While they are deciding, make even more art."

Mariana Gallardo, a biomedical science sophomore, told The Rider she is interested in participating in the Holiday Card Contest and sees how it benefits students.

"I think it does benefit students because it's a very easy opportunity for you to be able to get funds or a scholarship, which getting right now ... it's a very competitive situation, so that's great," Gallardo said.

To submit an entry, visit [link.utrgv.edu/holidaycard](https://link.utrgv.edu/holidaycard).

## ALUMNI

*Continued from Page 1*

develop holistically, whereas I think other universities require much more of you."

In 2020, Corte, who works as the events coordinator for University Marketing and Communications, earned a bachelor's degree in international relations and affairs from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

What drew Corte to UTRGV was its accessibility in terms of the cost of attendance for a master's program coming from a school in the Northeast.

He said even though he did most of his master's degree remotely, his experience in UTRGV was "great."

"It's interesting because I started my master's during the pandemic, so most of my classes were online," Corte said. "But I think what I really appreciated about UTRGV was their ability to be flexible with me because I was still working in Washington, D.C., when I entered my master's. So, I did a year to two years remote, but I still really enjoyed the class settings and getting back to physical spaces with my classmates."

UTRGV President Guy Bailey told the attendees the university will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2027. Bailey said everyone who graduated from legacy institutions, the University of Texas at Brownsville, and the University of Texas-Pan American, is part of the family.

"Would you have ever thought 10 years ago that many students would be at UTRGV?" he asked the attendees. "Would you have thought 10 years ago that we would have graduated over 55,000 students? Think about that. That's the equivalent of almost 3% of the [Rio Grande] Valley's population. I want you to think about that. That's



**Angel Ballesteros/THE RIDER**

Gael Figueroa (from left), Jalyne Garcia and her husband Eduardo attend the UTRGV Alumni Bash Tuesday in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. Figueroa graduated from UTRGV in 2023 with a Master of Arts in political science and Jalyne Garcia graduated from UTRGV in 2020 with a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies.

a university that's making a major difference."

Stephanie Segura, senior financial aid coordinator at UTRGV, graduated from the university in 2018 with a Bachelor of Business Administration and in 2020 with a Master of Business Administration.

The fact UTRGV is in her hometown, Brownsville, made her take the opportunity to stay in the Valley and still have the college experience at home.

"My favorite memories would definitely be being part of student

organizations and working as a student employee on campus," Segura said. "That allowed me to grow not just personally, but as a professional. And thanks to those opportunities, it led me to eventually becoming a full-time employee here within UTRGV."

She decided to come back to the university because her "heart was always at UTRGV."

"I think every experience I had in college, whether it was hanging out or staying late with my friends or working as a part-time student employee, really helped me shape the person I am

today, especially as a professional," Segura said.

She encourages current students to "always keep your end goal in mind."

"Always keep pushing forward, be involved on campus, have that Vaquero experience with UTRGV, attend as many events [and] create awesome memories with friends," Segura said. "At the end of the day, you know, we're all a family here at UTRGV. Don't ever forget that it is an amazing, amazing school."

Elisa Mares, external relations director in the Division of Institutional Advancement at UTRGV, said the purpose of the event was to raise awareness of all the different alumni opportunities the university has and reunite deans with alumni.

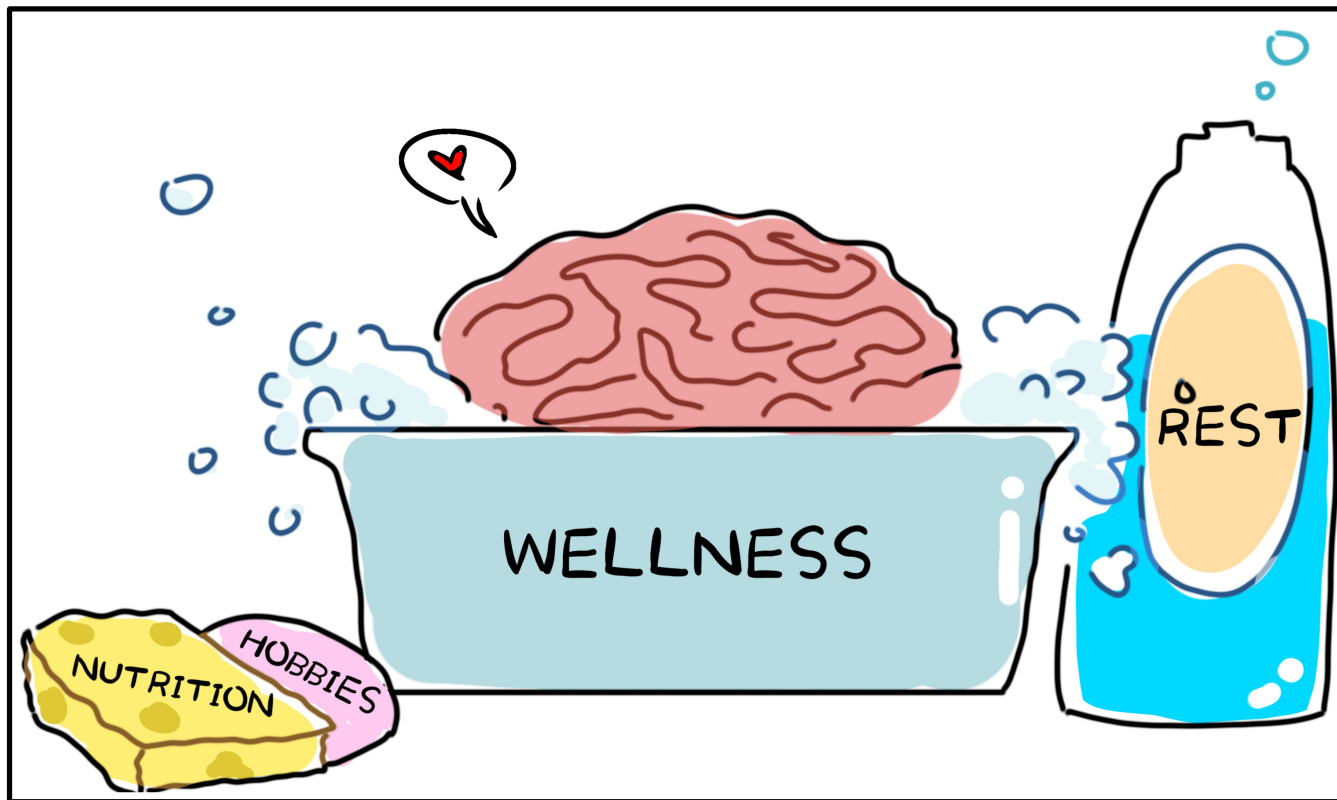
"Once people graduate, they feel like, 'OK, I'm done,'" Mares said. "However, the university has a lot of different services that are still available to them post-graduation, like career services, the use of our library resources. They have discounted prices for our UREC programs, just a vast variety of resources that are still available to them post-graduation that they're just not so familiar with."

She said UTRGV representatives plan to travel to San Antonio, Houston and Dallas to reconnect with alumni who are no longer living in the Valley "to make sure alumni feel part of the university that they attended."

Mares said the dates are not set but encourages alumni to stay updated with their emails and the UTRGV Alumni and Legacy social media accounts.

A UTRGV Alumni Bash was also hosted Wednesday in the PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón on the Brownsville campus and featured special guest speaker UTRGV Football head coach Travis Bush.





10/18

Take time for yourself.



With midterms around the corner, what strategies are you using to manage stress and stay focused?



"The main thing that I do is to ... manage my time and make sure that I am on track and that I am not too stressed about it. For example, I'll unwind and do some things to calm me down, and then another day I can just study for a long period of time."

**Ariana Garcia**  
criminal justice freshman



"So, a few ways I manage stress is that I am a very impulsive person. ... I'll read for like 15 minutes and I'll be like, 'OK. I did it,' and then I'll go back to studying and I feel like doing that ... helps me not get so anxious."

**Austin Garza**  
biology junior



"I'd say it is having good social and study balance, studying for maybe an hour or hour and a half and then going out with friends for a little bit and ... recuperate myself."

**Cooper Lazo**  
integrated health science freshman



"So, for me, I like to get my mind out of things, so I'll either work out or hit the gym, or [if] worse comes to worst, I'll just start praying and hope for the best."

**Michael Zamora**  
criminal justice senior  
--Compiled by Vanessa Aguilar

# I'm chill like that



**Andres Estrada**  
THE RIDER

I believe wisdom can come in three ways: with time, when you stop taking things personally and when you stop following the latest trends.

You can notice the lack of wisdom in some children in elementary, middle and high schools. Elementary children care a lot about having the newest gaming console or phone, or even talking to their friends, and nothing else really bothers them.

Middle schoolers are odd. Maybe it is because they are starting puberty. They care more about what people think about them or the person they are crushing on at the moment.

Another thing about middle schoolers is they believe the friends they have and who they hang out with

defines if they're "chill."

High school defines a big part of a teenager's life. During that time, they may experience a combination of all of the above: friends, gadgets, crushes—everything except their education.

That's how it was my first three years of high school. My priority was being liked by the people I hung out with, which was a waste of time because I don't even talk to them anymore.

It was not until my senior year in high school that I finally cared about my classes and grades. The college experience is not exactly how they describe it, but it gives more freedom.

This changes your view on social life.

My thinking is that it can go either like it went in high school or change completely to make it fit your personality as an adult.

I went with the second option, making my college life "miserable"—at least that's how other people see it—but I love it.

I focused on my studies and made friends in my field. Sometimes, however, it takes unexpected turns.

I joined a group of friends and tried going to a party. I had a good time but didn't see what was so different from going to a normal get-together.

After this, I just focused more on my personal health and school. I stopped caring who was popular or if I had the best clothes.

I stopped taking everything so personally.

Don't take it wrong, sometimes I do take a thing or two personally and it stays with me. Yet, the ideal thing to do would be to let it go, but no one is perfect.

It is like my grandma always would say, "Más sabe el diablo por viejo que por diablo".

This doesn't apply to everyone, of

course, but so far, it's been like that for me.

If you're not there yet, don't worry: Expect to be chill by 30.

It is like my grandma always would say, "Más sabe el diablo por viejo que por diablo". This doesn't apply to everyone, of course, but so far, it's been like that for me.

VISIT US ONLINE AT [UTRGVRIDER.COM](http://UTRGVRIDER.COM) TO PARTICIPATE

## WACKY WEB POLL

WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE UNIVERSAL RESPECT OR UNLIMITED POWER?

**54.55%** UNIVERSAL RESPECT

**45.45%** UNLIMITED POWER



# Octubre rosa

## Estudiantes difunden concientización sobre el cáncer de mama

**Cadence Vaughan**

THE RIDER

Octubre es reconocido anualmente como el Mes de Concientización sobre el Cáncer de Mama y UTRGV está corriendo la voz.

University Recreation organizó *Power in Pink*, su evento anual de concientización sobre el cáncer de mama el martes en el campus de Harlingen, el miércoles en el campus de Brownsville y el jueves en el campus de Edinburg. El evento fue organizado en conjunto con Student Health Services, UTRGV Student Food Pantry y el Counseling Center como un esfuerzo para educar a los estudiantes sobre la enfermedad.

Michael Garcia, estudiante de posgrado en kinesiología y supervisor de posgrado en acondicionamiento físico para University Recreation, cree que brindar recursos educativos e información sobre el cáncer de mama es importante para incrementar la concientización entre los estudiantes.

“El cáncer de mama es algo muy importante en la sociedad y afecta a muchas personas diferentes, ya sea de manera directa o indirecta a través de un miembro de la familia”, dijo Garcia. “Es bueno simplemente estar consciente de ello”.

Dijo que espera que los estudiantes reconozcan los síntomas de la enfermedad.

Kappa Delta Chi organiza anualmente *Paint the Campus Pink*, donde la hermandad y otros estudiantes atan listones rosas y colocan carteles educativos en todo el campus.

Jennifer Jimenez, estudiante de último año de danza, quien se desempeña como educadora de nuevos miembros y oficial de estándares de la hermandad, dijo que el evento está organizado para educar a los estudiantes sobre cómo



Abigail Ollave /GRÁFICA RIDER

la enfermedad afecta a la comunidad y sobre la importancia de los chequeos y exámenes médicos.

“El cáncer de mama es un factor importante que afecta a la población hispana-latina”, dijo Jimenez. “Algunas personas no saben que es algo que se les puede diagnosticar hasta que es demasiado tarde”.

Dijo que muchos estudiantes le agradecieron en su evento por crear

conciencia sobre la enfermedad.

Este año, Vaquero Outfitters, ubicado en 1518 W. University Drive en Edinburg, venderá camisetas rosas de UTRGV durante todo el mes de octubre. Las ganancias de cada camiseta vendida se donarán a la Fundación Nacional del Cáncer de Mama.

Alisa Gonzalez, copropietaria de la tienda, dijo que los estudiantes pueden mostrar su apoyo en el campus usando

la camiseta.

“En nuestra familia, tenemos sobrevivientes de cáncer de mama”, dijo Gonzalez. “Es algo cercano y querido para nuestro corazón”.

Dijo que los clientes que compran la camiseta están devolviendo a la comunidad y se convierten en parte de una donación caritativa colectiva.

--Traducido por Fatima Gamez Lopez

# Baila toda la noche



Angel Ballesteros /FOTOS RIDER

Sarah Champion, instructora de salsa/bachata para el estudio de baile Rhythm Room en McAllen, enseña a los asistentes de Rhythm Night movimientos básicos de bachata el miércoles en el University Ballroom en el campus de Edinburg. El evento fue patrocinado por el Student Union.



Los estudiantes de primer año La'Darian Lewis (izquierda) y Oscar Nnanna bailan durante Rhythm Night el miércoles en el University Ballroom en el campus de Edinburg.



Los asistentes de Rhythm Night se juntan en parejas el miércoles en el University Ballroom en el campus de Edinburg.



Review

# A 'love letter' to the Valley

**Eduardo Escamilla**  
A&E REPORTER

Entering through the doors of the Cactus Valley Art & Supply Co., bright piñatas hung from the ceiling, and I was immersed in a vibrant space adorned with sculptural motifs from a nostalgic time when cartoons and trips to the *mercado* were the true essence of joy.

The solo show "Color Between the Stars" by artist Sandro Galicia Toledo celebrates the culture, color and creativity of the residents in the Rio Grande Valley. The show opened Oct. 11 at Cactus Valley Art & Supply Co., located at 305 W. Van Buren Ave. in Harlingen.

Souther Recio, the owner and head artist of the company, said the show contains "a lot of allusions to childhood and cartoons and kind of getting lost in, you know, watching a TV show."

Recio said that, from conversations with the artist during the installation, they learned the artwork was reminiscent of tuning into a favorite show and tuning out the rest of the world for that moment.

"I think we live in a time, right now, where there's a lot of bad stuff happening all around us," she said. "So, to be able to come into a space like this today and see all the bright colors and the stars and the cheerful pieces, we can kind of get lost here in this moment and maybe put all of that aside just to have a good time together."

Recio said she and Galicia Toledo hope visitors walk away from the show with a sense of joy and a reconnection to their inner child.

Galicia Toledo, based in Los Fresnos, described his artistic style as "fun" and aimed at making people "have a good time and smile." His media of choice include acrylic, oil pastels and Posca markers on canvas or wood.

As he continued to describe himself as a "funny artist" in front of his piece "Ram, (Ramiro)" (acrylic and paint marker on wood), Recio walked toward the artwork and placed a metallic pink star on the label indicating it was just sold.



Eduardo Escamilla/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Artist Sando Galicia Toledo (left) is shown with attendees during the opening of his solo show "Color Between the Stars" Oct. 11 at Cactus Valley Art & Supply Co., located at 305 W. Van Buren Ave. in Harlingen. The show features a colorful celebration of culture and creativity in the Rio Grande Valley.

"Ram, (Ramiro)," an illustrated woodcut, depicts a fuzzy beige cat dressed in youthful attire with a bright yellow star on its T-shirt and a playful yet menacing gaze. There is a pastel green border traced around the silhouette, emphasizing the character's

The artist said one of his friends said it looks like Ram, another friend of his.

He said the show is inspired by his upbringing in the Valley. Through his use of bold colors and whimsical imagery, Galicia Toledo draws from childhood memories and

The *chicharra*, or cicada, motif is one that is recognizable in the Valley, and Galicia Toledo's "Chicharra #1" (acrylic and paint marker on wood) claimed its place on the gallery walls. Its gargantuan scale creates a comical contrast to the insect's

signature layers of vibrant paint.

"So, the main wood is from [Bandera Coffee Co.'s] old, like, cabinet doors," he said. "And my boss was like, 'Hey, like, you think you can use this for something?' And I was like, 'Yeah.'"

Galicia Toledo said many of his pieces are made from repurposed material, adding that upcycling material plays an important role in his artistic practice.

"I love repurposing things," he said. "Or, like making anything that we can make DIY is, like, a good thing for me because you're giving this old piece that was just thrown out a new life."

Galicia Toledo credited the local artist community and his friends as a significant source of inspiration.

"Valley artists ... all my friends [being] artistic or creative, I think that's a big inspiration for me, and how they ... create so many beautiful things," he said.

Galicia Toledo believes many people outside the area do not see the creative life that exists here and said his show is almost like a "love letter" to the Valley.

"Color Between the Stars" will run until Nov. 1. For hours of operation, visit [cactusvalleyart.com](http://cactusvalleyart.com) or [@cactusvalleyart](https://www.instagram.com/cactusvalleyart) on Instagram.



Artist Sandro Galicia Toledo shares the inspiration behind his piece "Ram (Ramiro)" (acrylic and paint marker on wood) on Oct. 11. "I have a cat who's very angry, but it's just, like, she's so cute," Galicia Toledo said. "So, I tried to do the, like, angry face and, like, cute body." "Color Between the Stars" will run until Nov. 1 at the Cactus Valley Art & Supply Co. in Harlingen. For hours of operation, visit [cactusvalleyart.com](http://cactusvalleyart.com).

charm.

Asked about his inspiration behind creating the piece, Galicia Toledo replied he considered the likeness of his cat.

"I have a cat who's very angry, but it's just, like, she's so cute," he said. "So, I tried to do the, like, angry face and, like, cute body."

regional Mexican motifs.

"[Like] the *rótulos* [hand-painted signs] here, it's like stuff that you would see, like, in Mexico or even here in the Valley," he said. "But it's just ... things that are here in the Valley, things that I loved as a kid, and the colors as well. A lot of it is, like, based off of, like, kids toys."

actual size.

You can almost hear the chirping of the *chicharra* break through the wood.

Galicia Toledo said the process of creating his piece involved projecting the image to trace it onto the sanded wood, cutting the silhouette out using a handheld jigsaw and, finally, adding his



## SUDOKU



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

Oct. 14 puzzle answer key:

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

See page 2 for the Oct. 7 puzzle answer key.



## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK:

Kimito Fritz



RIDER FILE PHOTO

Kimito Fritz, a multidisciplinary studies junior from Tokyo, Japan, is a right back and holding midfielder for the UTRGV Men's Soccer Team (3-6-2, 1-2-1 WAC). In the Vaqueros' first conference victory of the season on Oct. 13, Fritz totaled two assists in the match en route to a 5-1 UTRGV win over the Air Force Academy at the Soccer and Track & Field Complex on the Edinburg campus.

**Q: What is a fun fact about yourself?**  
A: "I like to eat, I like to cook [and] I like to listen to music."

**Q: Who or what got you started in soccer?**  
A: "My oldest brother. He is 12 years older than me and he plays soccer. I watched his soccer [games] and that's why I started to play soccer."

**Q: Who is your biggest inspiration or role model?**  
A: "When I was young, I really loved Cristiano Ronaldo. But now, I play defense, so [Dani] Carvajal from Real Madrid."

**Q: Who is your favorite player or club?**  
A: "Real Madrid, and my favorite player is Carvajal."

**Q: What practice drills help you the most in your position on the team?**  
A: "Finishing [drills], coach gives us some options and we play with those options and make chances, so we can use it in the games. That's helped me improve in practice."

**Q: What kind of music do you like to listen to?**  
A: "J-Pop. Sometimes I listen [to] rap and sometimes my teammates teach me some Spanish music."

**Q: Which shows or movies do you like to watch?**  
A: "I love 'Star Wars.'"

**Q: Do you have any hobbies?**  
A: "I like to ... drive, and I like to do surfing sometimes."

**Q: What is your biggest motivation?**  
A: "My family. They always support me and help me. So, I want to give [them] a good result and I want to pay it back to them."

**Q: What do you like the most about UTRGV?**  
A: "People. People [are] nice. ... I'm from Japan, I can't speak really good English. ... My teammates, my coach, professors—everyone helped me a lot. That's [my] favorite part about UTRGV."

--Compiled by Ali Halloum

# Ready for the big race

## Cross Country seeks to carry momentum into SLC Championship

**Ali Halloum**

SPORTS REPORTER

After yielding positive results in the Our Lady of the Lake University Invite Oct. 12, the UTRGV Cross Country Teams turn their focus on the Southland Conference championship.

In their last meet at OLLU in San Antonio, the Vaqueros finished 1-of-9, their first team win in women's cross-country since 1997. Four of its five runners had top-10 finishes.

In the men's meet, the Vaqueros finished second overall, with two of its runners, junior Abraham Morales and sophomore Kevin Cardenas, a Nikki Rowe High School graduate, finishing in the top 10 (fifth and eighth respectively).

UTRGV Cross Country assistant distance running coach Ricardo Mendoza, who head coach Shareese Hicks commended in a news release for his efforts in helping the teams, said the vigorous preparations helped them in achieving competitive success.

"[This season] has been a big change compared to how it was last year," Mendoza said. "I think it has to be the tons of work the athletes have been putting in this summer. ... I just think that they elevated to the standard over the summer, so coming into the semester, they've been representing the school on a high level."

Senior Samantha Gonzalez earned first place in the meet, finishing the race in 20:48.0, beating her personal 6K best by a minute and a half and 30 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher.

Gonzalez said "it felt awesome" to show positive results in her last meet.

"I was just focused on getting the least amount of points possible for my team so we could take the team win," she said. "I felt really good after the first lap and just decided to go for it and put it all out there for my team."

Faith Cruz, a junior and a Pharr-San Juan-Alamo High School graduate, finished fourth in the event.

Cruz said the team has put in a lot of effort to place itself in a competitive position.

"I think the hard work between the



PHOTOS COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

Junior distance runner Faith Cruz runs during the Our Lady of the Lake Cross Country Invite Oct. 12 at the Windcrest Golf Club in San Antonio.

girls and I is just really great for [us] this season," she said. "... We're able to train together, communicate with each other, and [when we] come down to the meets, we're able to learn what we need to do to perform well."

Mendoza told The Rider the results of the meet are a direct product of their hard work, which he says is "setting them up for conference and for [NCAA] regionals."

"I think the Lady of the Lake Invitational was a testament of how much the team has improved mentally and emotionally when it comes to competitions," he said. "I think going in there and winning the ladies' race on a high-level performance, too, is a big testament to the work they put in. And on the men's side, too, I think placing second is also a big testament to how much they've improved from a month ago."

In her final year, Gonzalez wants to have fun and win, saying, "We're ready for conference and regionals." Cruz said "going into the Southland Conference in a couple of weeks, I feel prepared."

As an alumna of PSJA High School, Cruz said "it means a lot" to represent the Rio Grande Valley at the Division I level.

"I feel proud of myself to be able to attend this university and represent where I come from," she said. "Being a student from the Valley, especially from the PSJA district, it's not much that you see a lot of kids coming out from the Valley, being able to represent their local school and their community."

The Southland Conference Championship meet for cross-country will take place Nov. 1 in New Orleans.



Distance runners senior Samantha Gonzalez (left) and junior Faith Cruz run during the Our Lady of the Lake Cross Country Invite Oct. 12 at the Windcrest Golf Club in San Antonio.

## WEEKLY SCOREBOARD

### VOLLEYBALL

UTRGV

3-1

NORTHWESTERN STATE

### MEN'S SOCCER

UTRGV

0-2

UNLV

## THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

### VOLLEYBALL

Noon Thursday  
vs. McNeese State University  
2 p.m. Saturday  
vs. Nicholls State University

IN THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

### MEN'S SOCCER

6:30 p.m. Thursday  
vs. San Diego State University  
Noon Sunday  
vs. California Baptist University

AT THE UTRGV SOCCER AND TRACK & FIELD COMPLEX

### WOMEN'S GOLF

All Day Friday  
vs. Texas A&M  
University-Corpus Christi Match Play

AT THE MCALLEN COUNTRY CLUB



## PINK Continued from Page 1

member,” Garcia said. “It’s good to just be aware of it.”

He said he hopes students will become knowledgeable of the disease’s symptoms.

Kappa Delta Chi annually hosts Paint the Campus Pink, where sorority sisters and other students tie pink ribbons and place educational posters across campus.

Dance senior Jennifer Jimenez, who serves as the new member educator and standards officer for the sorority, said the event is organized to educate students on how the illness affects the community and the importance of medical checkups and screenings.

“Breast cancer is a big factor that affects Hispanic-Latino population,” Jimenez said. “Some people, they won’t know that it is something that can be diagnosed with them until it’s too late.”

She said many students thanked her at their event for bringing awareness of the disease.

This year, Vaquero Outfitters, located at 1518 W. University Drive in Edinburg, will sell pink UTRGV T-shirts throughout the month of October. Proceeds from each shirt sold will be donated to the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Alisa Gonzalez, co-owner of the store, said students can show their support on campus by wearing the shirt.

“In our family, we have breast cancer survivors,” Gonzalez said. “It is something near and dear to our heart.”

She said customers who purchase the shirt are giving back to their community and becoming part of a collective charitable donation.



## DEBATE Continued from Page 1

Flores said instead of raising the minimum wage, she would focus on bringing “the cost of living down.”

Gonzalez said to reduce financial strain in the Valley, he would go after price-gouging corporations to lower the costs of necessities.

“Meat prices, poultry prices, egg prices are higher than they should be,” he said. “We’ve got to go after corporate price gougers. ... It’s the only way to bring inflation down.”

Gonzalez also said a \$15 minimum wage should be mandatory to help residents combat high costs of living, adding that anything lower is abuse.

**Housing**  
Moderator Daisy Martinez asked the candidates what they would do to make housing more affordable in the Valley.

Gonzalez cited high material costs as the reason behind high housing costs, while Flores spoke again about overspending abroad.

“We had a shortage of products that couldn’t move around the world as efficiently during COVID,” Gonzalez said. “That’s not happening anymore. We have to go after price gougers. ... We are past COVID, and we shouldn’t be charging COVID prices.”

Flores said overspending abroad and money printing needs to stop to put a halt to inflation.

“We’re \$35 trillion in debt,” she said. “We have to go back to pre-pandemic spending.”

**Unemployment**  
Svendsen said “unemployment in the Valley remains higher than the statewide average” and asked what each candidate would do to combat that figure.

“I recently got the permits for the two [liquefied natural gas] terminals at the [Port of Brownsville] that will bring high-paying jobs to our region,”

Gonzalez replied. “We have 40,000 acres that are ready to build much more industry. SpaceX continues to grow and there are more people, more new industries coming down to South Texas than ever in history.”

Flores did not reply to the question but called out the Democratic Party for its policies.

“The Democrat Party has sent billions and billions of dollars abroad,” she said. “Unfortunately, the policies that the Democrat Party has put in place, the policies that you have put in place, it’s what’s hurting us tremendously.”

**Groceries**  
Frank McCaffrey, NBC 23 news anchor and host of “Inside Valley Politics,” said the most-asked question from viewers related to the cost of groceries. He said although new government data shows a decrease in grocery costs, many Valley residents report feeling financially strained.

Flores repeated that “we have to stop the overspending and the printing.”

“We’re printing trillions and trillions of dollars and that is devaluing the dollar,” she said. “We need to focus on being more energy independent. We need to drill, drill, drill and that is going to bring the cost down.”

Gonzalez counterclaimed that the dollar “has actually appreciated over the last seven or eight years.”

He said the country needs to produce more food and hold grocers and price

gougers responsible.

## Immigration

Asked how she would secure the border, Flores replied that U.S. Border Patrol agents need to be allowed to focus on “terrorists” and “traffickers” coming into the country.

“One of the reasons why we have this crisis is because the Biden and Harris administration removed all President Trump’s policies that were working,” she said.

Gonzalez said asylum laws are “antiquated” and must be updated.

“I’ve got, actually, bills that I’ve filed called the Safe Zone Act and it creates safe zones in Guatemala and El Salvador and Panama,” he said. “But these safe zones, asylum seekers must go to those countries and process their asylum claim there ... away from our southern border. It takes the pressure off our border and eliminates cartels out of the equation.”

Early voting starts today and runs through Nov. 1.

In an Oct. 2 news release, the City of Brownsville announced that new voting procedures will make Election Day more convenient.

“Registered voters can now cast their ballots at any polling location within the county rather than being restricted to their specific precinct,” the release reads.

For more information about elections, visit [sos.state.tx.us](http://sos.state.tx.us).



Carlos Castañeda/THE RIDER SCREENSHOT



# DID YOU KNOW?

## UTRGV IS A POLLING SITE

**EDINBURG**  
Hidalgo County

### Early Voting & Election Day

#### ESTAC 1.100 Lobby

Monday, October 21 - Saturday, October 26 | 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Sunday, October 27 | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday, October 28 - Friday, November 1 | 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Tuesday, November 5 | 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**BROWNSVILLE**  
Cameron County

### Early Voting

#### BSTUN 2.24 Salón Gardenia

Monday, October 21 - Friday, October 25 | 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday, October 26 - Sunday, October 27 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday, October 28 - Friday, November 1 | 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**HARLINGEN**  
Cameron County

### Election Day

#### HCEBL 1.100 Auditorium

Tuesday, November 5 | 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.



For questions or accommodations, contact your local elections office.

Cameron County 956-544-0809  
Hidalgo County 956-318-2570

@vaquerosvoteutrgv

Scan for voter ID information

