

Professor: States can't turn away refugees

Jesus Sanchez
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

UTRGV graduate student Andrea Montemayor said she believes the U.S. should not turn away Syrian refugees.

"I feel that we should be taking them in and I know that there are people who are concerned about people coming and attacking us and disguising themselves as refugees," said Montemayor, who is pursuing a master's degree as an educational diagnostician. "These people are human beings and we can't turn them away, hundreds of people, just because [of] a few bad seeds."

She noted that Paris, which was attacked by terrorists Nov. 13, will continue to accept refugees, who are fleeing a civil war in Syria.

In the U.S., however, the door might be closing for Syrian and Iraqi refugees.

More than half of the state governors in the U.S. have indicated that they are not accepting refugees or are urging President Barack Obama to halt their entry into the country.

A UTRGV political science professor said the governors do not have the power to ban refugees.

Making history one move at a time

UTRGV student is crowned U.S. Class Chess Champion



ANDREY STUKOPIN

Oscar Castillo
THE RIDER

Grandmaster and University of Texas Rio Grande Valley math and physics sophomore Andrey Stukopin has won the 2015 U.S. Class Chess Championship.

Stukopin was not the only UTRGV student who placed in the tournament, held Nov. 13-15 in Houston. All UTRGV titled players placed in the top 10 within their master section. Team members are International Masters Guillermo Vazquez and Felix Ynojosa; U.S. Chess Federation Experts Simon Vasquez, Jeffrey Serna, Armando Cortes and

See CHESS, Page 10

Correction

In the article "Threads of energy," published Nov. 16 in The Rider, Chemistry Department Chair Justin Moore was incorrectly identified.



MARK KASWAN

"No, they don't," Assistant Professor Mark Kaswan said. "There was a law passed in 1980 that gives the federal government power over resettlement of refugees, so the governor doesn't have the power to refuse refugees, either."

On Nov. 19, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill,

289-137, that would require supplemental certifications and background investigations to be completed before Syrian and Iraqi refugees are admitted into the country.

U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Texas) introduced H.R. 4038, also known as the American Security Against



FILEMON VELA

Foreign Enemies (SAFE) Act. Forty-seven Democrats and 242 Republicans supported the bill.

In a policy statement a day before the vote, Obama said if presented with the bill, he would veto it.

"The certification requirement at the core of H.R. 4038 is untenable and would provide

no meaningful additional security for the American people, instead serving only to create significant delays and obstacles in the fulfillment of a vital program that satisfies both humanitarian and national security objectives," according to the Obama administration's

See SYRIA, Page 8

Proposed 2% tuition increase

Rates would affect incoming freshmen and graduate students

Andrea Torres
THE RIDER

Entering freshmen and graduate students will see a 2 percent tuition increase in Fall 2016 and 2017 if the proposed rates are approved by the UT System board of regents in February.

Under the plan, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley freshmen entering in 2016 would pay a total of \$3,738.11 in tuition and fees for 15 credit hours, a \$73.20 increase compared to those who entered the previous fall, according to information presented by the UTRGV Academic Cost Committee during forums conducted Nov. 17 on both campuses.

Graduate students who take a nine-hour course load would pay a proposed \$3,324.92 for Fall 2016, a \$64.80 increase from the previous fall rate.

Calculation of the estimated tuition costs for international students, online students and graduate students taking six credit hours was among the questions and suggestions audience members presented in the forums.

The committee will submit its recommended rates to UTRGV President Guy Bailey before Dec. 7 for approval. Bailey will present them to the UT System board of regents in its February meeting.

As previously reported by *The Rider*, in a special meeting Oct. 2, regents authorized UT schools to develop

Impact on Total Academic Cost (TAC) Entering Resident Undergraduate Students For a 15-hour course load			
	Current Fall 2015	2% Increase Fall 2016	2% Increase Fall 2017
Total Tuition and Fees	\$3,664.91	\$3,738.11	\$3,812.51
Increase (\$) - 15 hour load		\$73.20	\$74.40
Increase (%) - 15 hour load		2.0%	2.0%
(*Tuition and mandatory fees are capped at 12 hours.)			
Impact on Total Academic Cost (TAC) Entering Resident Graduate Students For a 9-hour course load			
	Current Fall 2015	2% Increase Fall 2016	2% Increase Fall 2017
Total Tuition and Fees	\$3,260.12	\$3,324.92	\$3,390.62
Increase (\$) - 9 hour load		\$64.80	\$65.70
Increase (%) - 9 hour load		2.0%	2.0%

MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

recommendations for a 2 percent increase in designated tuition and required fees.

The increase is needed to address the escalation of costs on campuses for salaries,

technology, infrastructure and other expenses.

Governing boards allow institutions to increase designated tuition for any graduate or undergraduate,

resident or nonresident student that the institution considers necessary for effective operation, according to the Texas Higher Education

See TUITION, Page 10

THE RIDER

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vaquero Ice Cream Bar

Ice cream will be served from noon to 1 p.m. today in the Main Building courtyard on the Brownsville campus. For more information, call the Student Union at 665-7989.

Auditions for 'The Miracle Worker'

UTRGV's **University Theatre**, in agreement with **Samuel French**, will host auditions for **'The Miracle Worker'** by William Gibson from 5 to 9 p.m. today and Tuesday in the Studio Theatre on the Edinburg campus. Those interested must prepare a monologue and be ready to read from the script. People who bring headshots and résumés will be seen first. For more information, contact Lecturer **Richard Edmonson** at richard.edmonson@utrgv.edu

'The Hobbit' presentation

The **Theatre for Young Audiences of UTRGV** will present **"The Hobbit,"** a

play adaptation by **Patricia Gray** based on the classic by **J.R.R. Tolkien**. The show opens at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre in the Arts and Humanities building on the Edinburg campus. Additional shows are at 7 p.m. Friday, 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$3 per person. For more information, call 665-3581.

Keep McAllen Beautiful

Volunteers are needed from 8 a.m. to noon Sunday to help clean up after the **Holiday Parade** in McAllen. Participants will gather on the corner of Bicentennial and Cedar streets (across from JJ's Party House). For more information, call Program Coordinator **Chris Lash** at 681-4562.

MLK Day of Service

Online registration is underway for the **Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service**, scheduled from 7:30 a.m. to

3:30 p.m. Jan. 18. Service projects will be hosted at various locations throughout the Rio Grande Valley. To register, visit <https://utrgv.collegiatelink.net/form/start/84422>.

BPUB offering scholarship

The **Brownsville Public Utilities Board** will award 10 scholarships to graduating high school seniors through its **Project SHARE Scholarship program**. Applicants must live in a household with a minimum of one year of utility service with BPUB at the application deadline date. Students may apply for the scholarship online at www.brownsville-pub.com/about-us/share. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. March 4, 2016. For more information, contact BPUB via email at projectshare@brownsville-pub.com or visit the BPUB website.

--Compiled by Monica Gudiño



POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Nov. 9 and 16.



November 9

3:34 p.m.: A student dislocated his shoulder while playing basketball in the UTRGV Wellness and Recreational Sports Complex. He requested to be transported to Edinburg Regional Hospital for further medical evaluation.

5:10 p.m.: A University Police officer was notified about a student making threatening statements against herself and family members on the Brownsville campus. The Office for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention was informed about the comments made by the student.

9:57 p.m.: A staff member reported that a student missed class after an attempt to hurt herself because of personal issues. The student admitted to slamming her head into concrete to hurt herself, but was reported to be fine. She was provided information on counseling services and made an appointment.

November 10

12:15 a.m.: Officers on foot patrol found a male exiting an apartment after visiting hours in the Casa Bella student housing complex. He was issued a criminal trespass warning.

2:57 p.m.: A student had a panic attack during her math test on the Edinburg campus. She was transported to Edinburg Regional Hospital for a medical evaluation.

5:59 p.m.: A student reported her vehicle was damaged, possibly from a door opening and striking it, in an Edinburg campus parking lot.

6:36 p.m.: University Police officers were dispatched to Neale Drive on the Brownsville campus after U.S. Border Patrol cameras spotted an individual crossing the border fence with a duffel bag. Upon arrival, they were informed by a Border Patrol agent that two subjects were in custody and that 10 containers of methamphetamine crystal were confiscated. The containers were found inside a vehicle parked in the Brownsville Early College High School parking lot. The vehicle was impounded and Brownsville School District police were notified.

November 11

7:21 p.m.: A professor fell at the Main Building on the Brownsville campus and injured her collarbone. Emergency medical services transported her to Valley Baptist Medical Center.

November 12

1:20 p.m.: A student reported she had been receiving unwanted text and Facebook messages for the last three to four weeks from a male student. She was told to file a report with the McAllen Police Department and any incidents

occurring on campus to UTRGV Police. The UTRGV Title IX coordinator was notified and the report will be referred to the dean of students.

2:43 p.m.: A student fainted in the Main Building's east courtyard. She requested emergency medical services. After being evaluated, the student declined transportation to the hospital.

11:40 p.m.: University Police cited four resident minors for drinking alcohol in one of the Casa Bella apartments.

November 13

2:33 a.m.: A student was stopped on the Edinburg campus after running a red light. The student was arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated after the officer found three open containers of alcohol on the front passenger seat. He was transported to Edinburg Municipal Jail and booked.

November 14

9:01 p.m.: University Police responded to a report of a stolen bike outside the Academic Services Building. It was later determined the bicycle was not stolen, but moved to another location as part of a fraternity prank.

November 15

4:30 p.m.: A student reported that he and his classmates are concerned over

the behavior of their instructor. He said the instructor gets upset often over low grades on assignments and tests from members of the class. The instructor has not threatened anyone or made any physical contact with anyone. The student was informed he can address the concern with the chair of the department and dean of the college.

November 16

12:37 p.m.: A student reported she is having conflicts with her husband, who has been harassing her via telephone. She was referred to the office for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention and to the Cameron County Sheriff's Department to file an information report.

4:16 p.m.: Two students struck each other's vehicles as they were backing out of their spaces in parking lot C on the Edinburg campus. The damage was less than \$1,000.

11:02 p.m.: A student resident reported her ex-boyfriend was attempting to contact her without her consent. She said she wanted to file an information report although the incident did not meet the elements for harassment or stalking.

--Compiled by Andrea Torres

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Bringing light to the matter

Gender Comm class to host expo on sexual assault awareness

Andrea Torres
THE RIDER

A free speech alley, panel discussion and information tables will all be part of the Gender Comm Expo to be hosted on the Brownsville campus from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday.

“The purpose of the event is to promote the awareness, down here in the Valley, of sexual assault,” said Rebeca Rodriguez, a communication junior in John Cook’s Gender Communication class who is coordinating the event. “Because, recently, it’s been growing; there’s an increase.”

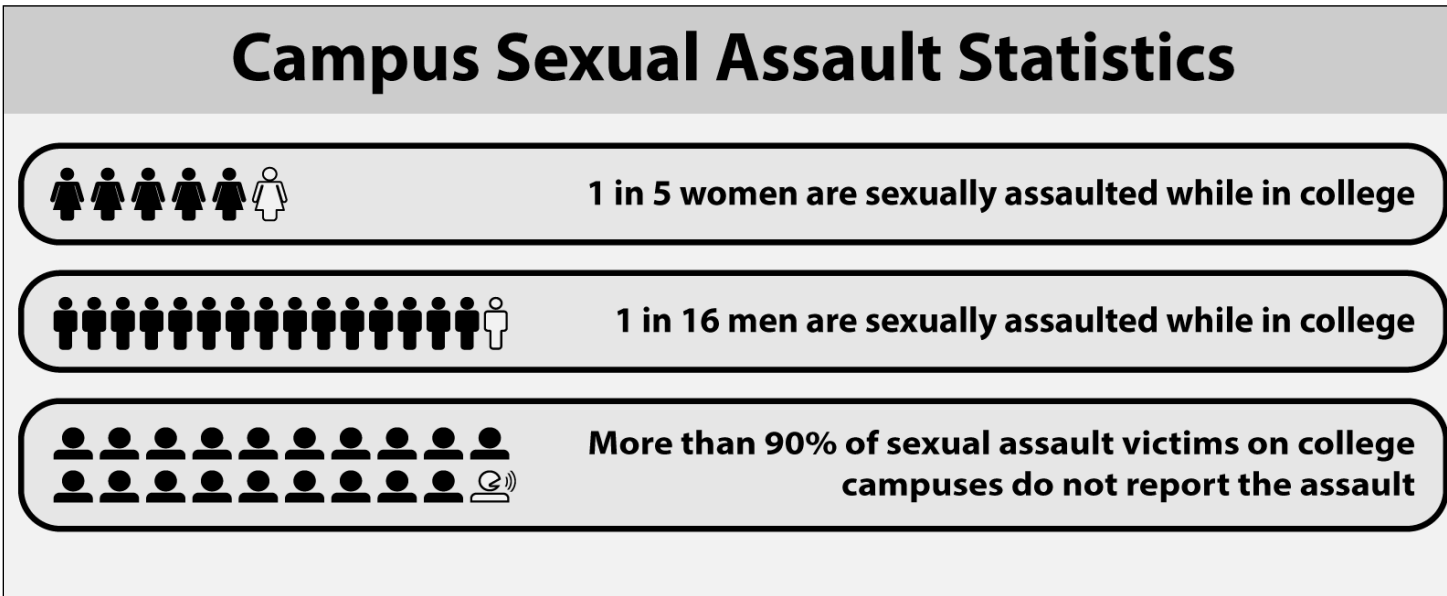
One in five women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted on a college campus, and more than 90 percent of victims don’t report it, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center website, www.nsvrc.org.

The expo will begin with a free speech alley from 11 a.m. where students will voice their opinions about the prevention of domestic violence.

A panel discussion on sexual assault at 11:45 a.m. in Salón Cassia will feature Laura Dominguez, a sexual assault nurse examiner from Valley Baptist Medical Center; Raul Munguia, UTRGV police chief; Luis Saenz, Cameron County district attorney; Cynthia Jones, director of the UTRGV Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention Office; and, Alicia Morley, Title IX coordinator and director of the Office of Institutional Equality.

“We’ll be creating questions, as a class, on what is the next step if somebody goes through sexual assault,” Rodriguez said.

The panelists will inform attendees on the process of reporting an assault and



SOURCE: NATIONAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTER

MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

what they can do if they know somebody that is going through physical abuse, she added.

Several departments, including Counseling and Student Rights and Responsibilities, will distribute information on sexual assault awareness and prevention.

Additionally, UTRGV and 12 other UT System campuses will take part in a campus climate survey titled The Campus Safety Project. A research team from the Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at the University of Texas at Austin will coordinate the survey with a group of UTRGV administrators, faculty, staff and students, according to a Nov. 17 email to students from Kristin

Croyle, UTRGV’s vice president for Student Success.

The survey will poll randomly selected students on topics related to intimate and interpersonal violence, such as sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment and stalking.

Croyle sent an email Nov. 17 about the 20-to-30-minute survey. The deadline to respond to the survey is xxxx. xx. Those who complete the survey will have the chance to enter a drawing for one of six iPad minis and one of 1,000 T-shirts.

“It’s hard to be able to know exactly the best way to support our students unless we know how things are right now,” Croyle said. “We know, for example, that students who, anybody, people who are

assaulted, some choose to bring that forward to authorities and some choose not to. So, in a survey like this, we are hoping to get a better sense of how intensive our students’ experience is so we can better cram our power toward education programs to support students who’ve been victimized and how to make the campus safer in general.”

UTRGV is also part of the It’s On Us campaign that was started by President Barack Obama in April 2014.

The campaign seeks to engage college students and other members of campus communities in preventing sexual assault, according to the website of the

See ASSAULT, Page 10

Marks of honor

IKX victorious at criminal justice regional competitions



PHOTO COURTESY NORA SEGURA

Members of the Iota Kappa Chi chapter of the American Criminal Justice Association are (front row, from left) Historian Kenia Alvarez, Julia Hernandez, Karen Elizondo, Steve Wilson (adviser), President Nora Segura, Veronica Rodriguez, Secretary Anna Moreno, Andrea Cavazos and Albert Escamilla. Back row: Enrique Cortez, Treasurer Jesus Garcia, Sergeant-at-Arms Adrian Maldonado, Vice President Emanuell Gomez, Roy Resendiz, Historian Raul Gonzalez and Alejandro Herrera.

Rick R. Ramirez
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

The Iota Kappa Chi chapter of the American Criminal Justice Association at UTRGV has placed in two separate competitions this semester.

The group attended the American Criminal Justice Association Regional Conference held Nov. 6-8 in Texarkana, Ark., where 17 members competed and won 10 trophies.

Chapter President Nora Segura placed first in physical agility and police management and third in corrections; Vice President Emanuell Gomez placed third in police management and criminal law; Roy Resendiz placed first in juvenile justice and second in police management; Julia Hernandez placed

second in criminal law and physical agility (division ages 18-25); Sergeant-at-arms Adrian Maldonado placed second in physical agility (division ages 18-25).

In order to participate in competitions held by the ACJA, students must be active members for at least a year.

The IKX chapter also competed at the Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice Conference held Oct. 8-10 at Schlitterbahn Waterpark on South Padre Island, where members won all team competitions.

“We swept the entire team competitions at the SWACJ,” said Steve Wilson, interim chair of the Criminal Justice Department and faculty adviser of the chapter. “We were competing against teams from Austin and the Houston area,

See CHAPTER, Page 10

Celebrating multiculturalism

Different languages and traditions presented at UTRGV



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER

The Inter-Lingua Fest took place in the library ballroom of the Edinburg campus Nov. 19. Students learned about the different language courses offered at UTRGV.

Jacqueline Arias
THE RIDER

The Department of Writing and Language Studies hosted the Inter-Lingua Fest Nov. 18 and 19, which consisted of presentations and activities featuring the different language and linguistics classes offered at UTRGV.

The event, held on the Edinburg campus, gave students a chance to experience different languages and cultures, such as Chinese, Korean, French, German, Russian and Zapotec. Each presentation of a language offered background information, how to learn language phrases and the cultural aspect with activities.

At the Chinese table, the group presented Chinese dances, removable tattoos, chai tea and chopsticks for students to get a small glimpse into the culture.

Shannon McCrocklin, an assistant pro-

fessor at UTRGV and coordinator of the event, spoke about how the event was organized.

“It started with two of the professors that teach Intro to Descriptive Linguistics talking about ways to get their students to kind of show off what they’re doing, maybe hopefully getting students interested in linguistics,” McCrocklin said. “Then, we started talking about all the other options, getting different languages involved and having them represented as well. It became this large two-day event where we had quite a few different languages represented.”

Ana Felicia, an English senior at UTRGV who took part in presenting the Zapotec language at the event, said Assistant Professor John Foreman introduced the language to her.

See LANGUAGES, Page 10

This is water

Maria Rincon
THE RIDER



“There are these two young fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says, ‘Morning, boys. How’s the water?’ And the two

young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes, ‘What the hell is water?’”

This story is the opening of a commencement speech by David F. Wallace, the late author of “Infinite Jest” (Little, Brown, 1996). Throughout my college years, I have come across few messages that have touched me as deeply as Wallace’s has. The message I take from the story is that we should be awake and aware of our own reality. In his speech, he notes, “Important realities are often the ones that are hardest to see and talk about.”

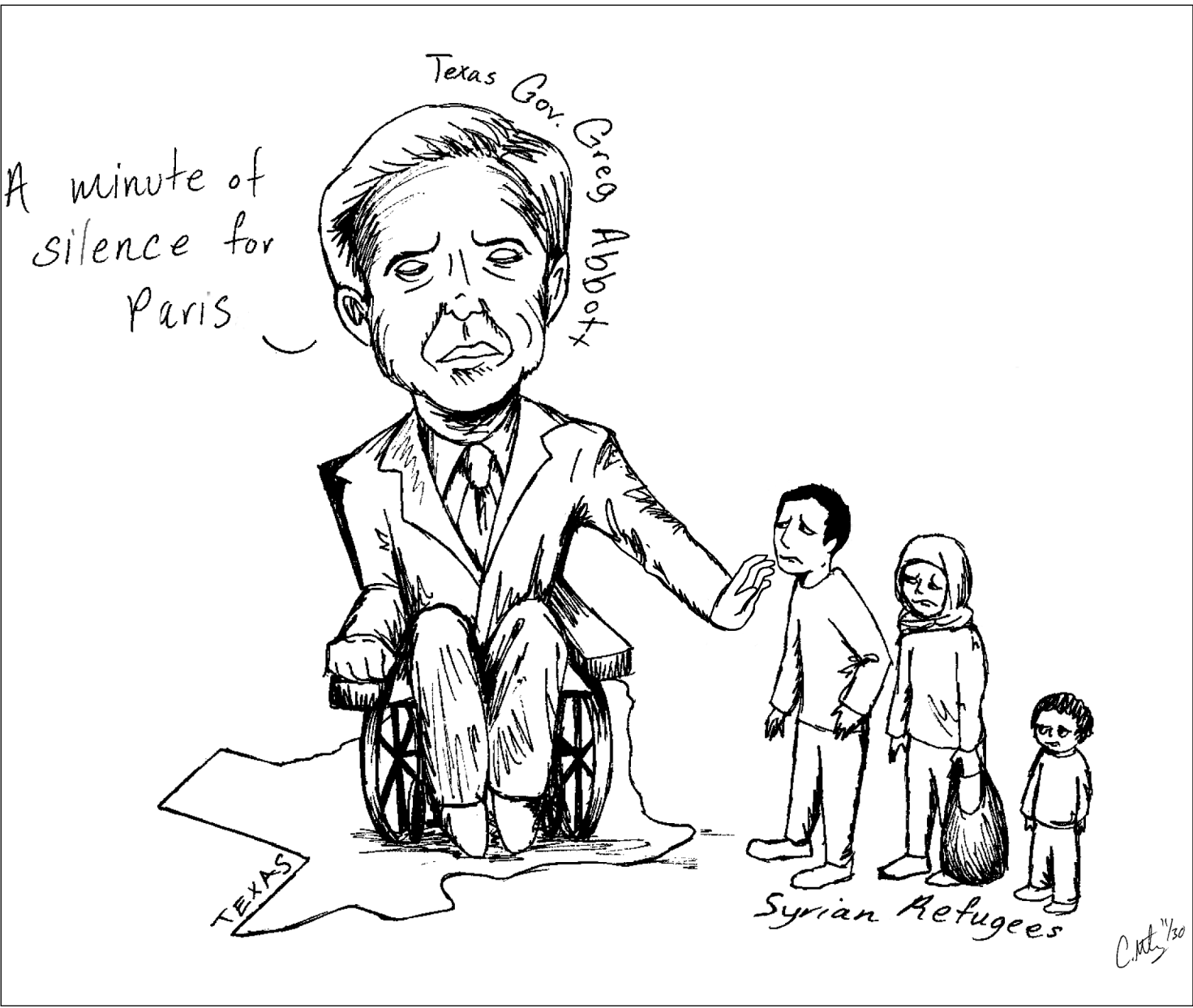
Just like the fish were not able to tell what water is, even though it is the reality they live in, I believe sometimes we tend to shift from our realities to others’ given the fact that we live in a technological world where the media controls what we see and know.

For example, on Nov. 13, we were engrossed by the terror attacks on Paris. Throughout the weekend, the news media were all about informing everybody about the tragic events. The hashtag #PrayforParis debuted worldwide on different social media outlets. Over that weekend, other types of hashtags, such as #PrayforBeirut, #PrayforSyria and others started to appear. Now, we were not only talking about Paris but also about the worldwide tragedies that had happened that week but were not given much of a spotlight.

Drastically, at some point, everything changed and all we could see, speak of and share was UFC champion Ronda Rousey’s knockout by Holly Holm. I even saw someone dare to post on his Facebook status, “You all have the attention span of a goldfish,” noting how we shifted from tragic events to entertainment topics in a matter of seconds. This made me think, do we really pay attention to the issues in our newsfeed? Or do we choose to take someone else’s reality and forget our own? Do we choose to make it our water?

This column will be read by, I hope, college students who have decided to get a higher education not because they hope for material gain afterward, but because they wish to be taught *how* to think instead of what to think about. Being able to decide how to think is being able to control what you think and how to be conscious of what you choose to pay attention to. The reason we decide to attend college may differ among individuals, but let us all share the goal of wanting to be able to decide what has valuable meaning and what doesn’t. Let us be able to choose what is water and what is not.

Hopefully, this will help you be conscious and decisive when you open Facebook and see another trending topic.



Campus Q & A

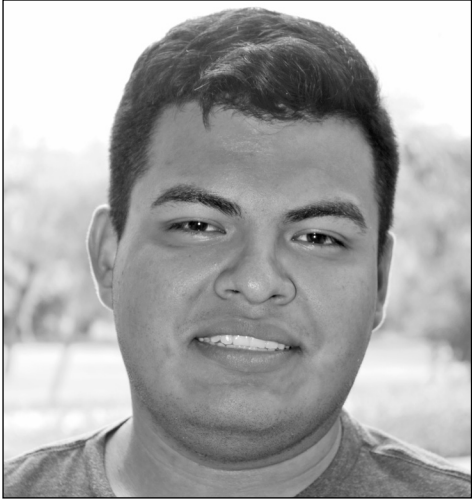
Did you encounter any issues while registering for the spring semester?

--Compiled by Michelle Espinoza and Lesley Robles



Alexia Garcia
Nursing freshman

“Because of the academic hold, I had to wait in order to register so it’s going to make me be late on some classes that I already know that I want and some spots might not be available, so that’s an issue. I had to set up an appointment and I won’t be able to get cleared until early December, [but] I was lucky. But, there’s still other students trying to make their appointment and everything is pretty much booked.”



Emmanuel Pérez-Villa
Bilingual education senior

“Yes, some of the classes were not offered here in Brownsville, they were offered in Edinburg. Some of the classes that I had to take for this semester, in order to graduate, were not offered this semester, so maybe they’re [not] going to be offered until next semester.”



Jesse Chavez
Accounting senior

“I had a small issue. One of the classes that I needed to register for, there was a hold on it. It’s a senior course, so you had to be graduating under the UTPA rules in order to register for it. This semester, they sent out an email where seniors did not have to go through that advisement process of getting the hold removed. That was the issue; there was still a hold. Basically, I just emailed them and they took it off right away.”



Miriam Almanza
Biology senior

“I had a problem: There was a hold that shouldn’t have been on my account. It wasn’t letting me register for one of the classes that I need to graduate. I called the registrar; they took it off. It was that simple.”

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Multicultural observance

Festivities highlight holidays from around the world

Astrid Gonzalez
THE RIDER

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley recognized five different cultural celebrations from around the world Nov. 19 on the Edinburg campus.

UTRGV's Campus Programming Board hosted its first annual Holiday Tree Lighting in collaboration with the Student Union, which hosted an evening of festivities at the Commons/Chapel Lawn.

The purpose of the event was to expose students to multicultural holiday celebrations and make them feel appreciated and welcomed with free food and cultural engagement. At the end of the event, the Christmas tree was lit, which is on display in the Student Union in Edinburg.

"What we are celebrating today is Christmas, New Year's, Kwanzaa, Diwali/Deepavali and Hanukkah," said Dinorah Flores, an exercise science sophomore and CPB music and variety chair. "Our goals for the event is, hopefully, students that do celebrate these other holidays, that they get that feel that, 'They care for us,' that, 'They're not only just thinking of the Valley, but thinking about also everyone around the world.'"

Kwanzaa is an African-American secular observance of cultural heritage and traditional values. It takes place from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1.

Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights. People light candles in their homes, seek divine blessings from the Goddess of Wealth and exchange gifts, according to the diwalifestival.org website.

Hanukkah marks the rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees after its desecration by the Syrian-Greeks, according to chabad.org. The festival of lights includes eating foods fried in oil such as latkes, or potato pancakes, playing with a dreidel, or spinning top, and gifts of money to children.

Raul Leal, a student organization program specialist for Student Involvement, said the event is meant to expose students to various celebrations.

"The ultimate goal and purpose of the event is to provide students with a cultural experience that they wouldn't otherwise have," Leal said. "So, we're exposing them to various kinds of winter celebrations that happen across the



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER

Martin Ramirez, a computer information systems technology junior, and Daisy Reyna, a psychology senior, build a gingerbread house during the Holiday Celebration Nov. 17 in the Main Building's Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus. Students made holiday decorations and refreshments were served. Student Involvement and the Campus Programming Board hosted the event.

globe to provide them with that cultural immersion that you don't typically get here in the Valley."

Students created wreaths that will be donated to Arbor View Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Edinburg. Children sang their favorite holiday songs and the UTRGV Tuba Euphonium performed holiday classics. Refreshments were served.

Kinesiology junior Manny Quiroga, who attended the event, said such events boost moods on campus.

"It brings the students together and, so far, it's been a fun experience," Quiroga said. "I get to socialize with other students from other organizations and checking out new cultures for Christmas."

A holiday celebration also took place on the Brownsville campus.



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER

Mass communication seniors Jessica Doria and Juan Carlos Garcia share a laugh as they make wreaths that will be donated to local nursing homes during the Make-a-Wreath event, which was hosted Nov. 19 by the Student Union in Edinburg.



ENA CAPUCION/THE RIDER

The Christmas tree that was lit during Holiday Tree Lighting is on display in the Student Union in Edinburg campus.



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UT officials and students offer advice to potential candidates

Reprinted from utrgvrider.com

Oscar Castillo
THE RIDER

University of Texas School of Law officials and students visited the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses Nov. 17 in an effort to encourage students to enroll in their school.

“A law school is a gateway to opportunities that are really extraordinary, that can change your community,” said Ward Farnsworth, dean of the UT School of Law. “With a law degree there are things you can do for other people and things that you can do for your community and things you can do for the state and the country that you never thought possible. You learn how the world works and afterwards you have the credential that puts you in a position to make changes that are otherwise completely impossible to achieve.”

Farnsworth said students of any major can apply to law school once they get their bachelor’s degree in something they love.

“We don’t really care what your major is, we care about excellence,” he said. “So, I advise everybody to just pick something you are passionate about and you can throw yourself into. That is when you will do your best work and that is what we want to see. What do you look like? What are you capable of achieving when you are fully engaged doing the thing you care about the most.”

Law student and UT Brownsville physics graduate Grady Lunsford said he found his true calling as a lawyer after



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER

Ward Farnsworth, dean of the University of Texas at Austin School of Law, explains how preparation for the LSAT is key for admission into the university during a presentation Nov. 17 in the Main Building’s Salón Cassia in Brownsville.

he defended a speeding ticket in court, which he received while exiting Cameron Park in Brownsville.

“I’m sitting there, I’m looking over and just objecting at the first thing he said,” said the second-year law student. “I don’t know if I was right. I don’t know what I was doing. I just wanted to do it. And just the look on his face, like he didn’t know what was going on. ‘Yup, I’m in his head, this is going to be fun.’ I lost. Because I didn’t know what I was doing, but it was so much fun. I really enjoyed it.”

Two things the law school admissions office focuses on, besides grades, during the application process are LSAT scores

and the personal statement.

Admissions Programs Director Sam Riley said the personal statement should not focus on how great the institution is or what they plan to do with their law degree after graduation.

“We want to know more about your past life,” Riley said. “We want you to basically tell us a story. ... What is it that makes you tick? What is it that makes you who you are today? ... Something that we can’t find anywhere else in your application.”

Farnsworth encourages potential applicants to practice a lot before taking the LSAT.

“I encourage you to prepare for it as if it were a final exam for a college course,” he said. “That test is coachable.

It is a test that you can improve dramatically with lots of practice. If you can take a preparation course either online or in person, I urge you to do that.”

Farnsworth also emphasized that law school is not about cutthroat competition.

“Our goal is to create an environment in Austin that is a warm one,” he said. “I try to meet with all our entering students ... over ice cream to get to know them. We spend a lot of time encouraging them to get to know each other, through first-year societies they take part in.”

Vanessa Garza, a UT law student and UT Pan American communication studies graduate, said there are many different organizations to be a part of as a graduate student.

“I’m a singer, I really love to sing and at the law school they have an a cappella group. Who would have known?” she said. “These are things you wouldn’t expect. These are things you get to be a part of with other law students.”

The deadline for regular decision admission is March 1. There is a \$75 application fee for non-Texas residents. The estimated annual cost for academic year 2015-2016 (tuition, fees, housing, etc.) is \$53,606.

For more information, visit law.utexas.edu.

Visit us at
utrgvrider.com

FOOD PANTRY OPENS



MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER

Michael Banegas, UTRGV’s associate dean for Student Support, shares the stories of students who are struggling to buy food. Last Thursday, the university held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of the Student Food Pantry in Cortez Hall 239 on the Brownsville campus. Also shown are Food Pantry Coordinator Jennifer Cerda (left) and Pantry Attendant Ivan Prado. Students, faculty, staff and the community are encouraged to donate nonperishable items or cash donations to the pantry. Hours of operation will be from 2 to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and from 1-4 p.m. Friday.

SYRIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

policy statement on the bill.

No refugee is approved for travel to the United States under the current system until the full array of required security vetting measures has been completed, the policy statement explains.

Among those voting in favor of the bill was U.S. Rep. Filemon Vela (D-Texas).

In an interview with *The Rider* Nov. 20, Vela said the American SAFE Act requires high-level officials to verify that each Syrian refugee poses no security risk.

“The bill passed the House, which I voted for, that would require a pause [in] the entry of the 10,000 Syrian refugees so that the FBI director, our national intelligence director and Homeland Security secretary would certify that they’re not terrorists, essentially,” he said.

Vela said Congress should take a look at the visa waiver program as it relates to people traveling to and from Syria and Iraq.

“I suspect Congress will address that after the Thanksgiving break,” he said.

Montemayor said H.R. 4038 would delay the refugees’ entry into the country.

“It’s hard enough as it is,” she said. “The only thing they’re doing is prolonging the process. It’s pretty obvious why they’re doing it, to prolong their entry to the country.”

The current screening process involves multiple federal intelligence, security and law enforcement agencies, which include the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Departments of Homeland Security, State and Defense, to ensure that refugees admitted do not pose a threat to the country, according to the policy statement.

These precautions include biometric

CLUB SPOTLIGHT



MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER

Members of Circle K International include (front row, from left) Maria Alvarado and Marie Maldonado. Middle row: Ninah Caquias, Andrea Montenegro, Aleksí Gonzalez, Mireya Huerta and Katia Perez. Back row: Marco Gutierrez, Brandon Muñiz and Vicente Martínez Jr.

Name: Circle K International

Purpose: To develop college and university students into a global network of responsible citizens and leaders with a lifelong commitment to service.

President: Marco Gutierrez

Vice President: Andrea Montenegro

Secretary: Hector Quintanilla

Treasurer: Maria Velazquez

Adviser: Estela Martínez, program coordinator for the department of Engaged Student Learning

Activities: Community service projects; volunteer at the animal shelter, beach cleanup, recycling and plant trees.

Meetings: Noon Fridays at Sabal Hall 1.104

Membership requirements: Attend meetings

For more information, email: utrgvbrownsvilleckl@gmail.com or call Gutierrez at 203-7986

--Compiled by Monica Gudiño

(fingerprint) and biographic checks, medical screenings and an interview by specially trained DHS officers who scrutinize the applicant’s explanation of individual circumstances to assess whether the applicant meets statutory requirements to qualify as a refugee and that he or she does not present security concerns to the United States.

Homeland Security has the authority to decide which refugees will be admitted into the country under the U.S. Refugees Admissions Program. Under U.S. law, a refugee must have a well-founded fear of persecution based on one of the five

“protected grounds”:

- religion
- political opinion
- race
- nationality
- membership in a particular social group

The processing time varies depending on an applicant’s location and other circumstances. However, the average time from the initial referral of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to arrival as

The season's last laugh

TYA performs comedic rendition of an English classic

Ena Capucion
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

The Theatre for Young Audiences will present its final fall production, “The Hobbit” by Patricia Gray at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus Thursday through Sunday.

Before UTRGV opened, one of its legacy schools, the University of Texas Pan American, performed plays for children until 2002--where UTPA offered a separate season. TYA’s first performance was the fall production of “A Christmas Carol” by Brian Warren, a creative drama/theater for youth specialist as well as the founder. Since then, TYA hit the road to local elementary schools for about 30 plays, including Dan Donahue’s versions of “Cinderella” and “Little Red Riding Hood.”

For this semester, TYA had a wide range of plays to choose from, but kept in mind the variety and creativity it can offer to the community.

“We find it very rewarding to be able to tap into the imagination of young kids and the audience in general,” Warren said. “As kids, they love to pretend--so why not give them a taste of what they like?”

UTRGV senior Kanea MacDonald is the director of “The Hobbit.” MacDonald has been working alongside Warren on many different levels, from assistant director for other UTRGV productions to instructor for the children’s theater camp.

With “The Hobbit” being her fifth time to direct a play alone, MacDonald keeps in mind that the Jeffers Theatre is what most film professionals and enthusiasts refer to as a thrust-style stage, in which the audience surrounds the stage on more than one side as opposed to a



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of “The Hobbit” act out a scene during last week’s rehearsal. The production opens Thursday at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre in Edinburg.

proscenium, where the audience is directly in front of the stage.

“This is a big thing I have to watch out for ... along with the voice, considering articulation and projection, as well as other basic acting tools,” the 21-year-old said. “[And to] break the actors’ habit of always facing relatively the same way.”

Theater performance junior Johnathan

Tamez will be playing Gandalf. Tamez got the role during a series of improv games where MacDonald would tell the participants what to do--similar to seeing whether the actors were able to adapt to different acting scenarios on command.

“It wasn’t until close to the very end that she actually had us read certain parts and one of the parts she had me

read was Gandalf and I’m guessing based on how I did she thought, ‘Oh, he should be Gandalf,’” Tamez, 22, said. “He’s a character that has a lot of power, or authority, in a sense.”

Tamez’s passion for acting stems from taking drama class in middle and

See THEATER, Page 10

From the classical to the abstract

First senior art show of the semester opens

Monica Gudiño
THE RIDER

“Never Again,” a senior exhibit that opens at 6 tonight in the Art Gallery at Rusteberg Hall, features the work of Abigail Gonzalez, Edna Escobedo and Chantal Lugo.

“My art is inspired basically in nature and organic forms and surrealist artists,” Gonzalez said.

Alejandro Macias, a lecturer in the UTRGV Visual Arts Department, said Gonzalez’s work “is far from traditional ceramic work or anything done with clay; it’s very abstract.”

“You are trying to make sense of the work when you first see it but it is very captivating and interesting to look at and she obviously said it was influenced by

art,” Macias said.

Escobedo’s art is mostly influenced by the Renaissance and the classical period.

“She is very interested in really capturing the figure as realistic as possible,” Macias said.

Most of Lugo’s work is done on tarp and is inspired by expressionism and modernism.

“It’s usually very large and it’s abstract expressionist-influenced, so there is a lot of color,” Macias said.

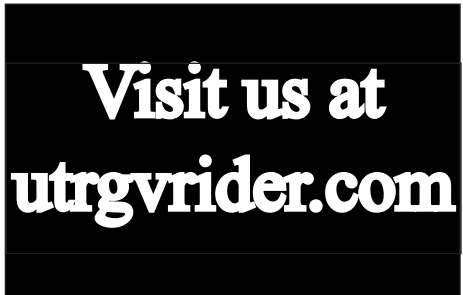
The three artists will bring different media to the exhibit, including ceramics and paintings.

“They are all very different but they all have a sense of direction when it comes to their work,” Macias said.

The gallery’s hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday, 10

a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday and noon-4 p.m. Friday.

Admission is free for Patron of the Arts members. General admission is \$1 and student semester passes are \$3. The exhibit continues through Saturday. For more information, call Macias at 882-7025.



COURTESY PHOTO

“The Return Of The Prodigal Son” by Edna Escobedo

After Thanksgiving break at UTRGV

So how many days until winter break?



17

cmh 11/17

CHESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mkhitar Hobosyan.

Senior Program Coordinator Alfonso Almeida said the tournament consisted of five rounds in which Stukopin won three and tied two, accumulating a total of 4 points. This resulted in a three-way tie, which was then resolved by giving the title to Stukopin since he had the higher chess rating of the three players. The other two players, 14-year-old Grandmaster Jeffery Xiong and 28-year-old Andrey Gorovets, were named co-champions.

“The rating is the latest performance of the players,” Almeida said. “Let’s say if you play in a tournament and you win a lot of games, that kind of stuff, then your rating goes up, and if you play bad or something, then your rating goes down.”

Stukopin, despite being the first UTRGV student to win the U.S. Class Championship, was not pleased with his performance.

“It feels all right, I don’t know how to explain,” the math and physics major said. “I didn’t feel anything special because I didn’t show a good play. I tried my best, but I’m in a very bad shape. That’s why I probably couldn’t show everything I am capable of.”

Stukopin ended the tournament with

LANGUAGES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

“There’s a linguistic professor, Dr. Foreman, who does an extracurricular club where we learn about Zapotec, which is an indigenous language they speak in Oaxaca [Mexico],” Felicia said. “Since fewer and fewer people grow up speaking this language, they have a tendency to start dying out and we’re trying to keep this one alive.”

UTRGV student Abraham Alvarez enjoyed the Zapotec presentation.

“I learned a lot about the different languages in Mexico and it seems like a lot of it is dying out,” Alvarez said. “It’s really, really interesting.”

THEATER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

high schools. However, he said theater wasn’t taken as seriously during primary education because it wasn’t a passion of theirs. However, when he began college, fellow theater majors shared the same enthusiasm and vigor that took theater to a whole new level for Tamez. His role

CHAPTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and we did just as good as they did.”

IKX’s members are from the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses. The organization has also won several awards for its volunteer efforts in the community and student involvement, such as the University Inner Circle Award, Student Leader of the Year Award and Adviser of

a rating of 2,662; Xiong, 2,658; and Gorovets, 2,636.

“It’s kind of an inauguration tournament for us to place in first place,” Almeida said. “We played the Texas state tournament and didn’t do well, but now we won this tournament and because of that, the games that I saw and how the students performed in this tournament, I guess we’re going to place way better in the Pan Ams in December.”

The 2015 Pan American Intercollegiate Team Chess Championship will take place Dec. 27 in Cleveland. It is the most important university chess tournament in the nation, according to Almeida.

“The very best teams in the nation play in that tournament. So, right now there are five teams. We are one of these five teams who are favorites to win the tournament because we are presenting teams with grandmasters,” he said.

He said their goal for this year is to make it to the Final Four at the Pan American tournament. They plan to do this by having their team composed of three grandmasters: Stukopin; computer science junior Anton Kovalyov, who placed in the top 32 at the 2015 Boka World Chess Cup in October in Azerbaijan; and computer science junior Holden Hernandez.

This week the UTRGV chess team is participating in the UT Dallas Fall 2015 Chess Tournament.

ASSAULT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Office of the President.

“Basically, our goal is to make sure that students become aware that they can take part in preventing sexual violence,” said David Mariscal, the associate director for Students Rights and Responsibilities. “There’s many things students can do to prevent sexual violence, like taking care of themselves and their friends.”



as Gandalf will be Tamez’s first ever play performance for the university.

“It is a bit nerve-racking because not only is it the audience, but it’s also the faculty,” he said. “In a sense, it’s kind of my introduction since it’s my first performance, so [the faculty] probably still sees me as the new guy.”

The play has a playful feel to it; that way, audience members can join the actors on

the Year Award.

Nora Segura, chapter president and a criminal justice senior, said the student organization has helped improve her leadership skills and shape her into the person she is today.

“A year and a half ago, I was not this person. I was very shy and I would’ve never imagined myself as the president,” Segura said. “[ACJA] has changed me completely. I am so grateful for joining.”

SYRIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

a refugee in the United States is about 18 to 24 months, according to the U.S. Department of State website.

Published reports say officials believe one of the suicide bombers in Paris was among a group of refugees.

After the Nov. 13 terrorist attack in Paris, Gov. Greg Abbott sent a letter to the president on Nov. 16, stating Texas “will not accept any refugees from Syria.”

In the letter, Abbott states he directed the Texas Health and Human Services Commission’s Refugee Resettlement Program “to not participate in the resettlement of any Syrian refugees.”

In Fiscal Year 2015, 190 refugees and 23 asylees from Syria came to Texas, according to information provided by the commission. In October, the first month of Fiscal Year 2016, 21 Syrian refugees had settled in Texas.

Vela said he thinks the governor’s approach regarding Syrian refugees is the wrong one.

“If the governor is calling for an absolute ban on the resettlement of Syrian refugees, first, I don’t think he can legally prevent the resettlement,” Vela said. “Second, a flat-out ban, I think, is a

TUITION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Coordinating Board.

“This is something happening systemwide, not only here at UTRGV,” Alberto Adame, Student Government Association president, said during the forum in Brownsville.

The forums were conducted by the UTRGV Academic Cost Committee. The committee is composed of 18 members: six students, a member each from the faculty and staff senates, one parent and nine staff members (eight are non-voting).

“Our purpose is to review the academic charges for education at UTRGV for undergraduate students and graduate students,” Adame said. “We will provide input to [President] Bailey regarding tuition and fees so he can forward them

stage in the world of imagination.

“I hope that we are able to ... inspire creativity in the minds of audience members of all ages,” MacDonald said. “Hopefully, [it] gets kids excited about theater and storytelling, encouraging them to put the cell phones down and go play outside. Play dress-up, play pretend. Create. The same can be said for adults, who tend to get that spirit squashed

Wilson said the Criminal Justice Department is growing along with its student organizations. These organizations offer members exposure to potential employers along with skill and work-related trainings.

“They do a lot of networking,” he said. “The club interacts with all types of criminal justice agencies.”

Training starts in April to compete in the 2016 ACJA Regional Conference.

mistaken approach.”

State Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr. (D-Brownsville) told *The Rider* Nov. 17 he was disappointed with Abbott’s decision.

“The men, women and children that are fleeing their home country are doing so to get out of harm’s way and to be able to save their lives,” Lucio said. “We should not turn our backs on anyone, no matter where they come from, no matter what religions they might believe in, as long as they’re good men and women and good families, that are law abiding and also believe in God. I think shutting the door in their face is something that my God wouldn’t want us to do.”

Asked how the issue might be resolved, Kaswan replied: “It may just be resolved by court action, lawsuits, if the state of Texas takes actions ... to block resettlement of refugees that in all likelihood I would expect that the federal government will sue the state of Texas to force them to accept refugees.”

He said the state will lose unless there is a change in federal legislation, which is unlikely as long as Obama is in office because he would veto that legislation.

--Andrea Torres and Monica Gudiño contributed to this report.

to the UT System and the board of regents so they can approve them.”

Before UTRGV opened this semester, officials announced guaranteed tuition for students who entered in Fall 2015. Additionally, the university capped tuition at 12 hours for undergraduates, meaning any semester credit hours over that amount would be free.

The tuition cap is one of the most important incentives UTRGV provides compared with its legacy institutions UT Brownsville and UT Pan American, Adame said.

“Students are not charged for an extra class they take after the 12 hours,” he said. “This way, they know about this program and take advantage of it and graduate within four years with their guaranteed rate and save a lot of money by doing so.”

See TUITION, Page 11

somewhere in the process of becoming ‘grown-ups.’”

“The Hobbit” is scheduled at 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday, at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday. General admission is \$3 per person.

For more information or special accommodations, call the box office manager, Elva Galvan, at 665-3581.

Members train two days a week for the physical portions of the competitions. The IKX chapter also practices gun safety and shooting practice at South Texas Tactical Shooting Range in Brownsville.

Asked about students’ dedication and overall performance during and after these competitions, Wilson said, “They got a lot of heart. All of them.”

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Saturday - 12 p.m. - 2 a.m.

Sunday - 12 p.m. - 12 a.m.

Something to build on

Volleyball fights as underdog in conference tournament

Nathaniel Mata
SPORTS EDITOR

Vaquero volleyball finished its Western Athletic Conference schedule with four wins in 14 matches. The less than spectacular record did not keep UTRGV out of the WAC conference tournament, however. The team qualified for play, entering as the sixth and final seed.

With three of four wins coming in the second half of the conference season, volleyball seemed to be showing its best play late.

The team's season ended Nov. 20 with a 0-3 loss to Cal State Bakersfield. Each set in the eliminating game was closely contested, including leads in the last two. In the final set of the year, the WAC champions from a season ago needed a 30-28 score to finally defeat the Vaqueros. While a 0-3 loss is disappointing, just getting into the second round as an underdog was an accomplishment.

The team's hot play from the end of the regular season continued during the first round of the WAC tournament



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Freshman Alexandra Ecker serves the ball in an Oct. 1 match against the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Ecker was named to the WAC All-Freshman team before the conference tournament.

in Kansas City, Mo. UTRGV pulled an upset win over third seed in the tournament, Utah

Valley University, in sweeping fashion. The 3-0 result was significant because both losses against Utah Valley this season were by 1-3 scores. Until now, the volleyball program had not won a match against UVU since 2005, which spanned 23 matches.

Senior Haley Durham had 11 kills, three blocks and two aces while pitching in to keep her collegiate volleyball career alive. On the other side of the spectrum, freshman Dubravka Vukoja added 41 assists. Sophomore Bojana Mitrovic led the attack for the team against UVU, once again, by tying her career-high in kills with 25.

Head Coach Todd Lowery commended Mitrovic's play, adding that the team's best offensive player is only improving.

"She continues to get better, [which] I think is the biggest thing," Lowery said. "She's a better player than she was the beginning of the year, making better decisions and knowing when to play hard."

Set scores in the sweep were

25-21, 25-20 and 25-14. It was a pleasant surprise to win three straight sets against a team UTRGV only managed to take two sets from in prior meetings this season.

Lowery mentioned the parity of conference tournaments, and how teams build all year for this time.

"That's what's great about conference tournaments. Everybody has a chance at the end of the year. You work all year long to get to that point," said the first-year head coach, who previously led legacy school UT Brownsville. "We've made a lot of adjustments over the year. We really felt that we were playing our best volleyball the last couple of weeks of the season."

Lowery completes season one with some momentum that can be carried over to the offseason and next year. Standout Mitrovic was named to the first team All-WAC, and two Vaquero freshmen, Alexandra Ecker and Vukoja, were part of the All-Freshman team for the conference.

TUITION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Earlier this month, the committee released a survey asking for input on the proposed tuition and fees increases for the incoming classes.

Of the 3,808 responses, 3,221 were undergraduate and 587 were graduate students.

Among the questions in the survey, students were asked to

indicate which areas they would prefer the additional funding to go.

The top three answers were to expand course and program offerings, provide more student employment opportunities on campus and expand the number of sections of current courses.

For more information, go to <http://www.utrgv.edu/feature/tuition-and-fees-forum>.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Mary Savoy
Classification: Junior
Major: Mass communication
Sports: Basketball
Hometown: Los Angeles, Calif.

Who is your favorite athlete? "My favorite athlete of all time, well, I have two, Lisa Leslie and Skylar Diggins." Leslie and Diggins are professional American basketball players.

Who is your role model? "I would have to say those two women."

What is the best advice you've been given and by whom? "The best advice I've ever been given is by two people, my mom and dad. My mom always told me to stay mindful and basically to stay humble and understand your surroundings. Just have an open mind about everything around you, not to stay close-minded to what you just believe in or think. My dad, he's always told me to strive for the best, and if it's not the best, you're not striving hard enough."

Where's your favorite hangout spot on campus?

Why? "My apartment, in my bed. [Laughs] Because it's too hot outside to be chillin' and I don't like the mosquitoes and I get bit every time I go outside."

When did you begin playing basketball and why did you start? "I began playing basketball in seventh grade and that's when I moved from L.A. to Corona."

Did you compete in high school and did you get any awards? "I played in high school my freshman and sophomore years in California. Then I moved because of my dad's job, but I got a good handful of awards and broke some records. I don't remember in what."

What are your academic goals? "Just to keep pushing and get a 3.0."

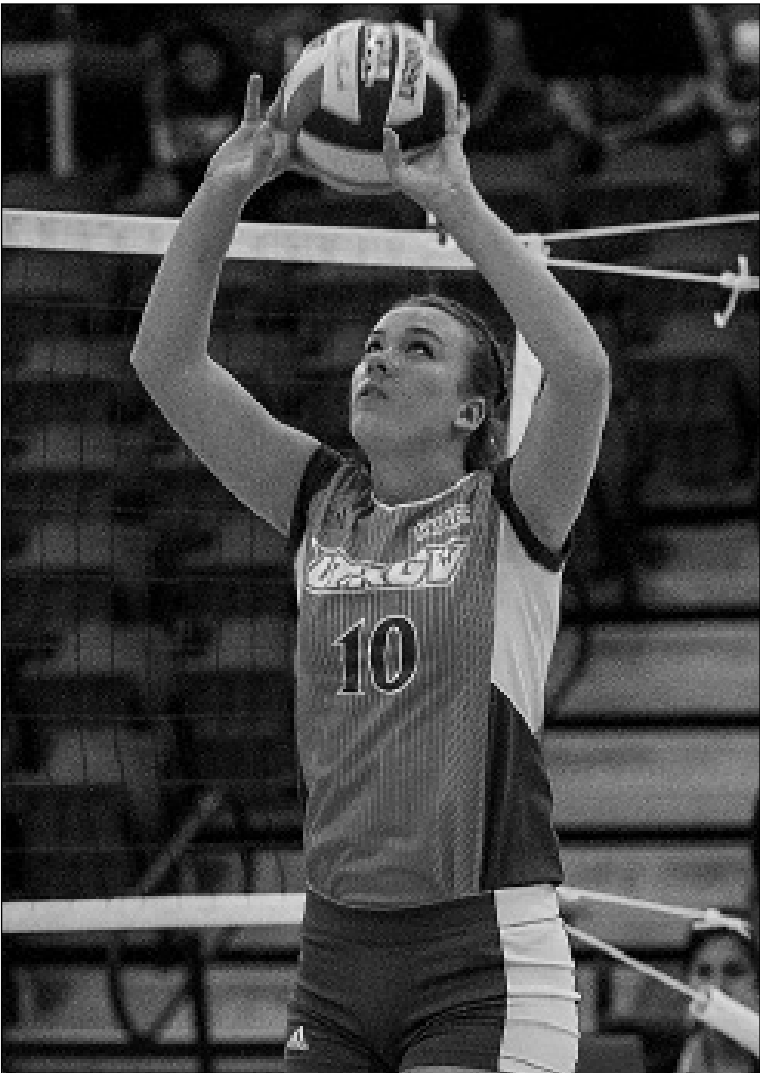
What is your favorite movie? "Wreck-It Ralph."

Is there a song that gets your head in the game? "No, I don't have a set song. I just listen to anything, but it needs to be tempo and bass kind of music."

What is your dream vacation? "Hawaii."

How do you feel about being a part of the first UTRGV Women's Basketball Team? "It's an awesome opportunity. I love having the opportunity to make new friends and have a new family because they're not just my team, they're my family. So, I'm very excited to be here and be a part of this."

--Compiled by Jacqueline Arias



Dubravka Vukoja sets the ball earlier in the season in a conference match against UMKC. Vukoja was named to the conference All-Freshman team.

Home Games

Basketball

Sunday, Dec. 6

Men's Basketball
vs. Angelo State Univ.

2 p.m.

UTRGV Fieldhouse

Friday, Dec. 11

Men's Basketball
vs. University of Tennessee
at Martin

7 p.m.

UTRGV Fieldhouse

Thursday, Dec. 17

Women's Basketball
vs. University of the
Incarnate Word

7 p.m.

UTRGV Fieldhouse

Wednesday, Dec. 30

Women's Basketball
vs. Evangel University

7 p.m.

UTRGV Fieldhouse

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Play focuses on abortion issue



ANA CAHUICHE/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Communication senior Carolina Mendez (left) and Mexican American Studies junior Carolyn Garcia act a scene from "Out of Silence," held Nov. 18 in the Student Union's Gran Salón. The play is based on people's real abortion stories and aims to end the stigma surrounding abortion care. Members of the Student Theatrical Society at UTRGV Brownsville participated in the "1 in 3 Campaign," which is sponsored by "Feministxs Unidxs RGV" and "Texas Freedom Network," according to the organization Advocates for Youth.



UTRGV students watch the presentation performed by members of the Student Theatrical Society at UTRGV Brownsville Nov. 18 in the Student Union's Gran Salón.



Art freshmen Alexa Olivares(from left) and Anayssa Gutierrez receive information about the Texas Freedom Network's stand on abortion care from physics junior Ramona Lunan. Texas Freedom Network is a nonpartisan organization of more than 100,000 religious and community leaders that advances a mainstream agenda of religious freedom and individual liberties to counter the religious right, according to its website.



Monica Hernandez serves appetizers to education freshman Mellisa Juarez during the abortion play "Out of Silence" Nov. 18 in the Student Union's Gran Salón.

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