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Stuck in my head

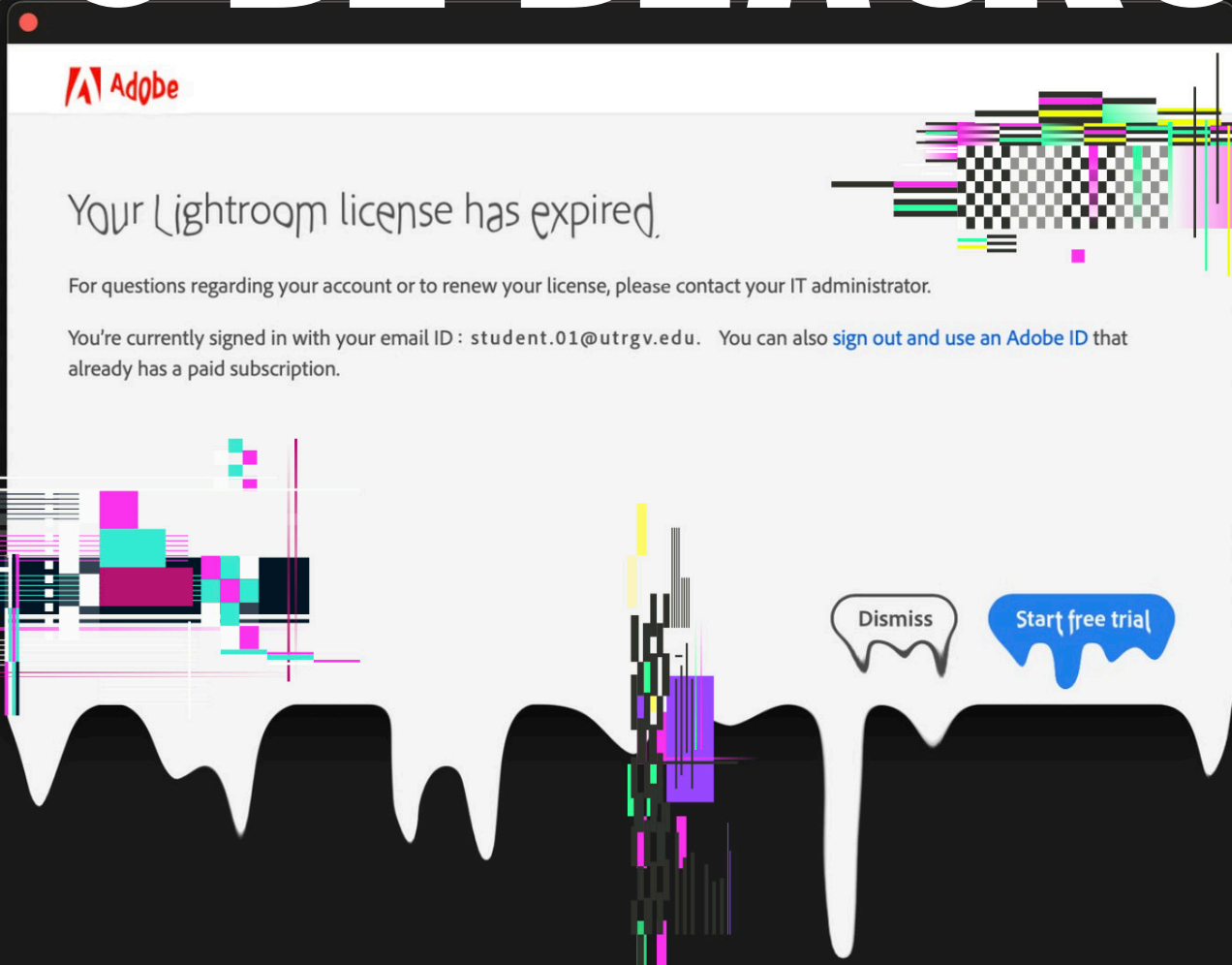
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ADOBE BLACKOUT



Venisha Colón/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

Pete Mendoza
THE RIDER

UTRGV student employees were recently restricted from using the Adobe software for free because of a change in licensing, limiting its use to only “knowledge,” or full-time, workers as of Nov. 6.

The Rider attempted to contact Adobe by email and phone but did not receive an answer.

Originally, Adobe was limited only to “knowledge” workers, but some student employees were allowed access once again on Nov. 12.

Frank Zecca, UTRGV

chief technology officer, said the change was caused by surpassing the usage of the Adobe software that was agreed upon.

“We were way overprovisioned and needed to reduce our licensing because we were overlicensed, and Adobe had contacted

us saying that we had more users ... than we had available licenses,” Zecca said. “So, we needed to do a cleanup.”

Arianna Peña-Rocha, a graphic designer for Strategic Enrollment and Student Affairs, said the license change had a major effect on her department.

“So when we lost access to the Adobe program, we couldn’t do our job because everything we do is based on Adobe, using Illustrator, Photoshop or any other program,” Peña-Rocha said. “We couldn’t do anything,

See [ADOBE](#), Page 3

ON CAMPUS

Some shuttles’ air conditioning on the blink

Cadence Vaughan
THE RIDER

The air conditioning in the UTRGV Vaquero Express has broken down many times this semester, giving students a hot bus ride experience.

UTRGV officials say the university will no longer use buses with broken air conditioning to shuttle students between campuses.

“For our transportation services, we will not be using any vehicles that do not have any AC in service,” said Maribel Contreras, director of Parking and Transportation Services.

On Oct. 8, students were informed that the air conditioning on a bus from Brownsville to Edinburg was broken and that a vehicle replacement would be provided.

Some students chose to board the bus despite the issue.

“I know that there was a All Valley

See [BUS](#), Page 11

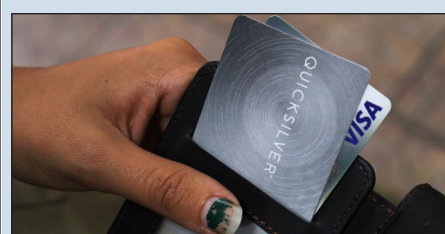


Venisha Colón/THE RIDER

A UTRGV Vaquero Express Campus Connector bus, chartered from All Valley Charters, awaits students, faculty and staff who travel to Harlingen and Edinburg Nov. 11 on the Brownsville campus.

FINANCE

What to know before you apply for a credit card



Venisha Colón/THE RIDER

Vanessa Aguilar

THE RIDER

An assistant professor of practice in finance said it is important to have a good credit score because it will help when making big purchases and offered tips on how to build a credit score.

“So, anytime you apply for a loan, you know, whether you’re buying a car,

See [CREDIT](#), Page 7

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 Union Unplugged

The **Student Union** will host a live house set by **RGV Jazz Collective** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

Graduate Workshop

Graduate Recruitment and Admissions will conduct a **virtual graduate workshop** from 5 to 6 p.m. Students can get a walk-through of their graduate application process by the **UTRGV Graduate Recruitment Team**.

RGV German Club Meeting

The **RGV German Club** will meet from 5 to 6:15 p.m. in Main Building Room 1.224 on the Brownsville campus.

Tuesday SPIE Seminar Series

Xianqi Li, an assistant professor in the College of Engineering and Science at the Florida Institute of Technology, will be the guest speaker of the **International Society of Optics and Photonics Seminar Series** from 11 a.m. to noon in the Mathematics & General Classrooms C-STEM Center Room on the Edinburg campus. The lecture will be livestreamed in Life and Health Sciences Building Room 2.602 on the Brownsville campus.

U.T.C.A.R.E.S.

The **United Together Caring Adults Reaching Early Childhood Students organization** will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Education Complex Room 1.406 on the Edinburg campus. The meeting will cover general information about the organization, future community service, professional development and fundraising opportunities.

Billiards Tournament

The **Student Union** will host a **Billiards Tournament** from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Game Room on the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses. Students can register for the tournament via V Link or at

the Game Room for a chance to win VBucks.

Linguistics Seminar Series

Teresita Lozano, an assistant professor in the School of Music, will present a lecture titled "**Fantasmas, fronteras y milagros: GhostSmuggling Corridos and the Undocumented Migrant Experience**" from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Academic Services Building Room 1.106. The event will be livestreamed to Biomedical Research & Health Building Room 1.222 on the Brownsville campus and via Zoom. ID: 449 301 4031. The talk is part of the **B3 Linguistics series**.

Wednesday 1 Million Cups

The **Entrepreneurship and Commercialization Center** hosts a special edition of **1 Million Cups** in celebration of **Global Entrepreneurship Week** at the eBridge Center for Business and Commercialization, located at 1304 E. Adams St. in Brownsville. Students will hear from entrepreneurs about challenges and opportunities.

Ghana Fest

International Student Services will host an **International Food Festival** from noon to 1 p.m. in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. Students will have the opportunity to taste the food from and learn about the culture of Ghana. The event is part of **International Education Week**.

Financial Aid Session

Family Involvement and the Center for Student Involvement will host a **Family Academy: Financial Aid Session** from 6 to 7 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 1.112A on the Edinburg campus and via Zoom. ID: 247 484 8532.

Thursday Engineers Fundraiser

The **Society of Automotive Engineers** will sell snacks from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Engineering Building on the

Edinburg campus to raise funds for its next competition in October 2025.

Coffee from Around the World International Student Services will host a "**Coffee from Around the World**" tasting event from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on the Main Building Patio Plumeria on the Brownsville campus. Students will have the opportunity to **taste coffee from cultures across the globe**. The event is part of **International Education Week**.

Eco Rio Symposium

The **School of Interdisciplinary Programs and Community Engagement** will host the **10th Eco Rio Environmental Studies Symposium** from 1 to 5 p.m. in Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus and on Friday at the same time in Student Academic Center Room 1.112 on the Edinburg campus. Students will learn about local sustainability.

Pancreatic Cancer Lecture

Dr. Sheema Khan, an assistant professor in the department of **Immunology and Microbiology** in the **UTRGV School of Medicine**, will present a lecture titled "**Conquering the Challenges in Pancreatic Cancer Treatment: Targeting a hard-to-hit KRAS oncogene**" from 1 to 2 p.m. in Room 2.200 of the UTRGV Biomedical Research Building, located at 5300 N. L St. in McAllen, and via Zoom. ID: 835 6653 8423. The event is part of the SOM Research Seminar Series.

Alteryx Workshop

The **Internal Audit Student Association, the Association of Latino Professionals for America** and the **Association of Accountants and Financial Professionals in Business** will host a workshop from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Mathematics & General Classrooms Room 1.202 on the Edinburg

campus. Students can learn about Alteryx Designer and its online learning platform.

YDSA Palestine Night

The **Rio Grande Valley Youth Democratic Socialists of America** will host a "**Palestine Night**" from 6 to 9 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 2.129 on the Edinburg campus. Students can join to celebrate Palestinian culture and history.

Friday Family Day

Family Involvement and the Center for Student Involvement will host "**Family Day**" with a Thanksgiving twist from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus and from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in the University Center lobby on the Edinburg campus. Students and their families can connect with the UTRGV community.

Philosophy Pre-Law Program

The **Philosophy Pre-Law Program** will host a book launch for "**Malevolent Legalities: Discriminatology and the Specters of Scalia**," by **Kevin Jobe**, an assistant professor of philosophy, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Education Complex Borderlands Room and via Zoom. ID: 292 983 5677. Attendees must RSVP through forms.office.com/r/t1AtjPsbVq for a chance to win a hard copy of the book.

'Ride the Cyclone, The Musical'

The **Department of Theatre** will present "**Ride the Cyclone, The Musical**" at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre, located in Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus. The musical comedy will also be presented at 2 p.m. Sunday. No one under age 18 will be admitted. General admission is \$20 and \$10 for UTRGV students, faculty and staff with a valid ID.

--Compiled by Hugo A. Sepúlveda

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Nov. 6 and 11.

Nov. 6

9:17 a.m.: A University Police officer responded to an active fire alarm in Troxel Hall on the Edinburg campus. Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management personnel found the alarm was triggered by a smoke detector. After assessing the situation, the building was deemed safe for reentry.

Nov. 7

7:33 a.m.: A University Police officer responded to suspicious activity occurring inside a vehicle in Lot E-9 on the Edinburg campus. Upon arrival, the officer spoke with a female and male student inside the vehicle

and determined no crime occurred.

8:56 a.m.: A University Police officer responded to an auto-pedestrian accident in Lot E-19 on the Edinburg campus. Upon arrival, the officer spoke with both parties. The pedestrian was identified as a student and transported to Doctors Hospital at Renaissance for minor injuries. The case is under investigation.

1:34 p.m.: An employee reported a small dog that appeared to be ill near the University Library on the Edinburg campus. An Edinburg Animal Control officer arrived on scene but was unable to secure the dog.

6:36 p.m.: An officer responded to a report of a theft of a personal transportation device at a bike rack near

the Science Building on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

Nov. 8

12:24 a.m.: A University Police officer responded to a vehicle collision involving an employee at an off-campus location in Brownsville. The employee was transported to Valley Baptist Hospital for medical treatment and was later released.

2:35 p.m.: A student reported an unknown person attempted to steal his electric scooter, which was secured to a bike rack outside the Engineering Building on the Edinburg campus. The only damage identified was to the scooter's lock.

4:31 p.m.: A University Police officer responded to a report of a gray pouch containing narcotics found

in the men's restroom in Performing Arts Complex B on the Edinburg campus. The officer took possession of the pouch, which later tested positive for a controlled substance. The owner of the pouch has not been identified.

Nov. 9

2:15 a.m.: A student reported he was assaulted by an unknown man outside Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus. The student was not injured but said the contact was unwanted. He did not wish to file charges. The case is under investigation.

Nov. 11

9:13 p.m.: An employee reported finding empty beer cans in the men's restroom trash in the University Library on the Brownsville campus.

--Compiled by Rebeca Salinas

Beautification underway in Brownsville

Andres Estrada
THE RIDER

The land being cleared by the resaca north of the Main Building on the Brownsville campus is going to be an area for students to enjoy the view, a university official says.

“Brownsville is a beautiful campus, and I had no idea that resaca was there until we walked out towards the [Lozano-Banco] Bridge,” Jason Hartley, UTRGV vice president for Operations, Planning & Construction, said. “And I’m like, ‘This is it. We’re missing such a beautiful opportunity, right?’”

Hartley said the department wants to clear up some of the dark and brushy areas near the resaca.

“That whole resaca area has been so overgrown for so long, so the intent really is, again, to activate that space,” he said.

Hartley hopes students use the area for studying and to “enjoy this treasure

See **PROJECT**, Page 7



Venisha Colón/THE RIDER

American Cuts LLC employees Manuel Torres (left) and Jorge Gaona clear out a brush area Tuesday behind the University Library on the Brownsville campus.

FASHION

The Masxoro Movement



Silvana Villarreal/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Model Samuel Gallegos walks the runway Thursday during a fashion show at the Isabella Medical Beauty wellness center in Brownsville. Gallegos modeled a handcrafted piece from Jxhn Masxoro’s spring/summer collection, “The Masxoro Atelier Prays.”



Model Steve Mascorro wears a blouse Thursday from designer Jxhn Masxoro’s spring/summer collection, “The Masxoro Atelier Prays,” which also includes jewelry, blouses, corsets and more. To buy a piece featured on the runway, email officialmasxoro@gmail.com or visit @masxoro on Instagram.



Model Ashley Lauren Barajas models an exclusive piece Thursday during a fashion show at the Isabella Medical Beauty wellness center in Brownsville. The show featured pieces from Jxhn Masxoro’s spring/summer collection, “The Masxoro Atelier Prays.”

ADOBE Continued from Page 1

where pretty much all work was put to a standstill until we were able to figure out either we were going to get Adobe back or we would now have to personally pay for our own subscriptions.”

The restriction also delayed production of content for The Rider newspaper, KVAQ-TV, Pulse magazine and Vaquero Radio.

Zecca said UTRGV was informed of the issue during the contract renewal in October.

He said the license with Adobe is based on a FTE (full-time equivalent) count,

which can be exceeded by 15% to 20%. The university’s usage of Adobe licensing exceeds 20%.

“Keep in mind, we have over 3,000 student employees employed here at the university and there is no way we can possibly license every one of them,” Zecca said. “We are looking at the data of who’s actually using it, and out of the 3,000, we found about 300 or so students were the ones who were actually using it.”

He said the Information Technology department is working with departments that have student employees who need access to Adobe Creative Suite.

“Right now, we are working on a process to streamline this via a ticketing request through our Team Dynamix site to make it an easier process and not [an] automated process, hopefully, for the licensing to be added back quickly,” Zecca said.

Peña-Rocha said since Adobe is a key factor to her work, the issue had to be addressed as quickly as possible.

“Since my boss is one of the few people who immediately alerted IT, explaining the situation, how we do need the program for our jobs, it isn’t just provided there for the sake of being employed,” she said. “We were one of

the first few to get [Adobe] immediately, since he was the first one to let them know about this circumstance.”

Peña-Rocha said the issue occurred in the middle of the semester when most people need the program.

“The lack of communication makes me worry because if they’re going to start making decisions like this, where certain things are no longer provided to the students, what’s going to happen in the future where they decide, ‘Oh, we don’t have the budget for this anymore. We’re going to just not make it available,’” Peña-Rocha asked. “Will they pull the plug suddenly like

last time?” Zecca said the circumstance was unfortunate and UTRGV will be looking to prevent any upcoming issues for the next renewal in October of next year.

“If any changes need to be made, we’ll be doing [it] way in advance, and we would be communicating that to our end users that may be impacted by any future licensing changes,” he said.

Zecca said students can access the Adobe software through UTRGV’s in-person labs or by logging into the virtual labs.

For student and teacher software discounts, visit the Adobe website.

VAQUERO VOICE

What's something you've learned about yourself since starting college?



"I'm a lot more social than I thought. ... I would see myself as introverted but once I started college, especially participating on campus events, I found that I can actually be pretty extroverted and it helped me make a lot of connections."

Silvano Gonzalez
economics sophomore



"I learned how to pick myself back up even after I fail something. ... I hope that, you know, people who are entering the university can also take that advice and to not give up on themselves."

Daniella Rios
nutritional sciences senior



"I think I'm a very extroverted person and I thought I loved being around people all the time, but it turns out I do not like working in groups."

Angela Flores
mass communication senior



"Something I learned about myself in college is that I'm able to manage multiple tasks at once and that, if you put your mind to it, you can do anything."

Job Martinez
civil engineering freshman

--Compiled and photos by Vanessa Aguilar

Stuck in my head



Fatima Gamez Lopez
SPANISH EDITOR

Here I am, just a few weeks away from graduating, and let me tell you something: I don't feel ready.

It's like I'm watching a *novela* and all I can think about is what happens next.

People say college is the time of your life, but what they don't tell you is to prepare for the job search.

We spend three to four years working our butts off, writing essays and pulling all-nighters fueled by caffeine and anxiety. Then, graduation comes and, suddenly, it feels less like a celebration and more like standing at the edge looking at your future.

As graduation gets closer and closer, all I can think about is how the clock is ticking away.

That clock tells me it's time to switch

from college student to "Welcome to real life." But, what does it even mean?

As an overthinker, I can't help but overthink everything. What if I don't get a job? What if I get a job and hate it?

As I scroll through job postings with titles that sound like a secret agent, I have mini mental breakdowns about my future.

With each click, I find myself wondering if I have the right skill set, the right mindset, the right anything at all to even be considered for these positions.

I love worrying about the things I cannot control. Each day that passes feels like another opportunity lost.

My close circle always tells me to stop worrying about my future because, "I have great things coming ahead of me," and I hate it.

I hate it because they say it with such confidence as if they can see the path laid out in front of me. I wish I could see myself the way they see me.

Sometimes, I have to remind myself that every confident smile is someone

who might be freaking out just as much as I am, even if they look calm from the outside.

Everyone is playing their own version of the waiting game, and we're all stuck in this limbo together.

I guess adulthood is just a never-ending series of, "What am I doing with my life?" moments.

out. Seriously, don't be afraid to admit that you're feeling overwhelmed. You'd be surprised by how many people are willing to help you navigate the real-life journey.

I wish I could hug my 15-year-old self and tell her how proud I am of her.

I want to tell her that despite the challenges she faced

adjusting to the education system in the United States, and the rollercoaster ride of learning a new language, she was able to accomplish so many things.

As I prepare to throw my cap into the air, I'm also throwing all my fears to move forward in my life.

Remember that no one has it all figured out. Just take it one step at a time, and maybe, just maybe, you'll enjoy the journey more than the destination.

And who knows, maybe a year from now, we might find ourselves laughing about all the things we worried about during our journey.

Cheers to graduation and the wild ride that follows.

As I scroll through job postings with titles that sound like a secret agent, I have mini mental breakdowns about my future. With each click, I find myself wondering if I have the right skill set, the right mindset, the right anything at all to even be considered for these positions.

For those of you who are about to graduate and feel like you're stuck overthinking about your life and what's next for you, here's my advice: Take a deep breath.

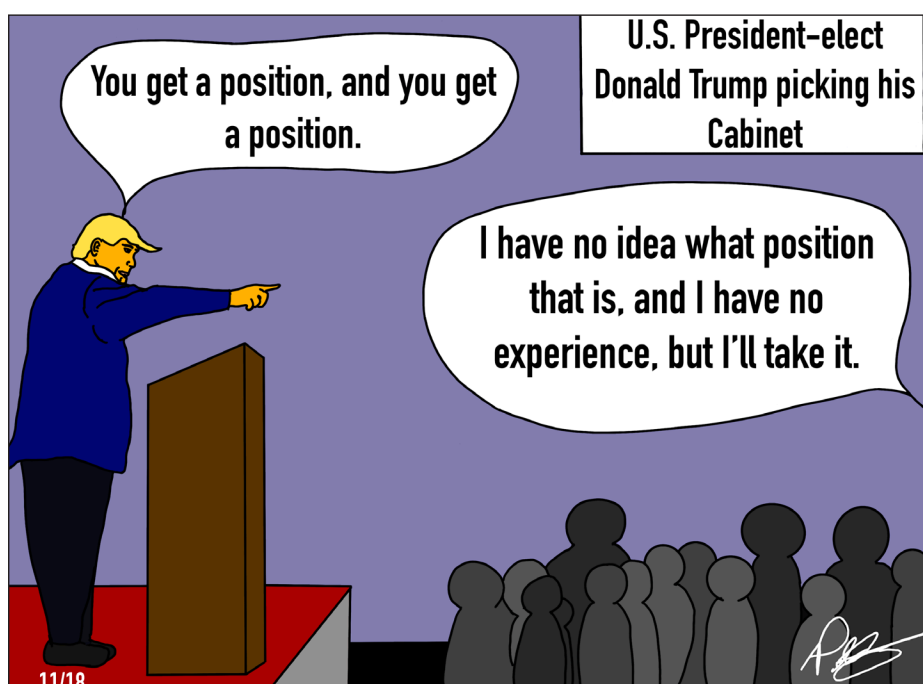
It's OK to be scared.

It's OK to not have everything figured

more than the destination.

And who knows, maybe a year from now, we might find ourselves laughing about all the things we worried about during our journey.

Cheers to graduation and the wild ride that follows.



VISIT US ONLINE AT UTRGVRIDER.COM TO PARTICIPATE

WACKY WEB POLL

WOULD YOU RATHER SPEND EVERY WEEKEND INDOORS OR OUTDOORS?

50% INDOORS

50% OUTDOORS

La historia a través de sus ojos

Discusión sobre la batalla por la verdad en el asesinato de tres tejanos

Fatima Gamez Lopez

EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

El miércoles se construyó un puente entre generaciones durante una conversación sobre el asesinato de tres tejanos caracterizados erróneamente como contrabandistas de licor.

El 1 de abril de 1920, varios hombres, entre ellos Crescencio Oliveira Jr., Dionisio Maldonado y Vicente Aguilar, se dirigían a una boda en México. Llevaban regalos para la boda cuando decidieron detenerse cerca de la frontera entre Texas y México.

Marianella Q. Franklin, descendiente de Maldonado y directora de sostenibilidad jubilada de UTRGV, y Arelis R. Hernández, periodista de The Washington Post, hablaron sobre la controversia en torno al caso durante la presentación de "El Corrido de Dionisio Maldonado: Familia, Memoria e Historia en las Tierras Fronterizas".

El Centro de Estudios Mexicoamericanos organizó la discusión en el cuarto Borderlands del Education Complex en el campus de Edinburg, que estaba lleno de las familias descendientes de los tres tejanos y miembros de la comunidad de UTRGV.

Oliveira Jr., Maldonado y Aguilar, quienes viajaban desde Benavidez, Texas, a Parás, Nuevo León, México, fueron etiquetados como contrabandistas de licor por agentes de la ley estadounidense en el sur de Texas.

"Lo que sucedió después ha sido debatido durante más de 100 años", escribieron Hernández y Frank Hulley-Jones, el diseñador principal de The Washington Post, en un artículo del 15 de mayo sobre el caso de 1920. "Los registros públicos y los libros de historia cuentan una versión de la historia, mientras que los descendientes de los viajeros cuentan otra".

Según Franklin, cuando los Rangers de Texas vieron a los viajeros, abrieron fuego, lo que resultó en la muerte de Maldonado, Aguilar y Oliveira Jr., quien era el novio.

Franklin dijo que asistió a una conferencia con su madre en el 2017, donde se iba a interpretar un corrido de su bisabuelo Dionisio Maldonado y los otros dos hombres que fueron asesinados.

Mientras escuchaban, se dieron cuenta de que la historia que conocían era diferente del corrido, ya que etiquetaba a los tres tejanos como contrabandistas de licor.

Las familias de las víctimas recordaban los eventos de manera diferente.

"Y la pregunta es, '¿Qué estaba pasando en la década de 1940 que omitían la mitad de la historia?', dijo Franklin durante la discusión. "La mitad de la historia que conocemos como familia, porque el corrido también los retrata como tequileros, lo cual no eran".

A lo largo de los años, ha escuchado corridos con diferentes versiones.

"No puedes tener un futuro si no conoces el pasado", dijo Franklin. "La historia es muy importante. Y la gente dice que no debes detenerte en el pasado. No nos estamos quedando en el pasado. Solo queremos asegurarnos de que del pasado, la información que se proporciona, sea correcta.

"Y no estoy aquí para decir nada negativo sobre los agentes de la ley estadounidense en ese entonces. [...] Solo quiero dejar eso en claro. No estoy contenta con la forma en que sucedieron las cosas en ese entonces. No hay nada que pueda hacer al respecto más que decir que quiero que



Angel Ballesteros /FOTOS RIDER

Arelis R. Hernández, periodista de The Washington Post, habla el miércoles sobre cómo su investigación se sintió como un "trabajo de detective" porque tuvo que obtener todas las perspectivas de la historia. La conversación tuvo lugar el miércoles en el cuarto Borderlands del Education Complex en el campus de Edinburg.



El público escucha la presentación de "El Corrido de Dionisio Maldonado: Familia, Memoria e Historia en las Tierras Fronterizas" el miércoles en el cuarto Borderlands del Education Complex en el campus de Edinburg.

se cuente esta historia y que no sea unilateral".

Cuando Hernández empezó a trabajar en el sur de Texas para The Washington Post en el 2019, le fascinó que hubiera latinos que pudieran rastrear sus raíces.

Para ella, como periodista, era importante ser rigurosa en su trabajo e intentar verificar tantos detalles como fuera posible.

"Parecía un trabajo de detective en el que se tenía un lado de la historia, y ni siquiera solo un lado [sino], como, matices de la historia desde diferentes perspectivas", dijo Hernández. "[...] No estoy diciendo que no debemos cuestionar también todas las historias orales. Creo que deberíamos cuestionar la narrativa oficial y la historia oral y mirar lo que tenemos de ambas y ver qué detalles podemos verificar a través de cualquier medio que aún exista, como una verificación de terceros y ese tipo de cosas".

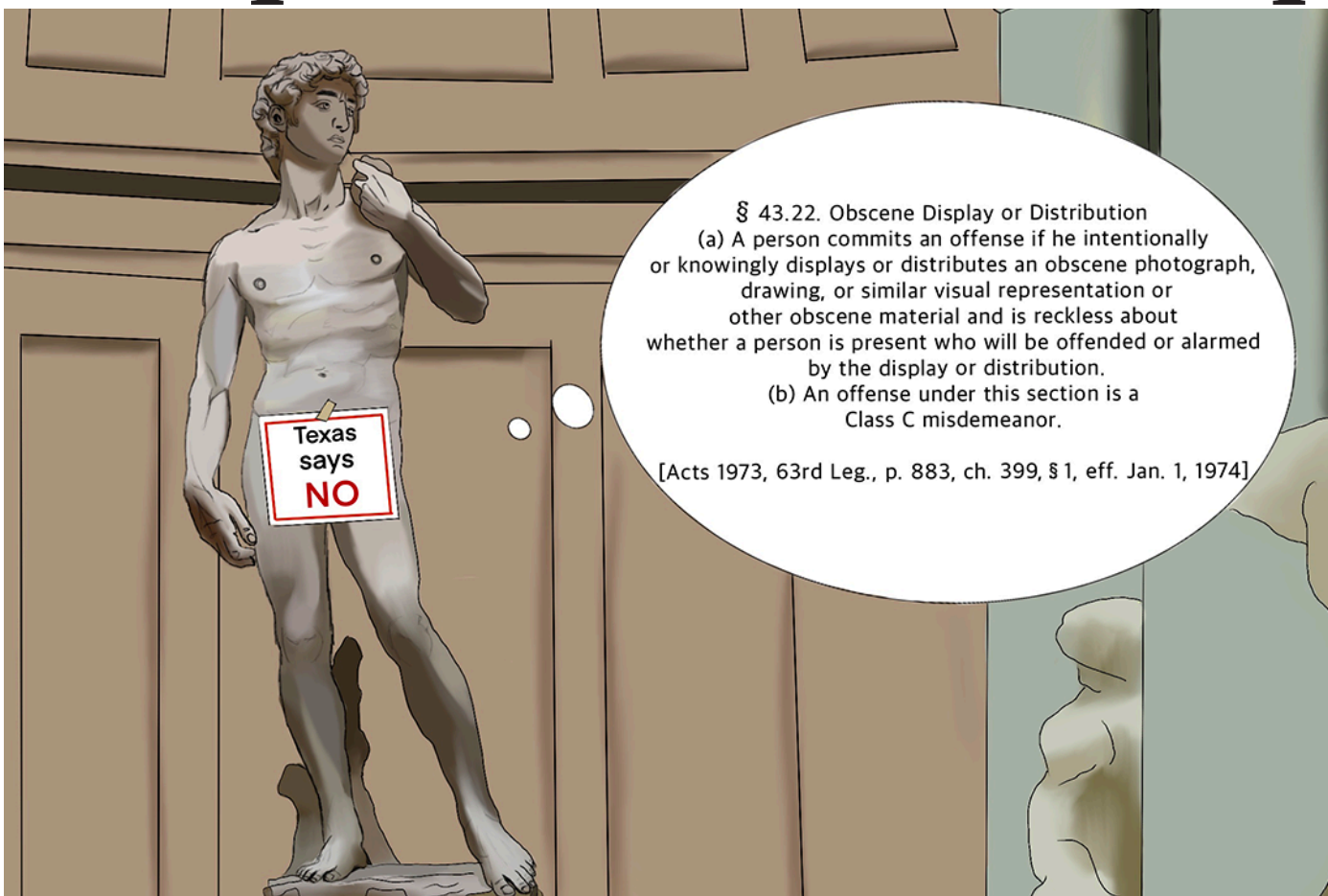
Franklin dijo que es importante hablar sobre el caso para encontrar la verdad.

"Es algo que debemos seguir analizando para asegurarnos de compartir lo que sabemos y permitirles compartir lo que saben", dijo. "Y que veamos dónde está la verdad.



Andres Amado, profesor asociado de la Escuela de Música, pregunta a Hernández sobre los diferentes corridos que relatan la matanza de los tres tejanos en 1920.

Texas law and art: a complicated relationship



Source: Texas Penal Code 1984

Eduardo Escamilla
A&E REPORTER

As debates over censorship and artistic freedom intensify nationwide, Texas artists are confronting a complex legal landscape that can hinder their freedom of expression.

Censorship and the broader implication of obscenity laws present challenges for artists and curators reconciling artistic creativity with legal restrictions.

In an interview with *The Rider*, Chloe Kempf, a staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas, shed light on the growing challenges facing visual artists in the state due to restrictive laws and censorship.

Kempf described the impact of Senate Bill 12, the so-called drag ban, which was blocked in federal court. While the law was temporarily halted, she warned it represents a broader trend of censorship targeting artistic expression.

"It threatened the First Amendment rights of not only drag performers in Texas but really anybody who engages in artistic visual performance," the attorney said.

Kempf added the importance of

understanding the legal framework surrounding obscenity laws, such as Texas Penal Code 43.22, which can be used to censor artistic expression.

"Art, a piece of art viewed as a whole, has to be patently offensive as judged by community standards," she said about the code. "It has to appeal to the prurient interest in sex, and it has to lack literary, artistic or scientific value."

Kempf cautioned that these laws are often used as a "smokescreen" to target LGBTQ+ content and expression,

"Art, a piece of art viewed as a whole, has to be patently offensive as judged by community standards."

--Chloe Kempf, a staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas

rather than addressing true obscenity.

"A lot of the censorship ... that the ACLU of Texas has their eye on, is censorship of LGBTQ artists, art and books," she said.

To combat censorship, Kempf urged artists to stay informed about their rights, engage in local and state politics and speak out against government restrictions.

The ACLU of Texas offers support to artists facing censorship through a

Raquel Cazares/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

dedicated form on their website, aclutx.org/en/request-legal-assistance.

Studio art senior Heidi Stubberud said she experienced firsthand the impact of Texas obscenity laws.

Stubberud said her intimate and revealing artwork, exploring themes of intimacy and the human form, was deemed too explicit to be displayed at the Silver Jell-O art show Oct. 25 at the Comminos Center for the Arts in Harlingen.

Of the three pieces Stubberud submitted, only one was displayed.

The other two depicted the male nude as her subject at the point or climax of an erection, and a female nude exposing her breast and buttock.

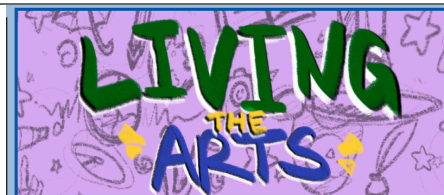
"Some people may say that it's disgusting to see it, but I think it's beautiful," she

said. "It's part of the human form. It's part of life itself, and I wanted viewers to connect to that [and] not see it as something filthy."

The decision to censor her work was based on Texas Penal Code 43.22, otherwise known as the "obscenity law," which Stubberud said she was unaware of until the exhibition.

"I was actually very sad ... not because

See [ART](#), Page 11



How are your dreams different now than when you were a child?



"I wanted to go into culinary and be a private chef. But now, I am doing integrated health science so I can become a travel nurse."

Alejandro Dueñez
integrated health science freshman



"I really loved basketball. I'm pretty tall, so it makes sense why I really liked it and I wanted to be an NBA player when I was a little kid. But when I grew older and I started to understand myself more, I realized that I'd be a better fit as a therapist."

Andrew Argabright
psychology senior



"I basically dreamed to be like Barbie. ... She did, like, everything and I wanted to be like her. I wanted to be an astronaut. I wanted to be a cook. Now, I decided to just settle down and I knew that the tech world was more stable."

Bethany Tijerina
computer science junior



"I wanted to be a [veterinarian] or a teacher. And then when I was in middle school, I wanted to be an artist or a comic artist. But then, I reached high school and I was like, 'Well, I'll just choose something in business.'"

Maria De Leon
finance junior

--Compiled and photos by Silvana Villarreal

SUDOKU

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

Nov. 11 puzzle answer key:

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

PROJECT
Continued from Page 3

hidden away.”
“We were hoping to do more beautification projects down in Brownsville in that area,” he said.

Abraham Hernandez, executive director of Campus Facilities Operations, said the project, which began in the summer, is taking longer than expected because, “... there was an old [house] foundation with stairs and footings.”

Hartley said the initial budget for the beautification project was around \$20,000.

Hernandez said the budget has increased to about \$30,000 to \$35,000 due to the unexpected size of the house foundation.

“We didn’t realize, I mean, we know there was an old house that had burned many ... years ago, and the extent of the foundation was all covered with dirt and debris and all the other stuff, so we had no idea what size it was,” he said. The overgrown grass made

it impossible for students to view the resaca as they walked from the front to the back of campus. The vegetation covers both sides of the bridge’s entrance.

Hernandez said the project might expand to both sides of the bridge.

Dezmond Romero, UTRGV alumnus and biology laboratory assistant, said he thinks the project is a “pretty good idea.”

“I definitely think our campus has the unique trait of being next to the resaca and it’s pretty open, so I definitely think it’s a pretty good idea of having a more open setting of where students can study,” Romero said.

Biology senior Ariane Garcia said she liked the landscape idea.

“I think that’s pretty cool,” Garcia said. “I think the resaca—it’s a very unused

area. I think it’s a very nice opportunity for people to relax ‘cause I always see people hanging out in the Student Union and stuff. But I have never seen, like, an outdoor area like this.”

“That whole resaca area has been so overgrown for so long, so the intent really is, again, to activate that space.”

**--Jason Hartley,
UTRGV Vice President
for Operations,
Planning &
Construction**

CREDIT
Continued from Page 1

in the future, buying a house, maybe even your student loans, even renting some places, they ask for a copy of your credit score,” Jorge Vidal said. “So, if you want to live in a nice place, you need to have a good credit score.”

Vidal gave some advice on ways to start building credit as a college student. These are some steps students must consider when initiating theirs:

“By paying your bills on time, you start building your credit score,” he said.

Vidal said secured credit cards are the best option when starting to build credit.

For someone who owns a debit card, applying for a secured credit card, which requires an initial cash deposit as collateral, offers a practical way to build or rebuild credit.

“Go to the bank and you open a secured credit card,” Vidal said. “And that means you make a deposit, and you can only spend as much money as you deposit in that account.”

Before applying for credit
When applying for a credit card, the first thing students must do is check their credit score for free at annualcreditreport.com.

“Get a free copy of your credit score, see what it is,” Vidal said. “You may not have one, and then make sure that you have a good credit score and not having one it’s also OK.”

After applying for credit
After seeing their credit score, the next step for students is to go to their preferred bank and ask if they qualify for a

student credit card.
“I will go to one of the major banks like Wells Fargo, Chase and ask for a student credit card,” Vidal said. “And, typically, they’re not going to have any fees, so take advantage of that.”

He also advised that when selecting a credit card, pay close attention to those that do not have any annual fees because they have a low interest rate.

Student Loans
For students with loans who are thinking of applying for a credit card, it is best to make those payments on time to avoid bad credit.

“Make sure that you pay those on time and that’s going to build your score,” Vidal said.

He said to consider a loan only when it is a necessity, such as paying for school.

“I will not take a loan to buy a brand-new car just because I want a brand-new car,” Vidal said. “It’s only for absolute necessities, not for wants.”

Using a credit card
Avoid applying for many credit cards because having too many can also affect a credit score.

“If you have a credit card, pay it off at the end of the month,” Vidal said. “Don’t have too many. Avoid the temptation of applying for credit cards everywhere, even if they give you a discount.”

The Rider asked students what questions they might have about credit cards.

Jose Leija Jr., a mechanical engineering sophomore, asked, “How can I raise my credit score?”

Vidal replied: “If you have

multiple credit cards, close them and just keep one. Avoid applying for credit and checking your credit all the time.”

Anselmo Rodriguez, an electrical engineering freshman, asked, “What is the minimum I should be making to take out a credit card?”

Vidal replied: “It’s a more complex number that includes how long have you been with the same employer? How long have you been working? Do you pay your bills on time? Do you have a bank account or a checking account or savings account? So, they take all of that into account.”

Anthony Saenz, a mechanical engineering freshman, asked, “How does interest rate work?”

“The interest rate is the amount charged on top of the principal by a lender to a borrower,” according to Investopedia.com.

“So, let’s say it is 22% and you spent \$1,000 and you pay it all off after the month,” Vidal said. “You don’t owe any interest. It’s when you carry a balance that you have to pay the interest on the balance.”

Some students offered advice on credit cards.

“You can start building your credit as early as 18 years old, so start early and on time,” said Claudio Gayosso, an accounting and finance senior.

“As an international student, try to have your [Social Security number] as soon as possible because without that, you may face some issues having a credit card,” said Atena Tavangarifarf, who is pursuing a doctorate in business administration.



STUDENT MEDIA

We are
HIRING

UTRGV Student Media is accepting applications for Spring 2025 for the following positions:

The Rider Newspaper

- Newspaper Editor-in-Chief
- Newspaper Spanish Reporter
- Newspaper Photographer
- Newspaper Online Editor
- Newspaper Reporter (Edinburg)
- Newspaper Copy Editor (Brownsville)

Pulse Magazine

- Magazine Graphics Editor
- Magazine Graphics Designer

KVAQ-TV

- TV Reporter (Brownsville)



Students must apply via

Jobx

All applicants must:

- Be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours at UTRGV during the Spring 2025 semester.
- Have a semester grade-point average of 2.5 or higher

**Deadline to apply:
3 p.m. Nov. 29.**

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK:
HASAN ABDUL HAKIM



Angel Ballesteros/THE RIDER

Hasan Abdul Hakim is a sociology senior from Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and a guard for the UTRGV Men's Basketball Team. In a Nov. 6 game in Omaha, Nebraska, Hakim led the Vaqueros against Creighton University, ranked No. 15 in the country, by recording a double-double with 26 points and 11 rebounds, which helped the team keep pace with the Bluejays despite a 99-86 loss.

Q: What is a fun fact about yourself?

A: "I'm very good at NBA 2K."

Q: Who or what got you started in basketball?

A: "It was actually LeBron James. I was a big soccer fan growing up, but I remember one time I turned the TV on and it was a playoff game. The [Cleveland Cavaliers] were playing the Boston Celtics, and I remember just seeing that and I thought it was cool. So then, the year after, I got into playing basketball."

Q: Who has been your biggest inspiration or role model?

A: "I'd have to say my mom ... because of all the sacrifices she made for me to be in this position to play basketball. [I was] not seeing it when I was younger ... and taking it for granted. Now, [I'm] seeing the position that I'm in and just being grateful."

Q: What practice drills help you the most in your position on the team?

A: "I feel like it's just how you approach them. You could practice anything but, I mean, if you're not focused on applying it or whatever the case may be, none of them are going to matter."

Q: Which shows or movies do you like to watch?

A: "My favorite show would be 'Stranger Things'; that's on Netflix. If you're talking about cartoons, I'd say 'Johnny Test.' My favorite movie? I'd say 'Avengers: Infinity War.'"

Q: What is your biggest motivation?

A: "My family and the people around me. [I'm] trying to put them in a position to help them out the best I can. Also, not taking anything for granted and all the sacrifices they made ... to put me in this position."

Q: What do you like the most about UTRGV?

A: "Everything, just the culture. The only thing I would say I don't like is the weather, how hot it is. If the weather was, like, anywhere near Canada, where it [is] kinda cold and there [is] snow and all that, then I'd say it's the perfect place."

Q: What are your biggest goals?

A: "For me, personally, obviously playing professional basketball. For the [team], I'd say making it to the NCAA Tournament. We'd still have to win the conference tournament at the end of the year. But yeah, making the tournament [and] everybody being in a position to get something out of this."

--Compiled by Ali Halloum

From Friday Night Lights to the classroom

KRGV-TV's Bella Michaels speaks to comm students

Ali Halloum

SPORTS REPORTER

On Nov. 11, a professor at UTRGV invited Bella Michaels, a news and sports reporter for KRGV-TV Channel 5 in Weslaco, to speak to students about her experiences in journalism.

The lecture, which was a part of the course "Writing for Mass Media," was hosted by Gregory Selber, a professor in the UTRGV Department of Communication.

Michaels is a weekend news anchor and weekday reporter at the station and previously served as a sports multimedia journalist, covering high school football.

She said that, during her time in sports, the most meaningful stories she covered were those that went beyond the game and the statistics, which inspired a series on Channel 5 titled "Coffee with Coaches."

Michaels was born and raised in Chicago and grew up going to many games, including Bulls and Cubs games.

Her love of sports originated from her family, as she grew up with family members who played soccer. Her parents met each other through soccer in Illinois.

"My dad played professional soccer growing up when he was younger and my brother played soccer, so I was always a fan," Michaels said. "I was always going to games [and] my family was just a big sports family. If you're from Chicago, you're a sports fan."

She is of Assyrian descent and described how her background impacted her both in her studies and in her career in journalism.

"[Assyrians] are a minority that still isn't recognized," Michaels said. "[There wasn't] even a box to check under race; I have to put white all the time because technically I'm white but I'm not."

"Media really focuses on black and white. But what about the brown and the in-between? I'm the only Assyrian girl in sports reporting that I know of in the nation [and] that's insane. ... There isn't much focus on the in-between and that does play a role in this job, unfortunately."

While in Chicago, she studied at DePaul University and covered the 2020 NBA All-Star game at the United Center, interviewing NBA legends and stars such as Luka Doncic, Charles Barkley and Trae Young.

Michaels told students about her experiences in similar lectures with professionals at her alma mater and wanted to do the same for Selber's students, telling them, "My help doesn't end here today."

"Just three years ago, I was in your spot," she said. "This is what DePaul brought us, people in the field that are actually doing the work that you want to do, and that's what I appreciated most."

Michaels speaks five languages, including Spanish, Italian and Aramaic. She said listening to Enrique



Angel Ballesteros/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Bella Michaels, a sports reporter for KRGV-TV Channel 5 News, talks to students about her profession Nov. 11 in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus.



Mass communication junior Ana Bocanegra asks Bella Michaels, a sports reporter for KRGV-TV Channel 5 News, about her most impactful story Nov. 11 in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus. Also shown are mass communication juniors Jacqueline Diaz (left) and Natalia Ayala.

Iglesias at age 12 was how she learned to speak Spanish.

This helped her get hired at Channel 5, where she also covers stories in Spanish for the station.

Michaels said the reasons she pursued journalism stemmed from both her love of storytelling and theater.

"Since I was little, I loved storytelling," she said. "But I was really interested in singing and theater. I was in the performing arts my whole life."

Michaels also told students about the importance of developing connections, saying that "making connections and networking is so important."

"You want to create an actual

relationship because the people in this field will help you, because you never know where they'll end up or where you'll end up," she said.

Ameera Asif, a mass communication junior, said the lecture was an "interesting opportunity" to hear from someone who works in journalism.

"I totally relate with Bella in terms of minority [status] in media, broadcasting or in entertainment," Asif said. "As a minority [myself], representation is very big for me. She spoke about it a little bit here, and I know it's a major thing down here in the [Rio Grande] Valley, that we represent ourselves, the 956 as a whole."

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
2 p.m. Saturday
vs. Arlington Baptist University
in the UTRGV Fieldhouse



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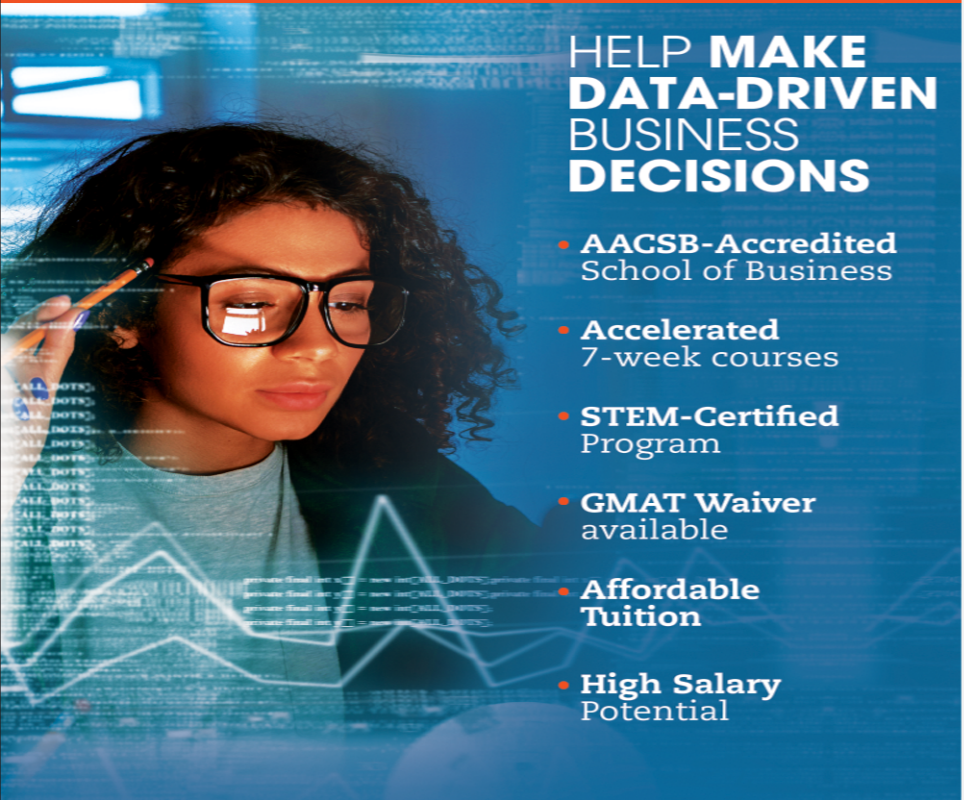
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Jazz en la veranda



Silvana Villarreal/FOTOS RIDER

David Gutierrez, estudiante de posgrado en música, y Carlos Hernandez, estudiante de último año de educación musical, interpreta canciones de varios artistas, entre ellas "Wayne's Thang" de Kenny Garrett, el jueves en la veranda del Student Union en el campus de Brownsville. La presentación fue parte de la serie *Union Unplugged*.



Carlos Hernandez, estudiante de último año de educación musical, toca la flauta durante el concierto de *Union Unplugged* con su banda RGV Jazz Collective el jueves en la veranda del Student Union en el campus de Brownsville.



Ulysses De Leon, estudiante de posgrado en música, toca "After You've Gone" de Henry Creamer y Turner Layton con su banda RGV Jazz Collective el jueves en la veranda del Student Union en el campus de Brownsville.

HISTORIA
Continúa de Página 5

Necesitamos la verdad porque esto fue algo que sucedió hace muchos años.

“Lastimó a muchas personas. No es un reflejo de lo que están haciendo hoy. No estamos aquí para intentar decir que están haciendo lo mismo hoy. Solo estamos tratando de descubrir la verdad”.

Miguel Mendoza, estudiante de posgrado en currículum y educación e instructor asociado de posgrado en el departamento de Enseñanza y Aprendizaje, asistió al evento el miércoles y compartió sus pensamientos sobre la importancia de aprender sobre la historia familiar.

“Cientos de miles de personas tienen una historia similar, [y] yo soy una de esas personas”, dijo Mendoza. “Por el lado de mi madre, tenemos a los Texas Rangers. Entonces, es un poco loco escuchar estas historias, que pueden entrelazarse y tú mencionaste por qué no hablar sobre la historia y dudar de la historia moral.”

“Y creo que a veces la gente no habla de eso porque también dudamos de nuestra propia historia. [...] Pero creo que es genial entender esto porque todos somos parte de esta, como una zona fronteriza. [...] Y definitivamente hay mucho aquí en esta sala. Entonces, estoy muy agradecido de que compartas tu historia porque también está revitalizando la historia de mi vida”.

ART
Continued from Page 6

I, like, want to promote, like, [being] promiscuous, but because I put a lot of effort throughout the years to be able to display my art,” Stubberud said.

Sean Hughes, the show’s curator and a studio art senior, told The Rider that the one-day show opened during Harlingen Art Night, which is billed as a family friendly event.

“The owner is an educator with [the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District], which often has his students and their parents come through,” Hughes said. “I decided that displaying her pieces that are very sexual in nature would be at minimum reckless since I have no control over admission.”

He added that while he supports artistic expression, he also recognizes that different contexts require different considerations.

“I can see on face value it appears to be censorship,” Hughes said. “In this case, it was a group show I organized by invitation. I chose to omit the [the two] pieces, based on the laws, the event billing and the potential legal and civil issues.”

He said he aimed to curate an exhibition that showcased photography as an art form, educating the public and inspiring future generations.

“This isn’t a reflection on the artist’s choices and value of the artist’s work,” Hughes

said. “It’s not commentary on if it’s art. It was purely a choice of the purpose of the show, the audience and compliance with law.”

Stubberud said she was left feeling disheartened and frustrated that challenging the sexualization of both men and women was frowned upon. She felt it is a theme lacking in the Rio Grande Valley art scene.

“I feel, like, there’s still something that we don’t touch upon, which is usually the sexualization of women in art and even men,” she said. “One of my pieces was actually for men. I wanted them to feel included, not in the standard way, but [in] that little cage that people usually put a woman’s body in.”

Stubberud added her concern about the potential impact of such censorship on young artists, who may be discouraged from exploring their creativity and pushing boundaries.

“It makes me feel trapped,” she said, emphasizing the need for spaces where artists can freely express their ideas without fear of repercussions.

Stubberud hopes to raise awareness about the issue of censorship and the importance of providing platforms for diverse artistic expressions.

“I really hope that there’s some talk about censorship, not only for nudity ... like, I want people to be able to actually photograph things that they want, or draw things that they want without having an issue with it later on,” she said.

BUS
Continued from Page 1

Charters bus that they had reported that the AC was not working from the Harlingen Soccer Complex to the Brownsville campus,” Contreras said. “When the vehicle arrived at the Brownsville campus, at that time, of course, the driver had already informed All Valley Charters that the AC was not working, so they were going to replace the vehicle.”

“When the vehicle got there, they tried to supervise and inform students, staff and faculty that there was gonna be another vehicle to replace it, but then some other students wanted to board that vehicle from Brownsville to Edinburg, and we mentioned to them that the AC was not working and that there was another vehicle that was gonna be coming to replace it. So, for our transportation services, we will not be using any vehicles that do not have any AC in service.”

A Rider newspaper reporter noticed the air conditioner in the UTRGV Vaquero Express

was broken on two occasions while commuting between campuses.

Ian Loera, a customer service assistant for Parking and Transportation Services, said frequent use of the buses causes the AC to break down.

Loera said buses with broken AC are taken out of the bus lineup, replaced by working buses and then fixed by an on-site mechanic.

“We try our best to, like ... make sure the students are comfortable,” he said. “... It’s just more of a mechanic issue.”

Biology senior Alyssa Salas said, in her experience, the AC tends to be broken on the shuttles she takes from Edinburg to Brownsville.

“It’s super hot because usually the shuttles are super packed, like, to the brim,” Salas said.

She hopes UTRGV will do something to solve the problem.

“I wish they had more buses so, like, they don’t have to fill them, like, every seat,” Salas said. “I think that’s what makes it so hot later in the day.”



The Perfect Fix

By: Elise Palacios

The “perfect fix,” his drug of choice was C17H-21NO4. My drug of choice was an A+. This addiction was genetically sequenced in my DNA from my father. Two sides of the same coin co-existed with the inherent need to satisfy the body’s desire for a fix. While his fix was a white powder that jolted him into a world of euphoria and energy, mine was the rush of an A+, a fleeting high that fed my hunger for worth and validation.

The first time I felt my craving for academic validation was in second grade. Anything less than a perfect score would unravel me, and receiving a grade below 90% would send an irrational feeling throughout my body, making my chest tighten, eyes well up with tears, and my stomach turn in on itself. My teacher, Mrs. Peña, quickly learned to break any news of my test scores in the hallway, away from prying eyes while I learned to compose myself. These early signs were merely the precursor of what was to crescendo throughout my academic journey.

Now, standing as the valedictorian of my class—which wasn’t as much of a goal as it was a side effect—I chased the adrenaline before every test, for it meant my ribs felt as though they were closing, my eyes veiny and purple under, and my stomach feel as though it was tied in a knot, twisted with the desperate hunger for one more hit of perfection. I have sacrificed so much in my pursuit of this feeling. I chased the lows knowing that these sacrifices would lead to an exceeding high of praise, top grades, and a level of confidence I couldn’t match with anything else. I became so enthralled by this cycle that isolation

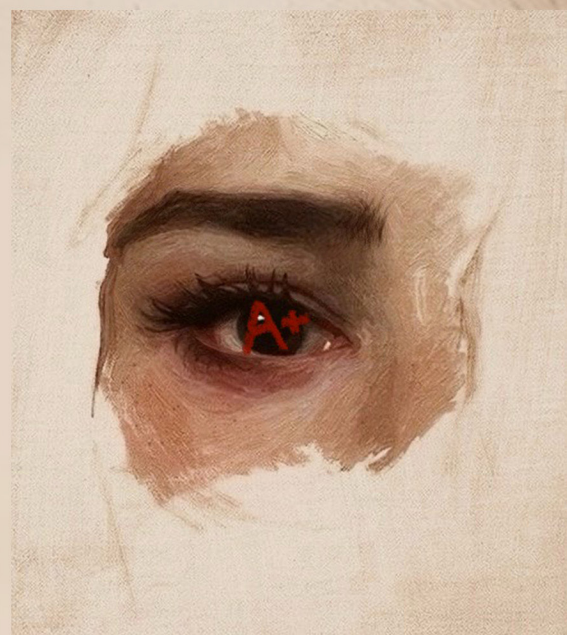
came with my decisions to skip important events to study and compelled myself to obtain every extra credit opportunity available. My self-worth became tightly bound to my academic success, and the joy of learning faded into the background, replaced by a relentless drive to achieve, to be seen, to be validated.

When I was little, my father struggled as a high-functioning addict, masking his addiction behind an exterior of normalcy. My mother, overwhelmed with the demands of caring for me and my sisters while facing the reality of his addiction, made the difficult decision to give him an ultimatum: leave or stay and be better. In that moment of desperation, he chose to leave, a painful choice that left scars and shaped my understanding of love and responsibility.

But like any addiction, there comes a crash—a moment of realization that the cycle is unsustainable. The exhaustion, anxiety, and constant feeling of “not enough” became overwhelming. It took my later high school years to understand that my need for validation reflected deeper insecurities, a desire to prove myself worthy of love and attention. Like my father’s journey with addiction, I understood that I needed to find a healthier way to cope.

Yet, despite his decisions, my father’s journey took a turn for the better. He committed himself to rehabilitation and has been clean ever since. He came back a different man, a man I know today as my dad. He often reminds me that once an addict, you’re always an addict. Every day requires the conscious decision not to revert to your past self. He once recalled, “But there will be things in your life that are worth giving it all up for, and I couldn’t give up my girls.”

My worth is not determined by the number one or an A+ on a piece of paper but by who I am and what I bring to the world. I am learning the value of moderation and balance, and that drive can still exist without condemning myself to live life by the rigid metrics of perfection, where every step is a calculation, and every misstep feels like failure. Becoming involved in research has taught me that true progress often comes through trial and error. In research, there isn’t always a clear path or an immediate answer—there will be 99 wrongs and 1 right. I have learned that each failure is not a reflection of my worth but an opportunity to grow. Surrounding myself with supportive family, friends, mentors, and community has helped me find that balance.





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