

THE RIDER

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A TALE OF 2 GAME ROOMS



MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER



CLARISSA MARTINEZ/THE RIDER

The Game Room, located in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus, is equipped with video game spaces for individual and cooperative play. A snack bar and dining areas are available, as well as billiards and air-hockey tables.

Legacy institution UT Brownsville had a game room for its students until the summer of 2013. The game room was located in Student Union 1.10, which now houses the Student Media office.

Jesus Sanchez
and **Macarena Martinez**
THE RIDER

During their spare time, students on the Edinburg campus can visit the Student Union Game Room and have access to a variety of games; on the Brownsville campus, however, students do not have that amenity.

Kevin Martinez, a pre-nursing sophomore, believes the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses should have the

same facilities and offer the same services.

“[Students in Edinburg] have a gaming room of their own, and in order to dissipate the notions that we are not equal, then I believe that we should have the same facilities or the same services as the Edinburg campus on

“ In order to dissipate the notions that we are not equal, then I believe that we should have the same facilities or the same services as the Edinburg campus on the Brownsville campus.”

Kevin Martinez
UTRGV pre-nursing sophomore

the Brownsville campus,”
Martinez said.

Student Union Director

Brownsville campus, we will definitely have [a game room

Edinburg said the reason there is no game room on the Brownsville campus is the lack of space.

“In the future, if there were an expansion or if a new unit were to be built on the

in the facility],” Zambrano said. “But right now, with the building the way it is and all the programs that have to be there and the classrooms that they have there and the tutoring, there is no room.”

The Student Union at UTRGV is a facility that offers programming, support services, dining, recreation and meeting spaces to enrich student life and promote learning outside the classroom, according to the university’s website.

At the University of Texas

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARIO GONZALEZ

Campus community feedback sought

Jesus Sanchez
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Quality Enhancement Plan Steering Committee will conduct a survey today through May 5 asking for feedback from the UTRGV campus community on three brief proposals.

“As part of our SACSCOC accreditation, every 10 years, we have to put together some kind of an initiative to help improve student learning or the student learning environment,” said Laura Saenz, associate provost for Accreditation and

Assessment. “We’ve come up with a couple of proposals that have some really good ideas that we’d like to get students, faculty and staff feedback on.”

Saenz said the three themes are a community engagement proposal, a proposal to help struggling students succeed in STEM courses and a proposal about writing and improving writing.

“We had 15 proposals that were submitted some time in February,” she said. “Through a committee selection process, we narrowed it down to three proposals. With these three proposals, we would really

like the campus community’s feedback and one of the expectations of our regional accreditor is that we have input from our faculty, staff and students. We’re trying to comply with that, but we’re really interested in what everyone’s views are on the value of each one of these particular proposals.”

The QEP describes a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning and/or supporting student learning

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‘Jeff Ross Live From The Border Fence’

Comedian shooting special in Brownsville

Bryan Ramos
NEWS EDITOR

Comedian Jeff Ross, also known as the Roastmaster General, will film his latest Comedy Central special “Jeff Ross Live From The Border Fence” at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Alice Wilson Hope Park in Brownsville. The event is free and open to those 18 and older.

Ross, who has roasted celebrities such as Justin Bieber, James Franco and Donald Trump, will perform a comedy show for the local community, intended to bring unity through laughter by talking about issues such as immigration and Trump’s potential border wall. The performance will be right in front of the border fence at Hope Park.

“Even though there’s a fence behind me, comedy has no boundaries and it unites people, and sometimes you can even find common ground with people that disagree with you,” Ross said. “I found that just talking about this stuff out loud in a public place maybe will be somewhat inspiring, and maybe even healing for some people; not everyone, I understand it’s a touchy subject but I do my best to bring some understanding and thoughtfulness and some love to the jokes. I hope people come out Saturday night to have fun.”

The special will be shown on Comedy Central at a later date. Ross will spend a week living here leading up to his Saturday special, immersing himself in the culture of South Texas to learn about life on the border.

“I go into it with a very open mind,” he said. “I’m going to be there all week, living there as a resident, essentially trying to roast Brownsville from the inside out. I like to really understand

See **ROSS**, Page 10



Comedian Jeff Ross

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

Symphony Orchestra

The **UTRGV Student Symphony Orchestra** will present a program featuring **Concerto Competition** winners in virtuosic works for violin and clarinet by **Vieuxtemps** and **Rossini**. The symphony will start at 7:30 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at <http://patron.utrgv.edu> or at the door. For more information, call 665-3881 or email patron@utrgv.edu.

Tuesday

Henna fundraiser

The **Muslim Students' Association** will draw henna designs to raise funds from noon to 2 p.m. in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus. For more information, email ameera.khan01@utrgv.edu.

'Fifty Shades Darker'

The **Campus Programming Board** will show the movie **"Fifty Shades Darker"** at 7 p.m. in the Student Union Theater on the Edinburg campus and PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón on the Brownsville campus. There will be prize drawings, popcorn and lemonade. For more information, email louay.bachnak01@utrgv.edu.

Wednesday

Denim Day

Student Rights and Responsibilities will provide information about the importance of **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Main Courtyard on the Brownsville campus. For more information, email douglas.stoves@utrgv.edu.

Scientific Method 'myth'

Brian Woodcock, a UTRGV

philosophy lecturer, will give a presentation on the myth of the scientific method, hosted by the **Philosophy Club** from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. in the Edinburg Liberal Arts Building North. For more information, email alfredo.ovalle01@utrgv.edu.

Rehab Services info session

The **Rehabilitation Services Program** will conduct a general information session from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. in Sabal Hall 1.102 on the Brownsville campus. Summer and fall schedules and practicum placements will be among the topics discussed. For more information, email Clinical Assistant Professor **Antonio Aguirre Jr.** at antonio.aguirre@utrgv.edu.

Bellezas del Mundo

Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity Inc. will host a pageant to promote women empowerment and provide women with scholarships to continue their education from 2 to 10 p.m. in the Student Union Theater on the Edinburg campus. For more information, email lawrenceearl.pabalinas01@utrgv.edu.

Academic Fitness workshop

The **Academic Advising Center** will host a workshop on **"Study Sprints: Preparing for Finals"** from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. in Sabal Hall 1.106 on the Brownsville campus. For more information, call 665-7120 or email academicadvising@utrgv.edu.

Thursday

Healthy Relationships Fair

Access for Sex-Education will host a fair to educate students about healthy relationships from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus. For more information, email cathryn.torres01@utrgv.edu.

BSM Spring Concert

The **Baptist Student Ministry**

invites the student body to attend its annual **Spring Concert**. The carnival-themed concert will have games, rides, food and live music from 5 to 9 p.m. in the Student Union on the Brownsville campus. For more information, email alondra.galvan01@utrgv.edu.

Friday

Superhero Day Student Rights and Responsibilities

will inform students on the importance of being an active bystander from 11 a.m. to noon in Main Building 1.005 in Brownsville. For more information, email douglas.stoves@utrgv.edu.

Saturday

Paint Night

The **Graduate Association of Social Work Students** will host **Paint Night** at 6:30 p.m. in the Good Neighbor Settlement House, which is located at 1254 E. Tyler St. in Brownsville. Admission is \$25. Proceeds will go toward operational expenses of the nonprofit agency. Free refreshments will be provided. For more information, call 542-2368.

Marimba concert

Andy Harnsberger, an associate professor of music and percussion coordinator at Lee University in Cleveland, Tenn., will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Tickets (\$15 for adults, \$10 for senior citizens and \$5 for children and UTRGV students, faculty and staff) can be purchased at <http://patron.utrgv.edu> or at the door. For more information, call 665-3881 or email patron@utrgv.edu.

--Compiled by Marie Vallangca

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between April 10 and 16.



April 10

9:24 a.m.: A faculty member reported items stolen from a room in Rusteberg Hall on the Brownsville campus.

There were no signs of forced entry. The case is under investigation.

11:33 a.m.: A staff member reported losing four university-issued keys in Main Building on the Brownsville campus.

3:21 p.m.: Four male students were being too loud on the third floor in the University Library on the Brownsville campus. Police officers told the students to keep the noise level down.

5:55 p.m.: A staff member reported losing her debit card on the Edinburg campus. She checked her bank account and discovered an unauthorized charge on her account. The case is under investigation.

9:26 p.m.: A woman reported being assaulted by her ex-boyfriend, a UTRGV faculty member, in Edinburg. She reported an argument which then escalated to being wrapped by his arm around the neck, making it difficult for her to breathe. The case is under investigation.

April 11

12:20 p.m.: An officer responded to an unknown person continuously

calling a faculty member's office phone. The incident is under investigation.

7:55 p.m.: A student reported unwanted contact by her ex-boyfriend. She stated that both of them contacted Student Rights and Responsibilities separately and both agreed not to have contact with each other. She said that her ex-boyfriend has contacted her three times via text messages and in person on the Brownsville campus. The case was referred to Student Rights and Responsibilities.

April 12

7:20 a.m.: A staff member suffered a seizure in the Academic Support Facility on the Edinburg campus. She was transported to Edinburg Regional Medical Center.

10:30 a.m.: A staff member on the Edinburg campus reported receiving harassing phone calls from India. The case is under investigation.

11:10 a.m.: An officer responded to a report of markings that included figures and racial slurs against the Hispanic community on the inside of a stall door in the first floor restroom in the Mathematics and General Classroom building on the Edinburg campus. A timely warning was given to the campus community. The case is under investigation.

12:22 p.m.: A student reported the mouth piece of his saxophone

instrument was stolen on April 11 from a locker in Performing Arts Complex Building C on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

12:53 p.m.: A student reported the reed case of her instrument was stolen on Tuesday from an unlocked locker on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

7:49 p.m.: A student fractured his left ankle while playing flag football on the Intramural Fields on the Edinburg campus. He was transported to Doctors Hospital at Renaissance in Edinburg.

April 13

10:50 a.m.: A student reported that her vehicle was struck while it was parked in Lot E21 on the Edinburg campus. Surveillance video revealed a suspect vehicle striking the student's vehicle and leaving the area. The case is under investigation.

April 16

7:40 p.m.: A police dispatcher observed via surveillance video two people engage in consensual sexual contact on a bench outside the Biomedical Research and Health Professions Building on the Brownsville campus. They were issued criminal trespass warnings and advised to leave the area.

--Compiled by Macarena Martinez

QEP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and accomplishing the mission of the institution, according to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation.

"We value faculty, staff and students' opinion on this particular initiative, but we're really most interested in what students believe because this impacts students directly," Saenz said.

The survey is available at www.utrgv.edu/qep.

For more information about the survey, call 665-4062 or email reaffirmation@utrgv.edu.

Have a story idea?
Give us a call at
882-5143 or 665-2541

Coping with a loss

Karina Aguirre
ONLINE EDITOR

UTRGV's Office of Continuing Education and Social Work Department will host the "Autism, Grief and Loss: There's A Lot We Don't Know" workshop from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Tuesday in the Harlingen Clinical Education Building Auditorium.

"The autism workshop is part of our Grief Series," said Marco Carbajal, program coordinator for the Office of Continuing Education. "It's based on how to help children and adolescents cope with the grieving process. Sometimes, it's for families and other times, it's for social workers and professional counselors."

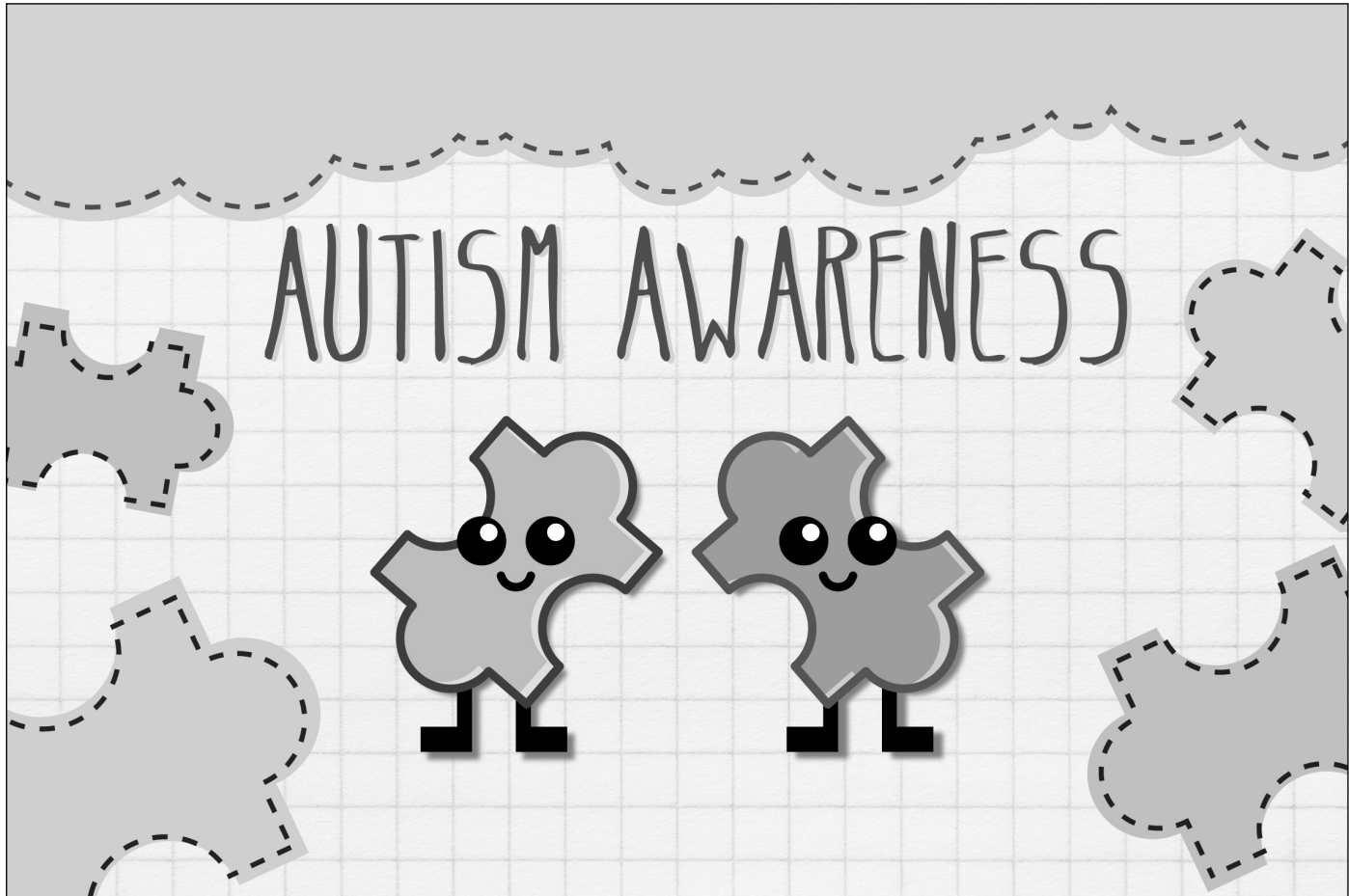
The workshop is open to anyone interested in participating but admission is \$35.

"The majority of the time, we have people who are social workers and counselors, but we've had parents, we've had educators, we've had somebody who just knows someone who is experiencing a loss," Carbajal said. "They are definitely open to anybody."

Stephanie A. Sokolosky, a board certified behavior analyst in Harlingen, will lead the workshop. Participants will learn how to help children with autism cope with the loss of somebody through practice exercises, according to Carbajal.

The workshop guides the participants through the stages of loss and provides tips on how to help children express themselves, as well as helping them experience the catharsis they need.

"It's a great opportunity to learn techniques and strategies for dealing with somebody who is experiencing



MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER GRAPHICS

loss," Carbajal said. "I think that's not always the easiest thing to deal with. A lot of the time people don't know how to help somebody when they are grieving."

The sessions are done in a roundtable manner where the presenter and participants discuss tips on how to help autistic children deal with the

grieving process.

Carbajal said there are a lot of questions and points discussed during the interactive sessions.

"The response that we've had from these Grief Series sessions has been overwhelming," she said. "They're very positive and usually do very well."

The Harlingen Clinical Education Building Auditorium is located on the UTRGV Harlingen campus, 2102 Treasure Hills Blvd. For more information about the workshop, call the Office of Continuing Education at 665-2071.

Remembering the Holocaust

J. Edward Moreno
THE RIDER

Last Tuesday, roughly 42 people gathered in the University Center lobby to share hot dogs, hot chocolate, s'mores and conversations in solidarity with those affected by the Holocaust.

"Talk about it S'more" is a biweekly series hosted by the Office of Student Involvement, which offers cultural events accompanied by s'mores and other refreshments. Angelina Buitron, a business major and student assistant at the Office of Student Involvement, said the series is meant to promote diversity and evoke constructive dialogue among students.

"We started this series to promote diversity on campus and have people learn more about different religions, cultures and things like that," Buitron said. "Personally, I got to visit the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., so that's what inspired me to organize this event."

Meera Joseph, a nursing major, said she first attended a "Talk about it S'more" event regarding autism, and was impressed by the amount of information she received, encouraging her to attend the rest of the series.

"I like the format of this, and the fact that they get professionals to talk about the



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER

Rabbi Claudio Javier Kogan of Temple Emanuel in McAllen informs students and staff about the Holocaust last Tuesday in the University Center during the "Talk about it S'more" speaker series hosted by Student Involvement.

subject because, otherwise, I don't know where I would look for this type of information," Joseph said. "I came with my little brother because I also want him to be exposed to this type of stuff and become familiar with other cultures."

Once the crowd had a chance to take a seat and have

that first bite of their s'mores, they were greeted by Paulette Gindler-Bishop and Debra Gatz of Temple Emanuel in McAllen, who offered valuable information on Judaism.

They addressed misconceptions about their religion, discussed their history, described the details of their favorite holidays and answered many

questions from the audience along the way.

Before giving the floor to Rabbi Javier Claudio Kogan of Temple Emanuel, Gatz gave a personal anecdote on how the Holocaust personally affected her and her family.

"My grandfather, when he was a young man in Poland, came to the U.S., leaving all

of his family behind shortly before the war," Gatz said. "Think of all the first, second, and third cousins you have--I didn't have that, because other than my grandpa, one of his brothers and one of his nephews, everyone else was killed."

Kogan then gave a brief presentation on the historical context of the Holocaust, providing all the important dates, numbers and statistics related to the horrific event, in which six million people were killed by Adolf Hitler during World War II. Those targeted were predominantly Jews, as well as Romani people, homosexuals and the mentally ill.

He ended his presentation with a message of hope. He explained to the crowd how the Holocaust was only possible because people did not have the courage to speak out, leaving a lesson to be learned about staying quiet in times of injustice.

"The message here is never again," Kogan said. "To speak out and not be afraid, to see something you think is wrong, and try your best to do something about it even if it doesn't affect you."

This was the last event for the "Talk about it S'more" series this spring semester. There will be more events scheduled in the fall.

Vaquero Voice

Spring 2017



“The only thing, I guess [I] wouldn’t like, is all the construction that’s going on [in Edinburg]. I guess that’d be one of them. Instead of coming from here to here, you have to walk all around. So that’s one thing, perhaps. I enjoyed this one class that I have [advanced creative graphic literature], it’s been very creative and I feel like you can actually do something.”

Alan Ramirez
Social work junior



“Construction. I’m really tired of all the construction going on, but I also wish there was more parking. I kind of wish there was less people that had Zone 2 parking and I wish people were to get bumped up from Zone 2 to Zone 3 already, because I know there’s a lot of Zone 3 parking that doesn’t get filled. I’m doing really good in my history class.”

Valerie Campos
Social work freshman



“Pues siento que este semestre me está yendo muy bien porque estoy cumpliendo todas mis metas y como, por ejemplo, ahorita voy a presentar un proyecto en el Engaged Scholar Symposium y pues a ver cómo me va. Espero que muy bien”.

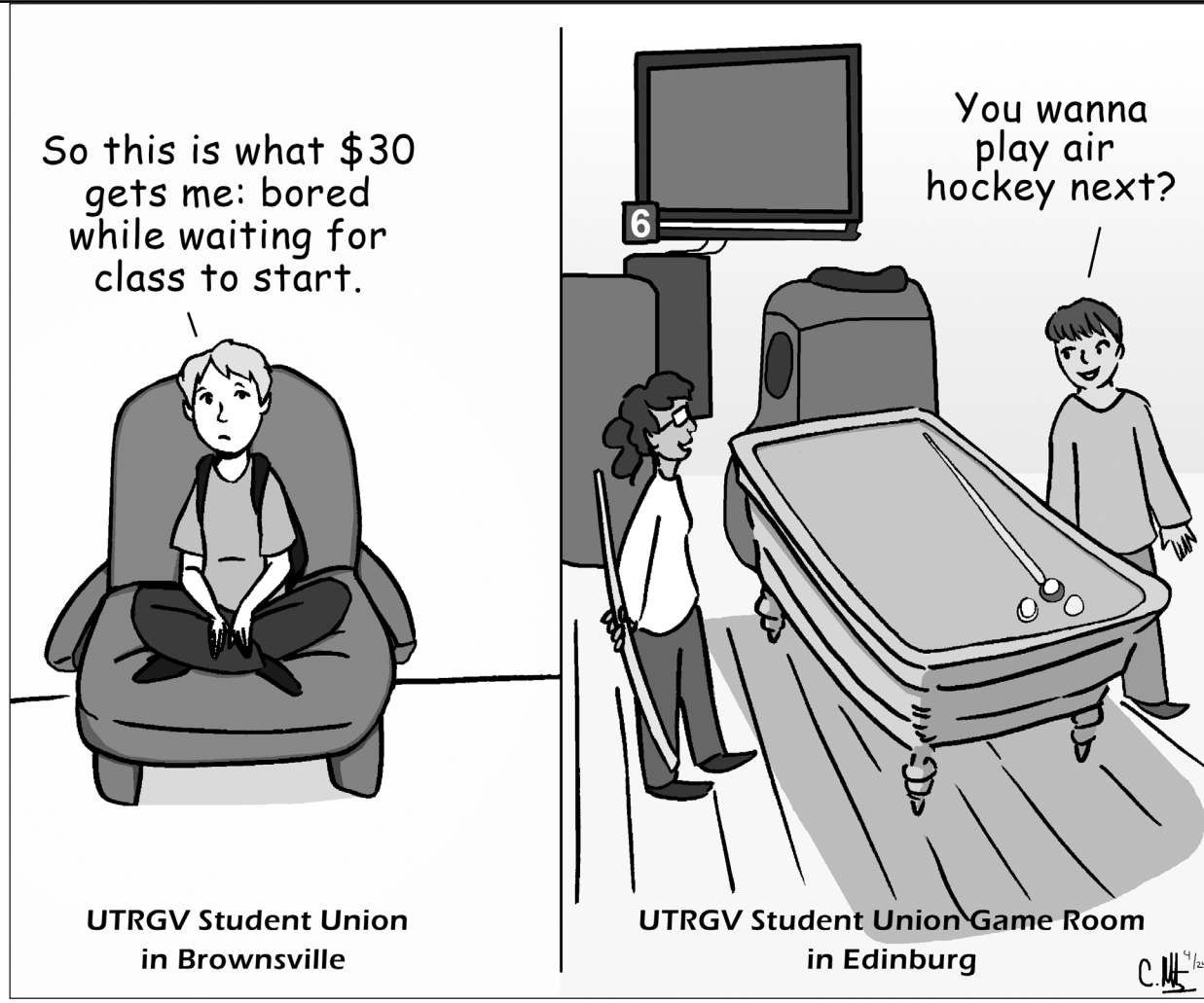
Adrián Maldonado
Estudiante de ciencias biomédicas de tercer año



“Well, as a freshman, Spring 2017 really got me involved. I was able to join a study abroad group for Costa Rica and this has been one of the best semesters of my whole school life ’cus I get to fundraise a lot.”

Victoria Mendez
Mass communication and environmental studies freshman

--Compiled by Ana Cahuiche and Gabriel Mata



Don’t let fear stop you



Mario Gonzalez
PHOTO EDITOR

People ask me all the time if I feel excited about graduating from college. I know I should be because it really is an accomplishment that not many people have the chance of even attempting.

However, the knowledge, the experiences and the friends that I have acquired during my time here make me feel melancholic and insecure to leave this place I have grown to care so much for over the last five years of my life. I am grateful, nonetheless, to my parents and God for giving me the chance to obtain a higher education.

I know how it feels to endure the struggle of financial instability. My parents have done everything they can and have made sacrifices to ensure that my siblings and I won’t commit the same mistakes they did when they were young. As the days pass, it becomes more clear that it is true: I am about to become the first in my family to get a college degree.

There was a time when my family lived together in a small house in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico. However, because of the lack of a profession, my father was unable to find a job there. He went up north looking for a job in the U.S. He worked illegally in Oklahoma for seven years until he was deported back

to Mexico.

I realized that everything was going to change. My mother, a full-time homemaker for 20 years, had to find a job and now as an undocumented immigrant in a foreign country. As an inexperienced college student, I decided it was time to contribute financially in my household. I applied to multiple jobs, yet I was not hired anywhere, not even at fast-food restaurants.

In my second semester in college, after I had grasped that education matters, I got my first job. A university department hired me to work in a new tutoring program. Along with different partners, other students and I took the role of English Composition I tutors for several freshmen classes. This job made me conscious of the importance of acting on the obstacles that life presents.

From there on, I have been working and studying full time simultaneously. I have learned how to balance my responsibilities, I have become more adult each day (even if my physical appearance says otherwise). I have been able to provide economically to my household. I bought my first car and was able to make my mother a permanent U.S. resident.

Even while the obstacles were immense, my parents have done everything they can for my siblings and me. My father’s deportation made me see life from a different perspective. I found the courage to stop relying on everyone else and to keep fighting for my goals. It is time for me now to take my next big step and start living a life beyond school, no matter how frightening it seems.

“As an inexperienced college student, I decided it was time to contribute financially in my household.”

Have a story idea?
Give us a call at
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In between the lines of slavery



BRYAN RAMOS/THE RIDER

Andrés Reséndez, author and professor of history at the University of California, Davis, speaks to students and faculty about his book, “The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of

Indian Enslavement in America,” last week as part of the Global Latin American Lecture and Engagement Series on the Edinburg campus.

Rebeca Ortiz

SPANISH EDITOR

Mexican historian and award-winning author Andrés Reséndez visited UTRGV last week to discuss his most recent book, “The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America.”

The lectures, held April 17 and last Tuesday, were part of the Global Latin American Lecture and Engagement Series, which was founded in early 2016 by UTRGV history assistant Professor Bonnie Lucero.

His highly acclaimed book suggests it was mass slavery by the Europeans, rather than epidemics, that reduced Native American populations across North America.

Reséndez was awarded the Bancroft Prize for “The Other Slavery.” The prize is awarded annually by the trustees of Columbia University and is considered one of the most prestigious honors in the field of American history.

“It was an authentic presentation by one of the top people in the field,” said George Diaz, an assistant history professor. “Andrés Reséndez is one of the top historians in borderlands and Latin American history. ... He basically got us to reconsider the way slavery worked in the Americas by including

Indians in the story, so rather [than] being strictly a history of African American slaves, it means we’re also [enslaved] and it caused tremendous demographic collapses, and it’s part of the American story that had not been explored really fully until this book.”

Diaz, who suggested inviting Reséndez to talk at the Global Latin American event, said the History Department is trying to present a face that students see as familiar and relevant.

“One of the things we love about him is that he is very relatable and engaging with the students and is accessible,” he said.

Reséndez, who worked on the book for seven years, said there was a close relation between epidemics and slavery.

“Slavery serves to spread germs, which results in more mortality, and when there is more mortality, there are more workers to replace through other raids, so both things form a vicious cycle ... which is mutually reinforced,” Reséndez said.

During the lecture, Reséndez, a professor at the University of California, Davis, presented evidence to support his suggestion, such as a map from the Caribbean island group, Hispaniola, at the time of Columbus

and a map of 1517. The maps illustrated the decrease of Native Americans from 26,000 to 11,000.

His seminar included the subjects of the Gold Rush, the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, and the Comancheria between Nuevo Mexico and Texas.

“Slavery of Africans reached 12.5 million ... and Native Americans, 2.5 to 5 million,” he said. “The number is smaller but we are talking about millions of human beings.”

Reséndez also discussed the 13th Amendment and asked the audience to reflect if the “new slavery” is, in fact, really new. He pointed out that even though slavery has been forbidden since 1542, it has continued across the world.

“In some way this Indian slavery gives us a very important antecedent for the kind of slavery that exists nowadays, in the sense that enslavement of Indians occurred even though it was forbidden, just like slavery today is forbidden across the world,” he said. “And yet ... the people that benefit from this type of work resort to all kinds of subterfuges, all kinds of euphemisms and all kinds of institutions, whose name is not slavery but is in all aspects but the name.”

History junior Griselda Cuellar said this was a fascinating subject.

“All throughout high school, junior high, and even my first two years of college, all I would hear would be the American or the very Anglo version of history,” Cuellar said.

Cuellar, who is reading “The Other Slavery,” said the evidence presented in the book was really solid.

“It’s true that disease had a lot to do with the indigenous people near extinction, but then as you read his book, and he presents all these other cases and examples you can’t ignore, the fact that there was slavery and that it did decrease their numbers and it kind of scattered people. So, you have these tribes and then they were reduced to only nomads, or they had to merge with other tribes to kind of survive.”

Asked why it’s important to have trustworthy history, Reséndez said it’s because “sometimes we have a very skewed vision of the history and we don’t understand what has happened.”

“Having a more reliable and tied-to-reality vision always helps us to understand our current reality,” he said.

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utrgvrider.com

Club Spotlight

Name: Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers

Purpose: “We aim to reach out to the underserved community in order to promote health, safety and emergency preparedness to the public, starting from our university to our Valley region, while incorporating the mission statement of the Medical Reserve Corps and the Surgeon General.”

President: Mary Grace Chiu

Vice President: Bindu Yarlagadda

Secretary: Abraham Arenas

Treasurer: Johnmarc Candelaria

Historian: Bina Yarlagadda

Public Relations: Brandon Tiu

Adviser: Thomas Pearson, an associate professor of philosophy

Activities: Vial of Life program: Went to mobile homes and helped residents fill out health information that is used for emergency purposes. Fire Alarm Installation Initiative: Made fire evacuation plans in homes for Weslaco residents and explained fire safety.

Meetings: 12:15 p.m. the second or fourth Thursday of the month in Science Building Room 3.212

Membership requirements: Must complete one event per month. This club is for those who have a passion for volunteering and want to make a difference in the community.

For more information, email: utrgvmrcv@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/utrgvmrcv/>

--Compiled by Lesley Robles



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER

Members of the Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers include (from left) Johnmarc Candelaria, Bina Yarlagadda, Brandon Tiu, Mary Grace Chiu, Abraham Arenas and Bindu Yarlagadda.

[illegible]

MAS to showcase research, recruit Tuesday

Rebeca Ortiz
SPANISH EDITOR

The Mexican American Studies program on the Brownsville campus will host its annual “La Noche de M.A.S.” from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday in Salón Cassia.

Janie Camero, a graduate student in the Mexican American Studies program, said the purpose of the event is to “raise awareness of the Mexican American studies program and to give a platform to students to go ahead and showcase the work we’ve done over the semester.”

The expansion of the Mexican American Studies program in Brownsville, such as the bachelor of arts, master of arts in interdisciplinary studies degrees and graduate certificate, will be discussed.

“We will be giving out information about that,” Camero said. “We will also be giving a small explanation over how people will transition from



an associate’s degree and a bachelor’s degree into the MAIS in Mexican American Studies and pathways that you do have within it.”

The program’s faculty and students will present their work in the field. Christopher Carmona, coordinator of UTRGV’s Mexican American Studies program in Brownsville and a creative writing assistant professor, will present his work to raise awareness of Mexican American Studies within education fields.

During the event, the UTRGV Marimba Reyna del Valle, will perform. Refreshments will be provided.

For more information, call Camero at 882-7302.

Visit us online at
utrgvrider.com

Giving back to grads



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Ayana Lazares, a nursing junior, picks up cookies and popcorn during last Tuesday’s Grad Bash in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus. The Alumni Relations Office hosted the event.



Ciara Perez, a dance and anthropology senior, signs in to get UTRGV giveaways during last Tuesday’s Grad Bash on the Edinburg campus. Popcorn, cookies and swag were passed out during the event. Also shown is Marisela Leal, executive director of Alumni Relations.

All about that jazz



ANA CAHUICHE/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Bianca Lopez, vocalist for the Harlingen High School Jazz Ensemble, sings “S Wonderful” by Ira and George Gershwin, arranged by David Wolpe, during the Spring 2017 UTRGV Jazz Orchestra concert April 17 in the Texas Southmost College Arts Center in Brownsville. The ensemble is directed by Ronnie Rios.



Josue Ayala, baritone saxophonist for the Harlingen High School Jazz Ensemble, plays a solo in the song “Quiet Time” by Paul Baker during the jazz concert April 17 in the Texas Southmost College Arts Center in Brownsville.

Rebeca Ortiz
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

El historiador mexicano y multipremiado autor Andrés Reséndez visitó UTRGV la semana pasada para discutir su más reciente libro, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*.

Las conferencias, que tomaron lugar el 17 de abril y el pasado martes, formaron parte de las Conferencias y Series Globales Latinoamericanas de Involucramiento, fundadas por la profesora de historia, Bonnie Lucero.

El aclamado libro sugiere que fue esclavitud en masas a manos de los europeos, más que epidemias, lo que redujo las poblaciones de Nativo Americanos en Norte América.

Reséndez fue otorgado con el galardón Bancroft por *The Other Slavery*. El galardón es otorgado anualmente por los síndicos de Columbia University y es considerado uno de los más prestigiados honores en el campo de la historia americana.

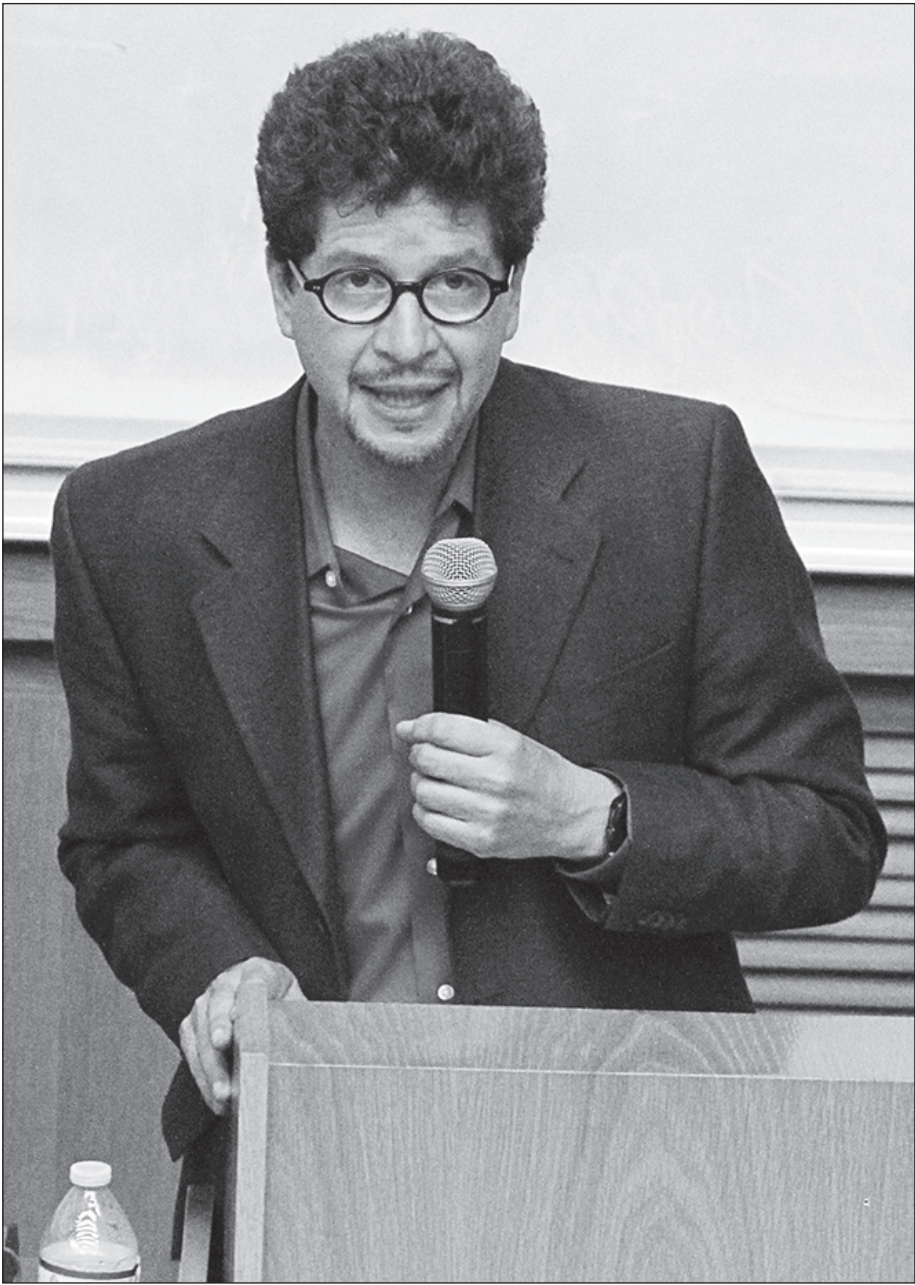
“Fue una presentación auténtica por uno de los mejores en el campo”, dijo George Díaz, profesor de historia. ... Él básicamente nos hizo reconsiderar la manera en que la esclavitud trabajó en las Américas, al incluir a los indios en la historia, así que en vez de ser una historia estrictamente de esclavos afroamericanos, significa que también esclavizamos, lo que desencadenó tremendos colapsos demográficos y es parte de la historia americana que no había sido explorada hasta este libro”.

Díaz, quien sugirió invitar a Reséndez a hablar en las conferencias Globales Latinoamericanas, dijo que el departamento de historia estaba tratando de presentar un rostro que los estudiantes pudieran ver como familiar y relevante.

“Una de las cosas que amamos de él es que hace muy fácil el relacionarse e involucrarse con los estudiantes y además es accesible”, dijo él.

Reséndez, quien trabajó en su libro siete años, dijo que había una relación muy estrecha entre epidemias y esclavitud.

“La esclavitud sirve para los gérmenes, lo que resulta en más mortandad y cuando hay mortandad, hay menos trabajadores que hay que reemplazar, a partir de otras redadas, entonces las dos cosas forman un círculo vicioso de epidemias y redadas.



BRYAN RAMOS/THE RIDER

El historiador mexicano, Andrés Reséndez, discute su más reciente libro, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, durante una de las conferencias Globales Latinoamericanas, ofrecidas la semana pasada en el campus de Edinburg.

Se refuerzan mutuamente”, dijo él. Durante su conferencia, Reséndez, un profesor en University of California, Davis, presentó evidencia para respaldar su proposición, tal como un mapa durante el tiempo de Cristóbal Colón, de la isla del mar Caribe, la Española, y posteriormente, un mapa de 1517. Los mapas ilustraron la disminución de los nativos americanos de 26,000 a 11,000.

Su seminario incluyó los temas de la Fiebre del Oro, la Revuelta del Pueblo en 1680 y la Comanchería entre Nuevo México y Texas.

“La esclavitud de africanos alcanzó

12.5 millones ... y nativos de 2.5 a 5 millones” dijo él. “Es menor el número, pero estamos hablando de millones de seres humanos”.

Reséndez también discutió la 13ª enmienda y pidió a la audiencia reflexionar si “la nueva esclavitud” era en realidad nueva. Señaló que aunque la esclavitud fue prohibida desde 1542, ha continuado a lo largo del mundo.

“De alguna manera, esta esclavitud de indios nos da un antecedente muy importante para el tipo de nueva esclavitud que existe en nuestros días, en el sentido de que esta esclavitud de indios se dio a pesar de que estaba prohibida, de la misma manera que la esclavitud de hoy en día está prohibida en todas partes del mundo y sin embargo, algo ocurre en la práctica porque los que se benefician de este tipo de trabajo, recurren a todo tipo de subterfugios y todo tipo de eufemismos, y todo tipo de instituciones que no se llaman esclavitud pero que, sin embargo, son esclavitud en todo menos en nombre”.

La estudiante de historia de segundo año, Griselda Cuellar, dijo que el tema era fascinante.

“Durante toda la preparatoria, secundaria y hasta mis dos primeros años de universidad, todo lo que escuché fue el punto de vista americano, o la versión anglo de la historia”, dijo Cuellar.

Cuellar, quien está leyendo *The Other Slavery*, dijo que la evidencia presente en el libro es bastante sólida.

“Es cierto que las enfermedades tuvieron mucho que ver con la gente indígena cerca de la extinción, pero conforme lees su libro, y el presenta todos estos casos y ejemplos que no puedes ignorar”, dijo ella. “El hecho de que hubo esclavitud y que disminuyó sus números y que de cierta manera dispersó a la gente, redujo las tribus a nómadas, o tuvieron que unirse a otras tribus para sobrevivir”.

Al preguntarle a Reséndez, porque es importante tener datos históricos fieles, dijo que era porque “tenemos una visión a veces muy sesgada de la historia y no entendemos lo que ha pasado.”

“Y tener visión más fidedigna y más apegada a la realidad siempre nos ayuda a entender nuestra realidad presente”, dijo él.

VISION

INTERNACIONAL

NUBIA REYNA/THE RIDER

Nombre: Carlos Hevia

Edad: 25

Especialidad: Ciencias de la computación

Clasificación: Estudiante de segundo año

País de origen: Cuba

¿Qué idiomas hablas?: “Español e inglés”.

¿Por qué decidiste estudiar en E.E.U.U.? “Me ofrecieron una beca como ajedrecista. Conocí al entrenador del equipo de ajedrez de UTRGV en un torneo. El vió mi *performance*, entonces me ofreció la beca y yo estaba indeciso. Pasé unos tres o cuatro meses indeciso hasta que pensé que lo mejor que podría hacer para mi futuro era venir a estudiar acá”.

Menciona algunos platillos típicos: “Se come mucho arroz, a diferencia de México, y acá hay un platillo muy tradicional cubano que es el arroz con gris. ... También la salsa mojito la extraño mucho. ... Es ajo, aceite bien caliente, sal y limón”.

Platillo favorito de aquí: “Sinceramente no me gusta mucho la comida de acá. No soporto el picante, chile, ni la tortilla tampoco. ... Hay un lugar que recomiendo. Se llama Texas Roadhouse; ahí, si como mucho”.

¿Cuáles son los lugares turísticos en tu país? “En Cuba mi lugar preferido es Varadero, una playa. Es probablemente la más famosa de Cuba y es el destino turístico más visitado”.

Lugar favorito de aquí: “Realmente no conozco mucho todavía de Brownsville. Es muy pacífico y me he acostumbrado. Yo vivía en una ciudad de Cuba y aunque me he acostumbrado a este ambiente [en

el] que incluso es muy fácil de estudiar, se me hace difícil encontrar lugares para divertirme como lo hacía en Cuba”.

¿Qué diferencias y similitudes encuentras entre tu país y E.E.U.U.? “Como es de conocimiento común, Cuba es muy distinto a los demás países porque no hay inversión extranjera y por lo tanto está muy atrasado en comparación con Estados Unidos. Así que realmente no encuentro muchas similitudes, pero bueno, Brownsville es muy tranquilo y en parte se parece a Cuba porque en Cuba no hay ningún inconveniente en salir de noche. No hay ningún peligro”.

¿Cuáles son algunas ideas erróneas que la gente tiene sobre tu país? “Todas las ideas que te han dicho son de verdad. [Se ríe]. Bueno, algunas personas piensan que el sistema de Cuba ayuda mucho a los ciudadanos y que se preocupa por ellos, pero es totalmente erróneo. Es muy difícil decir lo que piensas en Cuba sin que te pongan trabas y obstáculos”.

Anécdota: “Al principio cuando no hablaba inglés, recuerdo que fuí una vez a un restaurante y pues pedí *stick*. [Se ríe]. En vez de *steak*, pedí un palo. Fuí con muchos amigos y todos se rieron”.

¿Cuáles son tus planes después de graduarte: “Por ahora creo que solo seguiré estudiando, tratando de hacer la maestría. Ahora estoy más enfocado a mi carrera pero espero que cuando me gradúe, voy a tener más tiempo para dedicarme al ajedrez de nuevo”.

--Recopilado por Nubia Reyna

A reel life experience

Marie Vallangca
THE RIDER

A new independent film, “Transient,” written and directed by Alexander Stockton, will screen from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Edinburg Conference Center at Doctors Hospital at Renaissance.

“Transient” is a fictional film about a young man who is deported from the only home he has ever known and will do everything to go back.

Stockton studied film and economics at Dartmouth College and graduated in 2015. Living in the Rio Grande Valley most of his life, he heard stories of people entering the country illegally. He lived in McAllen until he moved away to college. So, when he was looking for character ideas, the story of a person living here illegally formed. The process took two years.

He started to write the script at the beginning of 2014 and started filming that summer.

The film takes place outside of Austin in a fictional town, where the main character Franky lives.

“The entire film was filmed in Texas and we shot for the majority of it around Austin and then another portion of it, we filmed in the Rio Grande Valley,” Stockton said.

UTRGV theater performance junior Ana Sofia Rodriguez is the lead actress of the film. She plays a character named Alex, who befriends Franky and guides



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER
Theater performance junior Ana Sofia Rodriguez stars in the film, “Transient,” written and produced by Alexander Stockton.

him in the small town of Durazo.

“It was definitely my first full-length feature film but I had done theater since middle school so I was already used to acting,” she said. Rodriguez auditioned for the film when she was a senior in high school.

The film interested Rodriguez because she can personally relate to the story, having previously been here on a tourist visa, but has now become a resident.

“I really liked that a story like mine and like so many other people’s is being told,” she said. “And that in itself encouraged me to be part of more projects

that are related to this topic. Doing ‘Transient’ sort of encouraged me to keep doing more related projects.”

The film is intended to motivate people, spread the message of what those living in the country illegally go through, and show what home means for them.

“We definitely wanted to kind of expose people to the issues that undocumented immigrants face,” Stockton said. “[It’s] intended for audiences in the United States who don’t realize what undocumented immigrants go through.

“It’s definitely intended for people who are passionate about these issues, about immigration reform or about helping undocumented immigrants and giving them a tool, this art piece that they can use to help mobilize people and spread their message and cause.”

The film has been screened in many places throughout the country.

“We played at the Beverly Hills Film Festival,” Stockton said. “Last year, we played at Social Justice Film Festival in Seattle. So, we played our film in different film festivals last year and now we’re releasing the film and screening it across the country.”

Stockton hopes that “Transient” can make people more accepting of those living illegally in the United States and realize that they are just doing their best to live a good life.

“There have been a lot of things that

have brought us to the media’s attention and the public’s eye in recent years,” he said. “We started this film before any of that and these issues have been relevant for all this time and I’m just glad so many people care about this now, and I’m hoping that this film can make a difference in some small way.”

With the screening coming up, UTRGV students were asked for their opinion on people living illegally in the United States.

Julie Viveros, a junior majoring in interdisciplinary studies-bilingual education, said immigrants who want to come here should not be deported because they came here to have a better life and work hard to put their families through college.

“It’s like the American dream,” she said. “If you [want to] come and work that’s fine, but I don’t think that people should be just kicked out just like that.”

Anthropology senior Olivia Salazar said immigrants migrate for a reason.

“I don’t see anything wrong with undocumented immigrants,” Salazar said. “They migrate for a reason because their homeland is not great economically. There is no way they can benefit, so they come to America just to find work that most Americans don’t want.”

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/transient-rgv-screening-tickets-32952024392>.

Enter a world of fantasy

Nubia Reyna
THE RIDER

UTRGV seniors Miriam Casarez, John Guerra and Joshua Berry will present the first senior show of the semester, “A Journey Through Fantasies,” at 6 tonight in the Art Gallery at Rustenberg Hall on the Brownsville campus.

“The show is absolutely brilliant,” art Lecturer Patrick Fatica said after seeing the students’ work in the painting room in Rustenberg Hall.

The exhibit focuses on the students’ perception of fantasy and nature.

“There are a lot of creative ideas and there is a lot of depth in the work we are creating,” Guerra said.

Guerra’s work consists of five pieces titled “Tim on Earth,” “Tim in Hell,” “Tim in Heaven,” “Tim’s Head” and “Satan’s Head.”

“It is about a story that I’ve been working on since I started making art,” he said. “It’s the story of a character named Tim and his journey through Earth, hell and heaven.”

Guerra’s story consists of three acrylic paintings and two ceramic clay heads.

“It has a lot of characters that in-



NUBIA REYNA/THE RIDER
Seniors Miriam Casarez, Joshua Berry and John Guerra pose with their art pieces last Tuesday in the ceramic room in Rustenberg Hall for the first senior show of the semester.

spired me since I was a kid,” he said. “Most of the work was inspired by my childhood.”

Guerra said that he is inspired by monsters and fantasy characters.

“The work that I am doing is a personal story and is very important to me

but it is also very fun,” he said.

Casarez’s work focuses on the relationship between humans and nature.

“What inspired me was the fact that you see all these things on the news of how people are not taking care of nature and they do not understand

that that is a big aspect of keeping us healthy and keeping us alive,” she said.

Her work consists of five drawings with Prismacolor pencils and pens.

“I showed them to my family. ... They were really inspired and after that they started to feel more conscious about helping recycle and cleaning up Brownsville,” she said.

Casarez said she believes that if her family got inspired by her work, she can inspire other people.

“I am really into nature and I want to keep it green for generations to come,” she said.

One of her works consists of a baby who is underground and his umbilical cord is a root.

“It shows that we are giving to nature but nature is also taking from us,” she said.

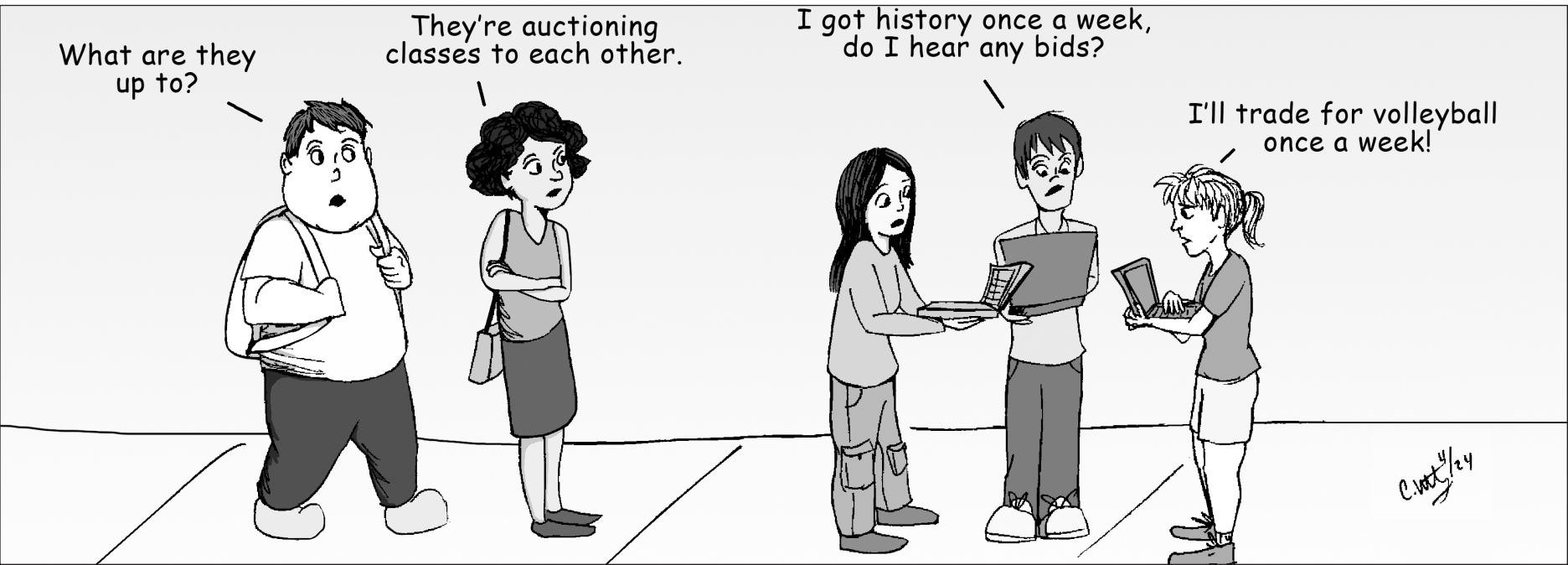
Focusing on video games, fantasy worlds and childhood memories, Berry, who used to be a professional gamer before enrolling in college, has prepared more than five pieces for the show.

“When I do my work I am inspired by my youth, my childhood,” he said.

See **SHOW**, Page 10

Trials and Trifles

By Clarissa Martinez



Worry less, limit stress

Nubia Reyna
THE RIDER

Last week, the Academic Advising Center presented its Fitness Workshop Series on both campuses to help students relieve stress from school.

Last Wednesday, more than 45 students attended the Academic Fitness Workshop Series presentation, titled “Mindfulness,” on the Brownsville campus. The same presentation was made April 17 on the Edinburg campus. “What we are trying to achieve is to get our students less stressful,” said Rey Rangel, an academic adviser on the Edinburg campus.

The workshops have been taking place throughout the semester and focus on budgeting, studying, managing stress, depression, among others.

“Most students are dealing with stuff at home or dealing with finances and social stresses, so that is what we are trying to relieve by at least showing them and introducing them to a practice that they might find helpful,” Rangel said.

During the workshops, students are offered snacks, prizes and flyers on how to improve their mindfulness, budgeting, etc.

“The goal is to make it an approachable place,” said Elizabeth Cuevas, an academic adviser on the Brownsville campus. “We can do a lot more than recommend classes.”

Rangel said right before finals is when students stress the most.



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER
Kassandra Garcia (right), a nursing freshman, practices breathing exercises during the “Mindfulness” workshop last Wednesday on the Brownsville campus. Shown next to Garcia is accounting senior Rebecca Villanueva. About 50 people attended the workshop.

ROSS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

my subject, so I’m going to really try to embed myself in the subject and in the people. I’m hoping college students who care, people who have a good immigration story, people who are directly connected to the immigration issue in America, I hope they come out to the show.

“Not everybody is going to go to the border, most people are just going to read about it; even the politicians just fly over, then they sign executive orders. So, I thought, why don’t I just go there and see for myself what’s happening, and give voice to voices that people don’t hear very often? I’ll probably do a lot of listening, not just talking, not just joking, but a lot of listening.”

This won’t be the first time Ross has taken on the role of bringing comedy to complicated issues.

In his 2015 special, “Ross Roasts Criminals: Live at Brazos County Jail,” he traveled to the Southeast Central Texas city of Bryan, where he spent time with inmates before performing a comedy show. The only way inmates were allowed to see Ross’ comedy special was if they were on good behavior and had no incidents for six months.

In his 2016 special, Ross brought laughs to the issues surrounding the divide between police and their communities with “Jeff Ross Roasts Cops.” He gave viewers a closer look at what cops go through by suiting up for ride-alongs with two sets of partners from the Boston Police Department.

Ross said his previous two roasts of cops and criminals has taught him that laughter and roasting can bring people together. The specials can be seen on Comedy Central’s website, CC.com.

“The strongest people aren’t afraid of taking a joke, the smartest people have a great sense of humor, and even though we should take this subject very seriously, we don’t necessarily have to take ourselves so seriously and I like to spread that,” Ross said. “Ultimately, we’re a nation of immigrants. This country’s built by immigrants; without immigrants, this country wouldn’t be as great as it is and I think people around America might be forgetting that right now. And I think the immigration experience, immigrants themselves need to be humanized, and

GAMES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Rio Grande Valley, students pay a mandatory \$30 Student Union fee per long semester and \$15 per summer session.

In Brownsville, that fee pays for student activities, wages, utilities, custodial fees for El Comedor and the maintenance of kitchen equipment.

Both Student Union buildings at UTRGV are still being paid off. Student Union fees are also used to pay the debt service each year.

The Edinburg campus Student Union operating budget for Fiscal Year 2017 is \$651,102 and \$503,316 for Brownsville.

In an email sent to *The Rider*, Student Union Director Edna Zambrano said all unused operating budget expenses go into a Student Union reserve that is used when major equipment replacement is needed.

“For example, the new furniture that was installed last year at El Comedor. And could be used for future expansion of buildings on both campuses,” Zambrano wrote.

The Student Union Game Room in Edinburg has seven pool tables, two air hockey tables, gaming consoles and board games, said Mabel Cortina-Matos, event manager for the Student Union.

Expenses for the game room on the Edinburg campus are an annual update of games or billiards equipment. This year, \$2,097 has been spent on the Edinburg Student Union Game Room equipment, according to Zambrano.

Last year, \$22,000 was spent in activities for the Brownsville campus. This year, \$12,000 has been spent, so far.

Legacy institution UT Brownsville had a game room for its students until

the summer of 2013. The game room was located in Student Union 1.10, which now houses the Student Media office.

When UTB split from Texas Southmost College, offices formerly housed in TSC buildings were relocated to the Student Union. Consequently, offices already housed in the Student Union were moved to different areas of the building, leaving no space for a game room.

However, two billiards tables from the former game room were moved to El Comedor, which is the Student Union dining area in Brownsville.

El Comedor closed in Fall 2015, the inaugural semester of UTRGV, to undergo renovations.

When El Comedor opened its doors again in Spring 2016, two new food concessions were available for students. However, the two billiards tables were gone.

Throughout the year, students walk into the Student Media office and ask if the area is still a game room or where its new location is.

“Usually, we keep all the doors locked but sometimes someone will leave the door open by accident and we’ll be working and some random person will come in,” said Clarissa Martinez, a student employee for the Student Media department. “It’s kind of scary because he is a stranger. But then, they’ll ask, ‘Is the game room here? Is this the game room?’ and we’re like, ‘No.’ They ask if we know where it is and we usually say there isn’t one and then they leave.”

Leonel Villafranca, a mechanical engineering sophomore, said he would like to have a game room in Brownsville.

Asked why, he replied: “To have just some activities to do when you are not busy with school or anything else.”

He decided to make her floating in-

“As the Academic Advising Center, we really want to try to relieve that stress as much as we can and also just let them know that we are there to mentor them, coach them and guide them,” he said.

Rangel recommends students relax and leave school for a little break.

“Go have fun with your family or just on your own and relieve yourself from stress,” he said.

Cuevas said these events are to bring skills that students may find supportive for their academic endeavor.

“We thought the mindfulness was important right before finals are coming up,” she said, adding that it is OK to take a pause to regroup.

“The goal of this session is to offer different ways to kind of reset your mind, so that we can focus on what we need to take care of,” she said.

This week, academic advisers will offer workshops to prepare students for final exams. The workshops will be at 12:15 p.m. today in Student Academic Center 1.102 on the Edinburg campus and 12:15 p.m. Wednesday in Sabal Hall 1.106 on the Brownsville campus.

“We will have lots of study tips, snacks,” Cuevas said. “We are giving little study packs, flashcards, highlighters. It’s really cute. I’d love for [students] to come; we have great prizes and tacos.”

For more information about workshops, advising and how to deal with stress, email Cuevas at elizabeth.cuevas@utrgv.edu.

Business freshman Jose Chavez said the Student Union in Brownsville is boring.

“People just come here to study but, obviously, there is other places to study, you know,” Chavez said. “I mean, it’s the Student Union, like, it should unite the students and most of the events that they do here are actually outside, you know. It would be a lot better if we actually had some things to do in here. Besides, we have to bring our own things to do, which is not bad, it shows initiative, but it would be really nice if we had a pool table or something.”

Zambrano said the Brownsville Student Union offers gaming events throughout the year.

“In the absence of a game room, we wanted Brownsville to have some of the gaming and that is why, you know, we set it up,” she said.

Chance Chapman, an anthropology freshman, said a game room on the Brownsville campus would bring community spirit.

“Playing games is always good and it fosters a sense of community spirit,” Chapman said. “You get to meet new people and you get to catch up with people you haven’t met in a while.”

The Student Union posts its upcoming events on its social media pages. For a schedule of events, visit the Student Union Facebook page at facebook.com/utrgvstudentunion.

“If you have any students that contact you requesting the game room, I encourage them to send us an email to studentunion@utrgv.edu so we can start collecting that feedback,” Zambrano said. “We need to hear from students. If that is something that they want in Brownsville, we’d like to know so the university can plan for the future buildings for expansion or remodeling or whatever is that they are going to do.”

stead and add a “magical book” with light coming out and papers flying to make it look like magic.

“I had a lot of fun with it,” he said.

The show continues through Friday. Admission is free and open to the public.

For more information about gallery hours and shows, email Gallery Coordinator and art Lecturer Alejandro Macias at alejandro.macias@utrgv.edu.

SHOW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Berry said he grew up reading fantasy books and illustration novels.

“A lot of that inspired me,” he said.

“The Thinking Witch” is a painting inspired by magic and fantasy from video games.

“I originally had her sitting down but I had to turn it into fantasy,” Berry said.

He decided to make her floating in-

In defense of the crown

Women's tennis ready for tournament play



SARAH CARVAJAL/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Sophomore Marine Darzyan prepares for the upcoming WAC Tournament during practice last Thursday at the Orville Cox Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus.

Nathaniel Mata

SPORTS EDITOR

At this time last year, UTRGV women's tennis was preparing for the WAC conference tournament. The tennis team returned to Edinburg as conference champions, the first athletic program to win a team championship in the Western Athletic Conference since joining in 2013.

Since that win, UTRGV volleyball has also added a conference title.

On the tennis team, there was a lot of turnover from the championship squad. Four of six women on the roster didn't return. Last season's coach, Stephanie Wooten-Quijada, left UTRGV in the summer.

Now several months into the new-look women's tennis team, it's time to put all of the work to the test. Tennis will travel to Las Cruces, N.M., to attempt a repeat championship.

"I feel like the biggest thing for them is they just have to be relaxed going into the tournament," first-year Head Coach Sonia Hahn said. "They are very aware that they were champions last year, but it's just a matter of focusing on the here and now and just having fun in the tournament."

The team will play shorthanded after freshman Amanda Guardia left the team. With only five active players, they automatically forfeit one doubles match and one singles match.

Newcomer and sophomore transfer Marine Darzyan has turned her season around since first joining the orange and gray. The native of Volgograd, Russia, had lost seven of her first eight doubles matches this season.

On Feb. 18, Coach Hahn made the move to pair Darzyan with sophomore Dominique Ibarra. Since the pair linked up, it's been an impressive 10 consecutive wins in doubles. They beat duos from Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Lamar and Texas State universities, as well as all of the WAC matches.

"I think we have good communication with each other," Darzyan said of her partner. "We understand each other

well. We are kind of like matching, maybe, our personalities as well. It's important in doubles to have that connection with the person you're playing with. And I think me and Dominique have that connection and it helps us."

"We did not bad in the pre-matches before the conference [tournament]," Darzyan said. "I think the WAC is really competitive. All schools are good, all teams are good, they're well prepared. I think we have pretty good chances."

Coach Hahn had spent the previous 19 years competing in the Southeastern Conference, taking her team to plenty of conference tournaments, as well as a

especially the few that have experience from last year's run.

Ibarra serves as one of two who carried over from last year's championship team. The sophomore from Barcelona, Spain, has a big role, playing the No. 1 doubles seed and usually the No. 3 singles match.

Ibarra's conference singles record this year is 5-1. She's only lost once, to University of Missouri-Kansas City's Mariam Kurasbediani, while defeating women from Chicago State, Seattle, Grand Canyon and New Mexico State universities.

"When I'm playing I try to be as posi-



Head Coach Sonia Hahn instructs freshman Chloe Leclere during practice last Thursday at the Orville Cox Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus. The team is preparing for the WAC Tournament on Friday.

period of 17 consecutive NCAA tournament appearances.

"The way our conference is, everyone is so evenly matched," Hahn said. "To me, I think on a given day, any team can beat anyone. To us, it's just a matter of being mentally tough and being focused. It really is who can have a full team being consistently focused."

She'll count on all of her team, but

tive as I can," Ibarra said. "The environment doesn't feel as good as we want because we're just five players. That just shows us we are more tough than before, because no one can rely on anyone. Everyone has to get the job done, work hard, do extra."

The tournament will span over the course of three days with the championship round taking place Sunday.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



SARAH CARVAJAL/THE RIDER

Name: Chloe Leclere

Sport: Tennis

Classification: Freshman

Major: Kinesiology

Age: 18

Hometown: Abbecourt, France

Who is your favorite athlete?

"[Novak] Djokovic because he plays good. I think he's a good person because a lot of young players become crazier as they become famous, so I don't want to become like that. I want to stay a good person like him and work hard."

Who is your role model? "Serena Williams because she is a great fighter. She works hard and I want to work hard, too."

What was the best advice you've been given and by whom? "My coach, Sonia [Hahn], said not every day you'll play good, but you need to find a way to and a way to win, even if you're not having a good day."

When did you begin playing tennis, and why? "I began at 4 years old. My family plays and I like to play, so I continued since that time and I wanted to come here to continue and do my school at the same time."

What's your favorite place to hang out on campus? "The library is really cool."

How do you feel being a part of this team? "It's really good. The girls are nice. We work hard and we all have the same objective, so we work together and we're close, so it's great."

What are your personal goals for this season? "Try to do my best, achieve my goals and win."

--Compiled by Sarah Carvajal

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