

# THE RIDER

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2017

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## PRIDE AND TRADITION

### It's time for a fiesta



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

Mr. Amigo 2015 Itati Cantoral (third from left) receives an official 2016 Charro Days framed poster along with a bouquet of flowers during the first annual Charreada last year on the Brownsville campus.

**Nubia Reyna**  
THE RIDER

For the second consecutive year, the UTRGV Brownsville campus will host a Charreada on Thursday that will feature a parade and recognition of Mr. Amigo 2016 Fernando Landeros Verdugo.

The Charreada is a UTRGV celebration that is part of Charro Days, a weeklong fiesta that celebrates the friendship between Brownsville and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico.

"Our legacy institution, UT Brownsville, was a part of the Charro Days festivities for many years," Veronica Gonzalez, vice president for Governmental and Community Relations, said in an email to the

campus community last Thursday. "This is the 80th Charro Days celebration."

This year, UTRGV is partnering with Texas Southmost College to celebrate Charro Days on both campuses.

"We wanted to emulate that spirit of friendship and collaboration across both campuses just so that students in the region don't feel a division and they're more participating in the spirit of unity," said Abraham Villarreal, Student Involvement program adviser for the Campus Programming Board.

The celebration begins with an intercampus parade at 10:30 a.m. Processions from the TSC and UTRGV campuses will meet on Ringgold Road. UTRGV's procession begins at

See **CHARREADA**, Page 7

### Can I get a whoop?



GABRIEL MATA/THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

Marin Holguin and Juan Cantu prepare to race on oversized tricycles during last year's Homecoming Tip-off celebration on the Chapel lawn in Edinburg.

**Marie Vallangca**  
THE RIDER

UTRGV is celebrating its second annual Homecoming Week through Saturday. The week began last Thursday with a series of activities planned by a collaboration of school

**Campus Q&A,**  
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programs and organizations.

Homecoming is a tradition that many educational institutions in the United States celebrate. The campus community and alumni show their school pride and spirit.

Since the university only opened in

Fall 2015, there aren't alumni from 10 or 15 years ago to visit the university except for those of legacy institutions UT Brownsville and UT Pan American. Former coaches, students, faculty and staff are invited to join in the fun.

"It's our second year, but we also have our extended alumni, which are UTPA and UT Brownsville student graduates, which are considered our alumni to some point," said Janet Peña, who is part of the Homecoming Committee. "So, we invite everybody that has some type of connection to the university."

The university will introduce a new tradition, the UTRGV Royals. There will be three UTRGV Royals, they must be role models that exhibit

See **HOMECOMING**, Page 7

## Medical school keeps growing Lands \$15M gift, plans second cohort

**Monika Garza**  
THE RIDER

February has been a good month for the UTRGV School of Medicine as it received a \$15 million grant and matched with 50 prospective students for its second cohort.

Steven Lieberman, interim dean of UTRGV's School of Medicine, updated the UT System board of regents' Health Affairs Committee earlier this month on the progress of the medical school.

Lieberman listed the medical school's accomplishments since the Texas Legislature approved its creation in 2013. The accomplishments listed were:

--founding the South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute  
--sponsoring, by this summer, seven medical residency programs at five Valley hospitals--Valley Baptist Medical Center in



MARIO GONZALEZ/THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

The Harlingen Clinical Education Building will house the new UTRGV School of Medicine Institute for Neurosciences.

Harlingen, Doctors Hospital at Renaissance, McAllen Medical Center, Valley Baptist Medical Center in Brownsville

and Knapp Medical Center. --receiving preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical

Education --completing its Medical Education Building on the Edinburg campus before

welcoming its first cohort of 55 students in June 2016.

On Feb. 3, the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation gave the university a \$15 million grant to establish the UTRGV Institute for Neurosciences, the medical school's largest gift to date, university officials say.

"The wonderful thing about [the gift] is that this is the biggest gift in the history of the School of Medicine," said James Mahon, interim executive vice dean for the UTRGV medical school.

Randall Baker, executive director for the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation, said the new institute will allow students get their specialization without leaving the Valley.

"I think it is fantastic that this program is going to come about," Baker said. "It is fantastic, first of all, because it's been a known fact that the

See **MEDICAL**, Page 10



THE  
RIDER

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Ana Sanchez

CONTACT:

EDINBURG CAMPUS

1201 West University Dr.  
ELABS 170

Phone: (956) 665-2541  
Fax: (956) 665-7122

BROWNSVILLE CAMPUS

1 West University Blvd.  
Student Union 1.16

Phone: (956) 882-5143  
Fax: (956) 882-5176

Email: TheRider@utrgv.edu

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday

Curt Menefee livestream

A presentation by **Curt Menefee**, host of “**Fox NFL Sunday**,” will be livestreamed from 6 to 7 p.m. in Salón Cassia in Brownsville and the PlainsCapital Bank Theater in Edinburg. The event is hosted by the **National Society of Leadership and Success**. For more information, call 607-7439 or email raul.leal01@utrgv.edu.

Wednesday

Percussion concert

**Percussion Associate Professor Mark Joseph Ramírez** will perform in concert at 7:30 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex in Edinburg. Tickets (\$10 for adults and \$5 for students with ID and senior citizens) can be purchased at <http://patron.utrgv.edu> or at the door. For more information, call 665-3881 or email [patron@utrgv.edu](mailto:patron@utrgv.edu).

**Dating Violence Awareness Student Rights and Responsibilities** will inform students on teen dating violence from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the PlainsCapital

Bank Gran Salón in Brownsville. For more information, call 665-5375 or email [douglas.stoves@utrgv.edu](mailto:douglas.stoves@utrgv.edu).

**World’s Greatest Hypnotist Sailesh**, a hypnotist, will perform in a show titled “**Come Sleep With Me**” from noon to 1 p.m. in the PlainsCapital Bank Gran Salón in Brownsville. For more information, call 665-7991 or email [louay.bachnak01@utrgv.edu](mailto:louay.bachnak01@utrgv.edu).

Thursday

**Cultural Movies Series: ‘Loving’ Student Involvement** will show “**Loving**” at 5 p.m. in Salón Cassia in Brownsville and at 7 p.m. at the Student Union Theater or the Chapel lawn in Edinburg. The film is about the social and political persecution an interracial couple has to survive through for love. For more information, call 665-2660

or email [kei.larabermea@utrgv.edu](mailto:kei.larabermea@utrgv.edu).

Game-A-Palooza

The **Student Union** will have free gaming from noon to 3 p.m. at the Student Union Game Room in Edinburg. For more information, call 665-7989 or email mabel.

[cortinamatos@utrgv.edu](mailto:cortinamatos@utrgv.edu).

Vaquero Luncheon

Meet the **UTRGV athletes** from noon to 1:30 p.m. and enjoy free food, fun activities and giveaways at the University Circle in Edinburg. For more information, call 665-7991.

Friday

Résumé assistance

UTGRV undergraduate and graduate students in health-related professions are invited to attend free **Training on Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)** from 12:30 to 5 p.m. in Sabal Hall 1.108 on the Brownsville campus. Register at <https://utrgvbrownsvillesbirt.eventbrite.com> or email [eluterio.blanco01@utrgv.edu](mailto:eluterio.blanco01@utrgv.edu).

Sunday

Duo Aldebaran

Music Assistant Professor **Krista Jobson** and Lecturer **Héctor Javier Rodriguez** will perform in concert as flute and guitar **Duo Aldebaran** at 7:30 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex in Edinburg. For more information, call 665-3881.  
--Compiled by Marie Vallangca

CLUB SPOTLIGHT



PHOTO COURTESY SEBASTIAN GAWENDA

Members of Hack and Make include (left photo, from left) Program Coordinator Mauricio Flores, Secretary/Historian Amanda Medina, Vice President Amanda De Leon, Treasurer Gilbert Fonseca III and President Mike Chaires. Right photo: Treasurer Alissa Flores and Brownsville Branch Chair Christian A. Martinez.

**Name:** Hack and Make

**Purpose:** Hack and Make serves to promote the attendance of hackathons as well as maker culture. Hackathons, a combination of “hack” and “marathon,” are a category of events in which a small team of students are given a time frame (often 24 hours) to create a software or hardware project from scratch. Maker culture is the technology-centric extension of do-it-yourself culture. Our focus is on providing a collaborative environment for teams of students to create their own projects either at events or on their own. We will achieve this primarily through the attendance and organization of hackathons, workshops to prepare students to work in a team environment, and

presentations of student projects throughout the academic year.

**President:** Mike Chaires

**Vice President:** Amanda De Leon  
**Brownsville Branch Chair:** Christian A. Martinez

**Secretary/Historian:** Amanda Medina

**Treasurer:** Gilbert Fonseca III and Alissa Flores

**Program Coordinator:** Mauricio Flores

**Social Media Editor:** Roel Barrea

**Adviser:** Timothy Wylie, assistant professor in the Computer Science department

**Activities:** Attends Hackathons outside the Rio Grande Valley, participates in HESTEC, develops and presents technological lessons at

workshops, learns or improves coding and programming skills, attends H&M Learning and Coding workshops, volunteers in techie community service events.

**Meetings:** 3-4:30 p.m. every other Friday in LHSB 1.102 on the Brownsville campus. Next meeting is Feb. 24.

In Edinburg, 12:15-1:30 p.m. every other Thursday in ENGR 1.262. Next meeting is Feb. 23.

**Membership requirements:** None  
**Dues:** \$20 (includes Hack and Make T-shirt, food and hardware access rental).

**For more information, email:** [christian.a.martinez01@utrgv.edu](mailto:christian.a.martinez01@utrgv.edu) or [chaires97@gmail.com](mailto:chaires97@gmail.com)

--Compiled by Michelle Espinoza

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Feb. 7 and 13.

Feb. 7

**8:01 a.m.:** An employee injured her left knee after she fell while going up the stairs in the Biomedical Research and Health Professions Building on the Brownsville campus. She refused emergency medical services and was advised to complete the report of first injury for Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management.

**7:44 p.m.:** A student reported that her purse was stolen from her vehicle while it was parked in the Visual Arts Building lot on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

**9:55 p.m.:** A student reported her laptop computer and headphones were stolen from the University Library on the Edinburg campus.

Feb. 8

**4:18 p.m.:** An unaffiliated driver backed into a UTRGV golf cart that a staff member was driving on Neale Drive on the Brownsville campus. No injuries were reported.

**6:45 p.m.:** A student reported he lost his wallet while walking from the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center to the Brownsville city bus station.

Feb. 9

**7:37 a.m.:** A staff member reported six smoke detectors were stolen from a mechanical room in the Coastal Studies Facilities in Port Isabel.

**10:12 a.m.:** A staff member reported fraudulent use of her university procurement credit card in Florida and Texas. The attempts were blocked with no loss to the university.

**11:58 a.m.:** A student reported receiving multiple harassing phone calls from an unknown male to her cell phone while on the Edinburg campus and off campus at her residence.

**5:29 p.m.:** Officers responded to a fire alarm in a lab at the Biomedical Research Building on the Brownsville campus. The officers found no signs of smoke or fire. UTRGV Environmental Health and Safety cleared the building for re-entry.

**8:21 p.m.:** A student reported his vehicle was damaged while it was parked in Lot E16 in Edinburg.

Feb. 10

**7:10 a.m.:** A female student reported being sexually assaulted by a male student acquaintance

between November 2016 and Feb. 2 at the Casa Bella student housing complex on the Brownsville campus. She reported the incident to Student Rights and Responsibilities and was informed its services. The case is under investigation.

Feb. 12

**5:20 a.m.:** A staff member reported a camera belonging to University Police on the Edinburg campus was lost. The camera was last seen about 10 p.m. Jan. 21. The camera’s value is estimated at \$140.

Feb. 13

**1:28 p.m.:** A student believes an unknown male was taking inappropriate photographs and videos of a female at the walkway by the University Library on the Edinburg campus. The information provided was by a third party.

**9:30 p.m.:** A student reported his vehicle was damaged while it was parked in Lot E27 on the Edinburg campus. Video footage showed the damage was not made while the vehicle was parked on campus.  
--Compiled by Macarena Martinez



# Living on your own

Macarena Martinez  
THE RIDER

Rent, utilities, student loan payments, medical insurance, gas, food, clothing and personal care expenses—these are all the costs of living on your own before and after graduation.

“You have to be very organized about all of your expenses,” said Aurora Gonzalez, who graduated with a bachelor’s degree in accounting in 2013 from legacy institution UT

Brownsville and a master’s degree in business administration in 2016 from UTRGV. Gonzalez, who works as a paralegal for the Internal Revenue Service in Austin, said she develops her budget weekly by pay period and she calculates her income and anticipated expenses.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website offers articles to help people with money management.

First, start to separate your expenses. Fixed expenses include mortgage payments or rent, utilities, medical or life insurance and student loan payments. Flexible expenses include gas, food, clothing and personal care spending, according to the website.

“You always want to have cash on hand as ... [an] emergency fund for unexpected things that can happen along the way, ...

unexpected job loss, helping a family member, etc.,” said Terrance Martin, an assistant professor in the UTRGV Economics and Finance department.

If in financial difficulties, try to see if there are areas where cuts can be made. For example, less expensive brands or items can be used instead, according to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website.

“Hiding financial difficulties from the rest of the family for long is nearly impossible, and it’s not

emotionally healthy,” the website states.

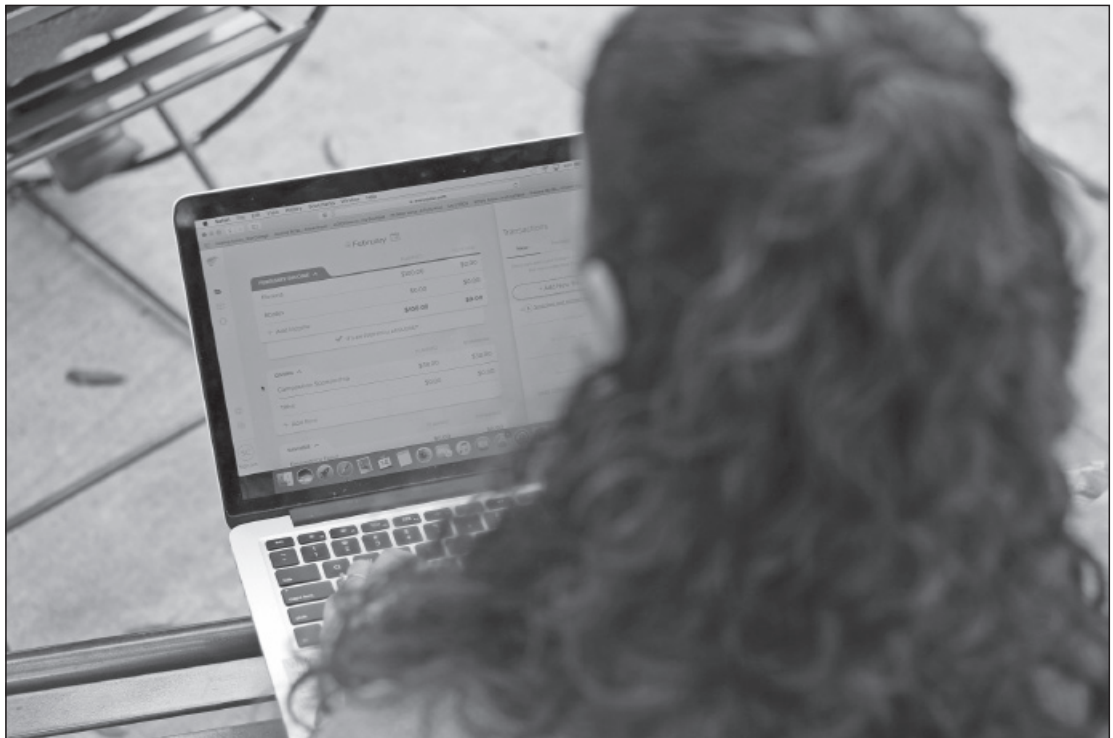
“Financial decisions affect the whole family.”

Many graduating seniors are in the process of filing an income tax return to receive a refund.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension shares some helpful tips for uses of a tax refund. Pay the bills you have fallen behind on, save for emergency funds or occasional expenses, save for special purchases and invest in yourself to improve your job skills.

No matter your financial needs, always be a smart shopper and focus on needs, not wants, according to the website.

Keep services such as utilities, phone, transportation, insurance, etc., in mind and when shopping, remember the necessities and luxuries, the



LESLEY ROBLES/THE RIDER

website states.

“Evaluate what’s the need, not the want. What do I need to take care of?” Martin said.

When obtaining student loans, students should know how much it is going to cost them. Obtain the best lending option with the best interest rates, Martin said.

He said students have six months to start paying the loans after they graduate and if they do not get a job within that time frame, they need to start putting money aside.

“You don’t want a situation where you have a certain

job, only paying you a certain amount of money and you go stay at an apartment that takes the bulk of your salary as well as if you have a brand-new car payment and you’re living your life neglecting your student loans.”

The website states that no matter how bad the situation might be, do not ignore the bills and creditors.

Graduates should save money for things such as a new car, a home, children and retirement. It all starts with creating a budget or spending plan, calculating your income,

expenses and how much you can save, according to the website.

When graduates start their employment, they should make sure their employer offers a retirement plan and take advantage of all the benefits it offers, such as short-term and long-term disability insurance, Martin said.

For more information on money management or any other topics, visit [agrilifeextension.tamu.edu](http://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu).

# The United States of opiates ‘Dreamland: Evening with Sam Quinones’

Bryan Ramos  
NEWS EDITOR

Opiate addiction and abuse is an increasingly problematic issue plaguing the United States.

On Thursday, Sam Quinones, a freelance journalist and award-winning author will be in the Edinburg campus Ballroom at 6:30 p.m. to give a keynote address and sign copies of his acclaimed nonfiction book “Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic.”

The “Dreamland: Evening with Sam Quinones” event will be presented by the UTRGV Collegiate Recovery Program, School of Medicine and School of Rehabilitation Services and Counseling.

In 2015, opioids were involved in 33,091 deaths and opioid overdoses have quadrupled since 1999, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Today, nearly half of all U.S. opioid deaths involve a prescription opioid. More than 15,000 people died from overdoses involving prescription opioids in 2015.

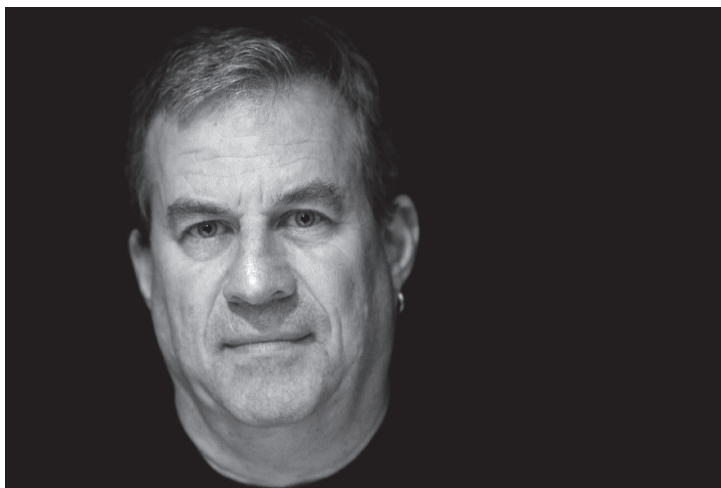
Kristina Canfield, program coordinator of the Collegiate

Recovery Program at UTRGV, said overprescribing painkillers such as OxyContin is a problem in the pharmaceutical industry.

“There’s a lot of evidence that shows big pharmaceutical companies really flooded parts of our country with an outrageous number of narcotic painkillers such as OxyContin,” Canfield said. “In my experience in working in inpatient treatment for a long time to being a part of the advocacy movement is that we overprescribe them. We don’t have a lot of medical professionals that have the knowledge about addiction yet and we’re working to change that.”

Quinones has covered crime and immigration while working as a journalist. He worked for the Los Angeles Times from 2004 to 2014. “Dreamland” dives deep into the world of heroin and painkillers in the United States.

“I began to realize there’s this unseen particle in one plant that has evolved to become absolutely essential to the dominant mammal on the planet, the opium poppy I’m talking about,” Quinones



Sam Quinones

COURTESY PHOTO

said in an interview Nov. 7 on the “WTF with Marc Maron” podcast. “Within that opium poppy, there is a morphine molecule and within that molecule we have the possibility of heaven and hell, freedom and complete enslavement.”

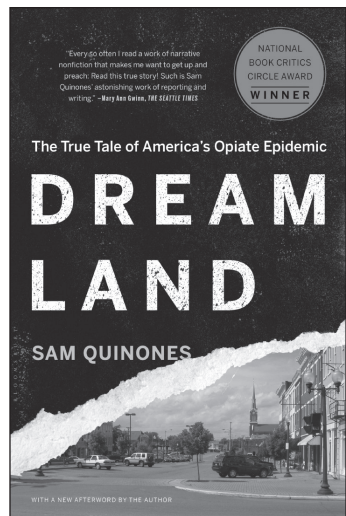
When opiate overdoses strike, they strike hard. In August 2016, officials in Huntington, W.Va., treated 26 patients who overdosed on heroin in just a five-hour window.

Canfield said opiate addiction affects everybody

involved, addicted or not.

“Statistically, everyone at some point will be affected by this whether or not they’re the person addicted,” Canfield said. “Addiction is really about community and Sam’s book really addresses that, the lack of community that really allowed the opiate crisis to take over. His ideas are that we have to come together as a community, everybody, whether or not you’ve been touched by addiction yet.”

Quinones said the morphine molecule in opium poppy can lead to the highest of highs



and the lowest of lows.

“This [morphine] molecule could create the most blessed relief, freedom from the most tortured pain and it could also be the source of the greatest debasement, the greatest enslavement we’ve ever known,” Quinones said during the podcast.

“Dreamland” was named one of Entertainment Weekly’s 10 Best Books of 2015 and The Guardian’s Best Book We Read All Year.

Quinones will sign copies of “Dreamland” after his lecture.

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## Campus Q&A

### Do you plan to attend the Charreada and Homecoming events? Why or why not?



"I do not plan to attend these events mainly because I don't know what they are about. I think they did send us, like, a couple of emails mentioning both of these events but I haven't seen, like, a bunch of poster boards. I mean, I have a lot of emails that I get every day, so I can't read everything and I don't even know when or where these events are going to take place or at what time. So, that's pretty much why I am not attending."

**Estefania Luna**  
Biomedical sciences junior

"No sé cuándo sean. Yo creo que no están haciendo un buen trabajo anunciando. A lo mejor deberían de decir que realmente se va a hacer en 'Homecoming,' no nada más así. Es que como yo vengo de una prepa donde como que eso realmente no era 'algo' como que grande".



**Abelardo Elizondo**  
Estudiante de contabilidad de último año



"I will be going to a lot of Homecoming events because I'm part of CPB, which is the Campus Programming Board, and we kind of help set up all the events that go on around campus, so you'll definitely see me around more than likely."

**Raul Argueta**  
Nursing junior

"I don't think that I'll be attending any Homecoming events just because I don't really have time, and I honestly had no idea they were happening."



**Judy Cavazos**  
Mass communication junior

--Compiled by Ana Cahuiche and Gabriel Mata



## ¿Petróleos Mexicanos?



**Rebeca Ortiz**  
THE RIDER

The name says it all. PEMEX stands for Petróleos Mexicanos (Mexican Petroleum). Last December, five PEMEX stations opened in Houston, marking its debut in the U.S. gas station market. At this point, former President and Gen. Lázaro Cárdenas must be turning over in his grave.

These new franchisees will determine the fuel's selling price, according to Houston's market conditions (At \$1.99 per gallon, it is now among the cheapest in Houston). Now, in the midst of a 22 percent price hike or "gasolinazo," back in Mexico, this is outrageous. As of Feb. 13, the price of gasoline was \$2.92 per gallon.

As a Mexican living in the United States, I wouldn't participate in PEMEX's strategy to expand its horizons to the United States, at the expense of the Mexican people, in order to fulfill the mandate of economic value in the competitive environment resulting from energy reform (another gigantic blow for Mexico).

Petroleum is the most important natural resource we have in Mexico. No biggie.

The nationalization of Mexican petroleum was the expropriation of all oil reserves, facilities and foreign oil companies in Mexico. It took place on March 18, 1938, when then-President Cárdenas declared that all mineral and oil reserves found within Mexico belong to the government.

Two hours before informing his cabinet of his decision, Cárdenas made the announcement on the radio to the rest of the country. Five days later, a

crowd of 100,000 (according to the press) rallied in support of Cárdenas.

On April 12, 1938, a crowd of thousands of women gathered in front of the Palacio de Bellas Artes to make donations to pay the debt to foreign companies. Donations varied from chickens to jewelry, since the women encompassed all social classes. Several chronicles have been written about this moment. It is considered by many as the first act of emancipation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which served as inspiration for other transcendent social movements.

On June 7, 1938, President Cárdenas issued a decree creating Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), with exclusive rights over exploration, extraction, refining and commercialization of oil in Mexico. On June 20, PEMEX started operations.

PEMEX held a monopoly of Mexico's oil and gas sector until President Enrique Peña Nieto signed reforms last year opening the energy market to private investors for the first time in 76 years.

Now, Peña is not the only traitor. There have been several other presidents who have tried to alter the constitution so that foreign companies could interfere in the petroleum industry (perforation, extraction, refining and distribution).

Let's go back and remember that President Adolfo López Mateos delivered a visionary speech during the act of the electric industry nationalization on Sept. 27, 1960.

"People of Mexico, I give back to you the electric energy, which is exclusive property of the nation, but don't get confused, because in future years some bad Mexicans will try to return the oil and our resources to foreign investors."

The history of Mexican petroleum has barely started to be written in its reality.

“As a Mexican living in the United States, I wouldn't participate in PEMEX's strategy to expand its horizons to the United States, at the expense of the Mexican people...”

## Submit a Letter to the Editor



**Letters policy:** *The Rider* encourages letters but does not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit for grammar and content. Letters for *The Rider* may be sent to [TheRider@utrgv.edu](mailto:TheRider@utrgv.edu). All letters must be typed and no longer than 400 words. Letters must include the name, classification and phone number of the author. Opinions expressed in *The Rider* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Rider* or UTRGV administrators.

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# Meet William Adams

**Name:** William Leigh Adams

**Title:** Part-time lecturer at UTRGV. Previously, served as a professor at legacy institution University of Texas at Brownsville since 1989.

“I was here for 27 years and then in 2015 I retired, and then last year I taught a year in China and I’ve come back and now I’m teaching part-time here.”

**Department:** History

**Degree:** Doctorate in history (1975) from the University of North Dakota; master’s degree in political science (1979), State University of New York at Binghamton; master’s in European history (1973), University of North Dakota; and a bachelor’s in history (1966), Central State University of New York College.

**Hometown:** “Brownsville. I was born in New London, Conn., but this is home now.”

**Military service:** U.S. Navy lieutenant, 1967-1972. “I served in the U.S. Navy for six years. I would like to say I was a naval officer for six years and I was aboard the aircraft carrier USS Forrestal. You know the supercarriers that they’ve been taking apart out at the breaking yards at the port? There was one a few years ago, they brought in and ripped it apart, sold it for scrap metal. And then I served in a NATO command in Lisbon, Portugal.”

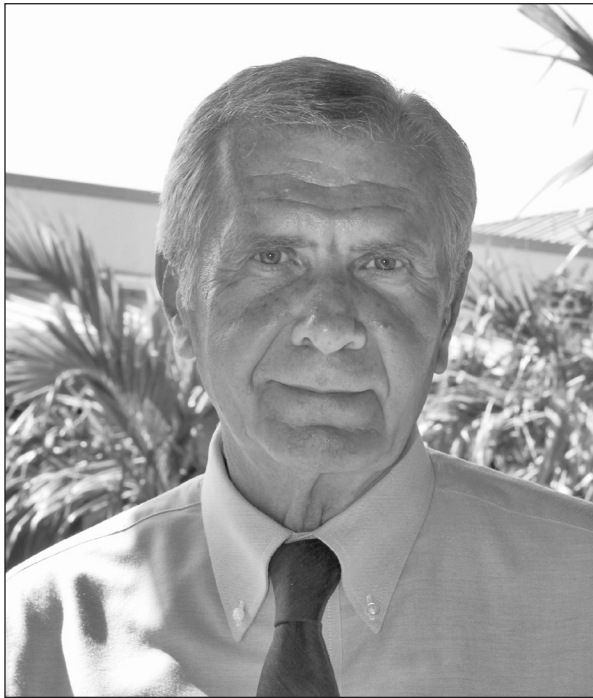
**What made you pursue teaching?** “I always had an interest in it. My mother was a history teacher, but I’ve always been interested in history.”

**What would you say most motivates you to do what you do?** “Well, my love for my subject, but also being around young people. I enjoy young people. It keeps you young being around them.”

**What brought you to UTRGV?** “Well, I had taught for 14 years with the Marist Brother monks, that’s a Catholic order, and I had taught in Australia, mainly in a place called the Solomon Islands, but when I left Australia I looked for a Marist Brothers school and Saint Joseph Academy in Brownsville was one. So, I taught there and then the second year, I got a job here at the university.”

**What do you do for your students?** “Well, I want them to know the topic that I’m teaching. If I’m teaching American military history, I want them to know our military history. If I’m teaching Asian history, I want them to learn the basics about Asian history.”

**What classes do you currently teach?** “This semester, I have American military history. I have world history since 1650.”



MICHELLE ESPINOZA/THE RIDER

**Have you written a book, and if so, what inspired you?** “Yeah, I’ve written five books.”

--“Portrait of a Border City: Brownsville, Texas” (Eakin Press, 1997).

Co-written by Anthony K. Knopp

--“Valley Vets: Texan World War II Veterans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley” (Eakin Press, 1999)

--“Valley Vets II: Korean and Vietnam Veterans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley” (Eakin Press, 2004)

--“Remembering Xinxiang (China)” (Nortex Press, 2001)

--“Night Song and other True Tales of the Orient” (Nortex Press, 2010)

“I wanted to write about the cities I’ve lived in. I’ve lived in Brownsville for many years, and I love Xinxiang, China, so I wanted to write about those. I wrote ‘Night Song’ and I spent a year sabbatical traveling around East Asia. I spent a month in different, in 12 different countries, and I wrote a story about each. ... And I look for interesting people in different countries to write about their lives, find people that normally, you know, tourists would never meet. Like, one of

the things I did, I moved constantly with their tribe. Wherever I went, I looked for something different, unusual that common travelers don’t see.”

**What do you like to do on your free time?** “In my free time currently, I like to take care of my lawn and I put together ship models. And I do woodworking. I’ve been doing it for about 15 years. In my home, I’ve got sort of a museum for my ship models. The one that I’m working on now will probably take two years, you know. Some of them are bigger than me.”

**Do you sell them?** “No, no, I just keep them in my little museum, you know. I used to collect shells. You know, go snorkeling, and I did that for about 40 years in different parts of the world, almost every ocean I’ve been to, to snorkel and, you know, I have quite a collection of these seashells that I’ve built up over 40 years. Often, you know, when I’m looking for a vacation, I pick, you know, something like the Philippines, or the Indian Ocean, or the Red Sea so that I could get different seashells. A long time ago they had them on display in the library, the one that’s now part of TSC; they had them there. Schoolchildren would come and visit them. ... So, I put it on display and I hope to put it on display again.”

**When you think of the future of America, what are some of your concerns?** “Well, what really concerns me right now is President Trump. I’m hoping he’s actually smart enough to do this job. I hope the people he’s surrounded with are going to be able to [do the job] ... because he has very little background in foreign affairs or politics or the military.”

**What gives you a sense of hope?** “I’ve always liked young people. They continue to be optimistic and very decent people for the most part. I think America has good people. Most Americans are kind.”

**What are some more fun facts about yourself?** “My son also teaches here in the business department, and my daughter-in law also teaches in the business department. [Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Associate Professor] Russell Adams and my daughter-in law is [Associate Professor] Clara Downey-Adams. I have another daughter, she’s in San Antonio. ... Kirstin Langreich. She’s married now. She is a nurse supervisor.

**What advice would you give to students?** “Well, to learn what they’re being taught so that they can actually make a good living at what their career is.”

--Compiled by Michelle Espinoza

## What should I major in?

*Throughout this academic year, The Rider will explore the programs of study at UTRGV. This is the sixth in a series. The Rider interviewed David Carren, Theater interim department chair, for information.*

**Major:** Theater

**School:** College of Fine Arts

**Department Chair:** David Carren

**Prerequisites:** None

**Total credit hours needed to graduate:** 120

**What is theater?** “Well, we’re kind of unique, actually. Most theater, television, film programs at other universities work separately. They do not talk or work together. They don’t even like each other very much. There’s a divide between film and theater, and we have a unified program because all film is, is photograph theater. So, if you want to get into film, you have to know how to create a character and work with actors at the level you do in theater with rehearsal and character intention and theme and all the great stuff that theater does. If you want to have a career as an actor, or anywhere in theater, you most likely at some point have to work in TV or film because that’s where most of the employment is. So, we cover this pretty well from both ends. We are going to soon approach some things differently in a sense of concentrating the major on theater and film, but right now we are theater, television, film. We are the largest community theater in the Valley, and we produce seven or eight shows a year, which is a pretty busy schedule. Every six to eight weeks we produce a show. There are a variety of shows. It goes from Shakespeare to light comedies and some children’s theater to some studio theater where we do some experimental stuff. We do original plays, and students get to act in all of this stuff. We also produce films, mostly short films. We are also the only program in the country that

gets to produce a feature every couple of years. The feature is, depending on the circumstances, is written, produced and/or directed by students depending on how we approach it.”

**Which classes can students expect to take?** “A lot of production classes such as location and field production. Editing, which is very important because whatever you want to produce in film or television, you need to have editing. Theater, we have acting, directing, lighting for stage and screen, scene design, costume design, it pretty much covers it all. You will have the basic things you need to work in theater or film.”

**What skills will students learn by the time they graduate?** “Editing, cinematography, sound, costume design, art direction, how to act beyond just making stuff up as you go along, improvisation, writing, not only in film, but also in theater. So, pretty much anything you can think of that involves film, television or theater, we offer it to our students.”

**What are some possible careers?** “The critical thinking you take from our department will apply to anything you want to do. Any form of media production, whether it’s music videos, PSAs, independent production, studio production, film production, any aspect, it’s all covered. Our students, because of today’s light equipment, can produce their own project and work in various entities either local or across the country and at the same time, pursue their national goals such as producing features or their own series. Some of our students, especially at the design end, are all working. We’ve been very successful in that. A fair number

of our students have gone on to Los Angeles. One of our students won an Emmy for editing ‘Amazing Race.’”

**Who are some possible employers?** “Since we’re the largest community theater in the Valley, we’re at the top of the heap here for community theater. As far as narrative film and television production, you have to leave the Valley. The big production centers right now are in Atlanta, Ga.; Louisiana; and California. All of these states have incentives now, and they’re trying to compete to bring production to the states. When I worked in the business in the mid-2000s, it was largely centered in Los Angeles. Students don’t necessarily need to go to California for production jobs and, actually, that might not be a good idea because production is leaving California pretty quickly. So, they can go to another state. There isn’t a lot of production in Texas because its incentives aren’t strong enough, but maybe they’ll change it.”

**What salary can a student expect to earn after graduation?** “A gig

on a crew in production can be pretty amazing. Not long ago, it was in the \$50-, \$60-, \$70,000 range to be working on a crew. If you were on a television crew, you would make enormous money because they work nine to 10 months a year. Most employment is in television. Probably 70 to 80 percent of employment for production is in television. That includes writing, producing and directing. Television is booming now, so there is a lot of opportunity. If you want to get into the film business to just work in movies, that’s not very practical.”

**Are there any student clubs?** “Kappa Sigma Psi is a theater fraternity we have. If you want more information about that, please contact [theater Assistant Professor Brian Warren at brian.warren@utrgv.edu or 665-7474]. He can give you all you need to know about it.”

**For more information:** contact David Carren at david.carren@utrgv.edu or call 665-2634.

--Compiled by Sarah Carvajal

**Want your major featured? Email us at [TheRider@utrgv.edu](mailto:TheRider@utrgv.edu) or call us at 882-5143 in Brownsville and 665-2541 in Edinburg!**



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# SGA discusses campus safety

J. Edward Moreno  
THE RIDER

The Student Government Association met Feb. 3 and 10 to discuss matters concerning campus safety, shuttle services and the fulfillment of duties of certain officer positions.

Richard Costello, director of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management, spoke at the Feb. 10 meeting about the mobile equipment policy, which could restrict the use of bicycles, skateboards and other equipment in certain areas on each campus.

“We have an increased number of individuals using mobile equipment--with that we’ve seen a significant amount of complaints,” Costello said. “Basically, the issue is a lack of respect for pedestrians.”

There have been two reported instances in which students were severely injured while using mobile equipment; one was a bicyclist who was hit by a vehicle while using a crosswalk, and the other was an individual on a skateboard who crashed into a post on the covered walkway while trying to veer away from pedestrians.

“When we look at liability on an institutional campus--the institution is not going to be held responsible for paying for any injuries,” Costello said. “What our issue is, in the event that a pedestrian gets injured, and we don’t have any policy in place to protect them--then, ultimately, the university could be held at risk.”

“The policy will most likely ban skateboards and bicycles on the covered walkway in



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIEL MATA

the Edinburg campus and on the Resaca bridge in the Brownsville campus,” Costello said.

The details of the policy are still being discussed. A completed policy will be announced at a later date.

At the Feb. 3 meeting, Costello and University Police Chief Raul Munguia spoke about the possibility of removing the blue emergency phones and received ideas from the SGA for replacing those services.

Munguia said service provider AT&T ended its 2G systems on Dec. 31, leaving most of the phones located further away from the center of campus out of service.

The university is now faced with the decision of either removing the affected phones, or replacing them, which could cost between \$8,500 and \$10,000 per phone. Failure to replace or remove them could result in a lawsuit for not maintaining current equipment, Costello said.

“It does not appear that they have ever really been used,” Munguia said. “We looked back at the records to see how many true emergency calls we had taken, and we had zero--we had one call in Brownsville that was a carjacking, which actually turned out to be a false report.”

Costello said the biggest issue associated with

maintaining the emergency phones is that unlike other campuses with similar phones, the Wi-Fi connection at UTRGV is not capable of providing service to all of the phones, forcing most of them to function through a cable that ties them directly to the police department.

In order for those cables to comply with safety standards, they need to pass routine inspections, which they often had trouble with due to the humidity in the area obstructing the underground cables.

“In terms of the amount of people who have actually used them, the cost it took to install them, and the cost

associated with maintaining them, the numbers don’t add up,” Costello said.

With the removal of the emergency phones, the funds once used to maintain them could be transferred to other projects that could improve safety around campus.

“The phones can give students a sense of security, but it’s interesting that at the state that they are now, covered in caution tape, they seem to have the opposite effect, whereas if they weren’t there at all,” said SGA Senator Kanea Macdonald. “I think it would be a better investment to focus on security cameras and additional lighting.”

A final decision is pending.

Kristina Cantu, chair of the SGA’s campus life and community affairs standing committee, brought up concerns about persistent noncompliance with the “no-smoking” policy on campus and provided an update on the status of the new Vaquero Express Connector shuttles.

“There was some issues with the paperwork at Valley Metro, and we are now about five months behind schedule,” Cantu said. “We probably will not be seeing the shuttles this semester, but hopefully in the fall.”

During the comments and announcements portion of the meeting, SGA Associate Justice Marcelina Gutierrez brought up a concern about Alondra Galvan, the SGA vice president in Brownsville, not being able to fulfill her constitutional duties due to her current internship in Austin.

See SGA, Page 10

## HOMECOMING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

qualities, such as scholastic achievement, leadership, citizenship, character and emulate the spirit of the UTRGV community. The student body can vote on their favorite royal candidate on my.utrgv.edu. Voting began last Thursday and ends this Thursday.

“We want the students to get out there and feel that pride within the university,” said Louay Bachnak, president of the Campus Programming Board. “We used to be UTB and UTPA, but now we’re one university. We’re under one vision, one mission. We want students to have pride in being a Vaquero.”

There will be many activities

and events happening throughout the week on both campuses.

Today, the Tip-Off Party runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Student Union lawn in Brownsville and at the University Circle in Edinburg. The event will feature UTRGV athletes and have free food, music and a lip sync battle of student organizations.

On the Edinburg campus, the Vaquero Olympics will run from 6 to 9 p.m. in the University Recreation Center. Teams of four to six members will compete in a variety of contests. The same event will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Casa Bella student housing complex in Brownsville.

Student organizations are invited to participate in Can-Struction, a food drive benefitting the UTRGV Food

Pantry, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Student Union veranda in Brownsville and University Circle in Edinburg.

A DIY Swag Party, where students can make their own Vaquero spirit flag, will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the Student Union lawn in Brownsville and the Chapel lawn in Edinburg.

The campus community is invited to root for its favorite college as deans across campus battle it out in the halftime free-throw contest during the 7 p.m. UTRGV vs. Seattle University men’s basketball game in the Fieldhouse in Edinburg. The event is part of Faculty and Staff Appreciation Night. The college with the highest student attendance will be declared most spirited.

At 6 p.m. Friday, the

university will host the grand opening of the new entry plaza to the UTRGV Baseball Stadium, named after legendary baseball Head Coach Emeritus Al Ogletree and his late wife of 62 years, Joann.

On Saturday, the 2017 Athletics Hall of Fame Induction takes place at 11 a.m. at the Baseball Stadium in Edinburg. The class includes the 1980-81 men’s basketball team, former men’s basketball player Kenneth “Apple” Green, former women’s basketball player Becky (Dube) Thomas, former baseball players Jack Ewing and Jim Proctor, and former women’s tennis player Ellen Nelissen.

The Homecoming Cook-off at the Tailgate Party will run from 3 to 6 p.m.

in parking Lot F near the Fieldhouse in Edinburg. Student organizations and departments can enter the three categories of the cook-off: fajita, guacamole and elote. Students can taste and vote on what they think is the most delicious dish.

The Homecoming Tailgate takes place before the basketball game from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Fieldhouse parking lot in Edinburg. Students’ family members are invited to experience campus life.

All the events are hosted by collaborations of the Homecoming Committee, the Campus Programming Board, the Student Union, University Recreation, Athletics and Housing and Residential Life. For more information, call 665-2660.

## CHARREADA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Main Building entrance. The university’s student organizations will compete for a \$100 cash prize.

Villarreal said the parade will be similar to the Hands Across the Border ceremony at the Gateway International Bridge that will take place earlier in the day.

Participants from both schools will meet in the middle of Ringgold Road, the border between both campuses “to kind of emulate what is taking place on the international bridge,” Villarreal said.

The first-, second- and third-place winners in a door-decorating contest that began last Thursday will be announced during the

Charreada, which will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Ringgold Road.

“It’s going to feature organizations from both campuses, fundraising and selling food items, and we are going to have competitions and activities put on by both student groups here at UTRGV and TSC,” Villarreal said of the Charreada.

Food to be sold includes corn in a cup, tostaditas, hot dogs, pizza, fajita tacos and nachos.

Landeros, founder and president of the foundations Teletón México and Teletón USA, is expected to arrive in TSC’s SET-B Lecture Hall around 11:45 a.m.

“We will have a formal ceremony honoring and welcoming the invited guest from Mexico,” Villarreal said.

He is being recognized by the Mr. Amigo Association for contributing to the friendship of the United States and Mexico. The association was created in 1964. Past Mr. Amigos include Cantinflas, Juan Gabriel, Veronica Castro, Lucha Villa and Arath de la Torre.

Landeros is the “visionary behind the CRIT system of children’s rehabilitative hospitals in Latin America and the United States, which is the largest private pediatric healthcare network in the world,” according to the teletonusa.org website.

Villarreal said it’s important to support the relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros and their shared culture.

Students are also excited to be part of this celebration.

“It sounds very interesting,” said Sabrina Garza, a psychology sophomore. “To gain the experience and see what they have to offer, hopefully, to make a memorable experience out of it.”

Garza believes that it is “pretty cool” that UTRGV and TSC are collaborating on the event. TSC and UTRGV legacy institution UT Brownsville entered into a partnership

in 1991 but split after the UT System board of regents voted to end it in November 2010, followed by a similar vote by the TSC board of trustees in February 2011. UT Brownsville and UT Pan American merged in Fall 2015 to create UTRGV.

“It’s going to be good for the community so they know that everyone is united,” she said.

Admission to the Charreada is free and open to the public.

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JESUS SANCHEZ/THE RIDER

El desarrollo de viviendas, Buena Vida, fue reconocido como “Choice Neighborhood” por el Departamento de Viviendas y Desarrollo Urbano de EE.UU. (HUD).

**Rebeca Ortiz**  
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

El pasado mes de junio, el Departamento de Viviendas y Desarrollo Urbano de EE.UU. (HUD por sus siglas en inglés) nombró al desarrollo de viviendas, Buena Vida, como uno de sus 10 “Choice Neighborhoods” distribuidos en toda la nación.

El Departamento de Viviendas de la Ciudad de Brownsville (HACB) recibió un bono de \$500,000 para el desarrollo de un plan de transformación que posteriormente será presentado ante HUD con la posibilidad de calificar para una concesión de hasta 35 millones de dólares para su implementación. Dicho plan se trazará en un período de dos años.

De acuerdo a su sitio oficial, las concesiones de la iniciativa de “Choice Neighborhood” (CNI) apoyan a las comunidades que han atravesado por un proceso de planeación y están listas para implementar su “plan de transformación” para re-desarrollar su vecindario.

“Nos han otorgado medio millón de dólares para en dos años, tener un plan que va a impactar la comunidad de Buena Vida”, dijo Hilda Ledezma, directora de servicios de la comunidad de HACB. Los límites de Buena Vida incluyen las áreas de la Calle Sexta hasta la Calle 22 y Frontage hasta la Calle Madison. “Son más o menos 1,000 familias que van a ser impactas, más o menos 6,000 personas”.

Buena Vida, que es el primer desarrollo de viviendas de Brownsville, fue construido en 1939 y fue inaugurado el 15 de agosto de 1940.

La población estimada de Brownsville es de 183,887 personas (2015), con una media de ingresos del hogar de \$32,894 (2011-15) y solo 64.1 por ciento terminó preparatoria y/o educación de nivel superior.

Parte de esta estrategia de revitalización es la colaboración de residentes, líderes locales, propietarios de negocios, escuelas, empresarios, organizaciones no lucrativas y promotores privados, para la identificación de críticas y posibles mejoras en la vecindad.

Dado que en las áreas colindantes a Buena Vida se encuentran muchos sitios de interés público, tales como el Brownsville Museum of Fine Art, el zoológico de Gladys Porter, Brownsville Children’s Museum, el Camille Playhouse, el departamento de policías, la corte del condado de Cameron y el Historic Brownsville Museum, además de muchos edificios históricos.

Este lunes el Departamento de Viviendas inició su período de encuestas donde hacen preguntas relacionadas con la salud, nivel de educación y empleo de los residentes para poder identificar los retos a transformar la comunidad de Buena Vida.

La iniciativa de “Choice Neighborhood” se centra en tres objetivos fundamentales, mismos que son compartidos por el Departamento de Viviendas de la Ciudad de Brownsville, que son vivienda, personas y vecindario.

“El plan de ‘Choice Neighborhood’ impacta a las familias, impacta a la vivienda, impacta a la comunidad, entonces, ya de acuerdo a lo que se haya identificado ahorita en la primera etapa del plan, es en lo que se va a invertir”, dijo Ledezma, quien explica que las necesidades de la comunidad abarcan muchas cosas, como mejor alumbramiento, mejores calles, mejor transporte, cosas de limpieza”.

Para lograr estos objetivos básicos, las comunidades deben desarrollar su plan de transformación el cual se convertirá en el documento guía para la revitalización de las unidades de vivienda pública, mismo que dirigirá la transformación hacia las familias y el barrio que la rodea.

El comité directivo de Buena Vida “Choice Neighborhood” tiene representantes de UTRGV, Texas Southmost College, del centro cultural Carlotta K. Petrina, del zoológico Gladys Porter, Brownsville Museum of Fine Art y de la Ciudad de Brownsville.

“Esto fue un proyecto colaborativo con la ciudad, no es nada más de HACB”, dijo Ledezma. “En la ciudad vienen todos los departamentos, como los de policía, Parques y Recreación ... BISD, el distrito escolar, entre otras”.

Para en un futuro poder implementar con éxito el Plan de Transformación, los solicitantes tendrán que trabajar con las agencias públicas y privadas, organizaciones, para recoger y aprovechar los recursos necesarios para apoyar la sostenibilidad financiera del plan. Estos esfuerzos deben construir el apoyo de la comunidad y su participación en el desarrollo de esta estrategia.

Ledezma asegura que aunque haya transformación en la infraestructura, la esencia y cultura de Buena Vida seguirá fuerte y en continuo crecimiento y recalco la visita de varios residentes a Washington, D.C., el 8 y 9 de marzo donde asistirán en representación de Buena Vida como “Choice Neighborhood”.

Laura Villarreal, presidenta de la asociación de residentes de Buena Vida, dice sentirse muy contenta y halagada de poder asistir. “Es un programa que se está haciendo para todos los que viven aquí alrededor de los negocios, de las propiedades de personas particulares, y es una transformación de planeación que se va a llevar a cabo”.

Sobre la posibilidad de que el plan de transformación sea aprobado por HUD, Villarreal dijo encontrarse positiva. “Por eso estamos haciendo varias encuestas, varias juntas aquí en Buena Vida, para estar hablando con la gente. Este es nuestro plan ... que la gente dé su opinión, que platiquen que es lo que esperan de Buena Vida, algo mejor, para prosperar. ... Tiene muchos años este proyecto pero, a la vez, yo pienso que los residentes merecemos vivir algo mejor”, dijo ella.

Villarreal, que lleva 26 años residiendo en Buena Vida, piensa que el vecindario puede durar muchos años más con la ayuda de una transformación.

Como parte de la celebración por su nombramiento como “Choice Neighborhood”, 25 niños de Buena Vida presentarán un baile folklórico durante la semana de Charro Days, a las 6 p.m. del miércoles dentro del vecindario.

“Es una forma de celebrar, y de anunciar a la comunidad entera que Buena Vida es ‘Choice Neighborhood’”,

dijo Ledezma.

Los niños, que presentarán el Jarabe Tapatío y cuyas edades varían desde los 4 a 12 años, están siendo ensayados por Julio Fuentes, instructor y fundador del grupo folklórico Telpochcalli y participarán en el desfile y tendrán otra presentación en el evento “Alboroto Mexicano” a las 6 p.m. del domingo en el centro cultural Carlotta K. Petrina.

“Hay mucho niño en este vecindario que desgraciadamente no tienen recursos para pagar una escuela [de baile], pero los niños traen mucho potencial, mucho talento y entonces aquí se les está dando la oportunidad”, dijo Fuentes.

El grupo folklórico Telpochcalli opera bajo la organización R.O.C.A. (Renacimiento de Artes Culturales) misma que tiene su sede en Carlotta K. Petrina, el cual se encuentra en el área de Buena Vida.



ANA CAHUICHE/THE RIDER

Miembros del Grupo Folklórico Telpochcalli ensayan el martes de la semana pasada en el Centro Cultural Carlotta K. Petrina en preparación para su participación en Charro Days.



# A tradition of classical music in the Valley

**Sarah Carvajal**

THE RIDER

Sounds of cases opening, fingers pressing down keys and valves and bows along strings fill the auditorium as the Valley Symphony Orchestra gets on stage to begin its performance.

The VSO was established at legacy institution UT Pan American in 1952 when a group of volunteer musicians decided to form it. It showcases the talents of local musicians, as well as international musicians who come to perform with them.

"Its purpose is to serve the community, and to educate and inspire," said Peter Dabrowski, VSO music director and University Symphony Orchestra conductor. "For many years, it served as a community orchestra combining the talents of the area, such as professors, educators and the most talented students."

The VSO puts on six concerts every season in its series. In addition to these performances for the public, the VSO performs Children's Education Concerts to about 10,000 elementary students.

"Some of them, believe it or not, are handicapped, they cannot hear," Dabrowski said. "So, when I play concerts for them, and I know they cannot hear it, but they can feel the vibrations of the music, these concerts are very special. They make me feel very humble, and I know when musicians share their talent with young audiences, these concerts are building the future."

Today, over 90 musicians are a part of the VSO with about 50 percent of the members being UTRGV and UTPA alumni, students and faculty, including cello studio and music Professor Tido Janssen as the assistant principal cellist.

"I've been a part of the VSO since I moved to the Valley in 2011," Janssen said. "My favorite part is playing with other people and seeing them on a regular basis."

Janssen moved to the states from Germany in 1992 for his post-graduate degrees.

"When I moved here, I was asked if I wanted to participate," he said. "Where I came from, I was always a part of an orchestra, so I was looking forward to being in it."

UTRGV supports the VSO by providing rehearsal space and a venue for concerts. The relationship is beneficial to both organizations, Dabrowski said.

"It's a very equally serving situation because I think both UTRGV and VSO help each other for many different purposes,"



PHOTOS COURTESY VICTORIA MOSQUEDA

Assistant principal cellist Tido Janssen (center) performs next to the principal cellist Benjamin Ponder.

he said. "If you're performing with the local orchestra, then you're advertising the university with the quality of your playing, which resembles the quality of the teaching. The university offers the space for the concerts and the rehearsals and support through professors and talented students participating in it."

The VSO also has a chorale section that joins the orchestra during some of its performances. David Means, UTRGV director of Chorale Studies, conducts the choir.

"This is my fourth year at both the university and as the conductor of the VSO Chorale," Means said. "My favorite part is probably the rehearsal process. I enjoy watching people learn music that they don't know and then get it to the performance stage."

The VSO Chorale rehearses every Monday on the Edinburg campus and performs two concerts a year alongside the VSO. This year, the chorale did a Christmas performance titled "Touch of Frost" in November, and will perform again March 2 in a concert titled "Brahms with Opera" at the McAllen Performing Arts Center.

"We don't do the whole concert," Means said. "We're only half of the concert."

The VSO and the VSO-Chorale began the 2016-2017 season



Peter Dabrowski conducts the Valley Symphony Orchestra.

performing only at the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex. This year, they added the McAllen Performing Arts Center to their list of venues for performances.

"This is my 16th year with the orchestra," Dabrowski said. "And after 16 years, we now have two acoustically sophisticated concert halls."

Auditions are held once a year for the next season.

"It's kind of like an interview process where you pick music that the VSO picks for you, and

part of what you pick for yourself," Janssen said. "Since the level of playing is pretty high, you would have to compete with a lot of highly educated musicians in the Valley, so start early and practice a lot would be my advice."

Means outlined the process for chorale auditions.

"Well, they would need to contact me, generally by email," Means said. "Then, we will see what chorale experience they have. It's not the kind of choir you just show up to because you

like to sing. You have to be able to read music well. There is a piece you have to learn and there is some sight-reading."

For those interested in joining the VSO, auditions for the 2017-2018 season will be held toward the end of August or early September.

For more information, visit [www.valleyorchestra.org](http://www.valleyorchestra.org) or call 661-1615. To join the chorale, email Means at [david.means@utrgv.edu](mailto:david.means@utrgv.edu).

## Trials and Trifles



By Clarissa Martinez



# First comes self love



CLARISSA MARTINEZ/THE RIDER

Micaela M. Rodriguez (left) informs education freshman Britney Laurents (from left), freshman Kimberly Barton and psychology freshman Bianca Jasso about the health services Su Clínica provides with the Healthy Texas Women program during the Self Love event last Tuesday at the Student Union veranda in Brownsville. The UTRGV Know Your Status organization hosted the event to provide information on health, promote safe sex and conduct free STD tests in observance of National Condom Day. Friendship of Women, Planned Parenthood and Feministxs Unidxs also participated in the event.

## SGA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

“Although the internship is a great opportunity for her, it does come with dire consequences,” Gutierrez said. “Although many of her duties may be done via teleconference--we have had to make several accommodations for her absences already.” Galvan told *The Rider* that although her internship has caused her to be absent from some meetings, she was able to file absence slips when necessary and have it approved since her internship counts as academic credit hours.

“My internship is a class, it is not an extracurricular activity--there are several members who do not attend the senate meetings, but are also excused because they have class,” Galvan said. “There’s been previous vice presidents, as well as other members, who have been in the same position as I’m in. There is nothing in our governing documents that states that someone should be removed because of an internship so long as they fulfill their duties.” The next SGA meeting is scheduled for 2 p.m. Friday in Education Complex 1.102 on the Edinburg campus and Biomedical Research Building 1.222 on the Brownsville campus. Meetings are open to the campus community.

## MEDICAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Rio Grande Valley has had a shortage of primary care physicians for years and even though this is not a primary care, there’s virtually no specialties offered in the Rio Grande Valley now. Medical students or actual residents who do want to specialize typically have to go outside of the Valley ... and this program will allow students to get their specialization right here in the Valley, primarily in Cameron County.” The new UTRGV Institute for Neurosciences will be housed on the Harlingen campus. Mahon said it is important to recruit and retain students in the Valley. “The more residencies you have, the more often you can keep those residents when they are finished with their three- or four-year obligation to keep them in the Valley. That is why it’s critical for recruiting and retaining [students] because we have a shortage of doctors in the Valley,” he said.

Asked if the university will ask for more gifts from other foundations, Mahon replied: “We are trying to [go] out to other foundations, trying to see if we match to some of them. This was sort of the founding gift. In other words, there wasn’t a UTRGV Institute for Neurosciences. ... So, now there is.” Mahon said the school will use the \$15 million gift next fiscal year.

“The significant funding from the Legacy Foundation starts [on] Sept.1 ... and we really will use the time between now and Sept. 1 to do the ramping and planning, so that when the foundation starts allocating the funding, we will have a very defined plan of how we are going to spend it,” Mahon said.

Gabriel de Erausquin, a UTRGV professor in psychiatry and neurology, said the gift is an opportunity to develop programs with multiple effects on the region.

“On one hand, [the gift] will allow to develop educational programs for doctors in neurology ... and to expand what we have for doctors in psychiatry as well as to provide opportunities for training for students in those areas,” Erausquin said. “And on the research side, it will provide very significant funding to start the neuroscience projects that will allow the university to compete for federal funding in line with [the White House BRAIN Initiative] that was started by President Obama in 2015.”

“In addition, the funding will allow us to start very important clinical programs to provide services ... that are currently not available, such as evaluation assessment and treatment of patients with early psychotic illness or patients with presence of disabilities such as blindness or deafness. And

last but not least, it will allow us to do community engagement and to develop primary care integration initiatives that will allow us to reach the community to provide services and education that are currently not available.”

Mahon said the \$15 million gift will fund the UTRGV Institute for Neurosciences for three years.

“This grant is funding us for three years,” he said. “So, what we will be doing is going after money from the University Texas System ... and we will be going after federal funding for grants. So, to know the actual budget, it’s going to depend on how successful we are in obtaining other sources of funds. But, we know that we have this [\$15 million] grant to launch with. ... That is a great base to start from.”

Asked if UTRGV will construct more buildings for the institute, Mahon replied: “At some point, when we need more capacity, we will probably buy ... or build a separate structure.”

Mahon said the South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute, established in 2014 on the Brownsville campus, was the first institute the UTRGV School of Medicine founded. The new UTRGV Institute for Neurosciences will be the second.

Research from the South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute is underway with a focus on diabetes, obesity, heart disease, ocular health, psychiatric disease, osteoporosis and infectious diseases to address health disparities in the region, according to the UTRGV website.

In other news, the medical school has found 50 prospective students for its second class. Of these, 45 are from Texas, including 11 from the Rio Grande Valley. Seven are from Hidalgo County, two are from Cameron County and two are from Starr County.

The UTRGV School of Medicine received 3,950 applications and interviewed 320 students for 50 seats, according to a UTRGV news release. The medical school then ranked applicants for admission.

Applicants also ranked the medical schools to which they applied in order of preference. The rankings from the medical school and applicants were sent to the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service, a centralized application processing service for all first-year medical students applying to public medical, dental and veterinary schools, to be matched, according to a UTRGV news release.

Students have until the first day of orientation, which is scheduled for July 5, to decline the acceptance offer. Because of this, the medical school is not releasing names of the top 50 students with whom it matched.

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# Fit for spring

## UTRGV taking advantage of local boom



GABRIEL MATA/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Recent Northern Kentucky University transfer Anders Mathieson drives through Houston Dynamo players. The Dynamo beat UTRGV 5-0.

**Nathaniel Mata**  
SPORTS EDITOR

UTRGV men's soccer is half a year away from its upcoming season. It's also four months removed from the end of the WAC tournament. However, Head Coach Paul Leese's team is still on the pitch, facing professional squads.

The spring season got underway with the stiffest competition available, Major League Soccer's Houston Dynamo. On Feb. 4, the Vaqueros played a 60-minute match against the Dynamo, losing 5-0. The final scoreline was lopsided, but UTRGV kept Houston at 2-0 until the floodgates opened late.

Leese said the game served as motivation and a unique opportunity.

"You can't ask for anything more than playing against the MLS guys," he said. "For these young boys, they all want to see themselves in that position. What better way to measure how much more work they have to do and the areas they need to grow."

Feeding into the development of UTRGV soccer, and on a broader scale, soccer in the Rio Grande Valley is the growth of RGV-FC. The professional team is part of the United Soccer League. The Toros serve as a development program for the Dynamo.

The parallels between the Toros and Vaqueros are easy to recognize. The teams are both in their infancy, UTRGV's first season was 2015, and the Toros inaugural season was last year.

Leese said the structure of soccer is now a complete pipeline, from youth to professional.

"Whether you go from youth club, from academy level," the head coach said. "Then you got the college level, immediately after that you have the USL, then you have the MLS. You got a perfect structure. You're developing that, and that's the most valuable thing.

Former Vaqueros Alex Ochoa and Juanito Garcia saw action for the Toros defense in the second half Monday.

Brownsville native and Rivera High School alumnus Isidro Martinez is an early example of a local taking advantage of the pipe-

offense. The defense also faced the best forwards it has probably ever had to mark.

Defender Michael Faber was a freshman last season and only took positives from these matches. He is looking forward to growing along with the budding soc-



Midfielder Ilias Kosmidis attempts to break through a tackle by Houston Dynamo midfielder Boniek García.

You don't want to lose a player who drops through one of those gaps. You've always got a team that can help pick them up."

UTRGV also faced the Toros this semester. It lost 2-1 Feb. 13. The Vaqueros were outshot 6-3. New Mexico University transfer Andy Rios made three saves in his debut with the team. He started the second half and his only conceded goal was an own goal.

The Toros already have UTRGV influence on their preseason roster, just two years into their existence.

line.

He scored UTRGV's lone goal in the 2-1 loss to RGV-FC. He will be a junior next season and is soaking up as much knowledge as he can.

"Obviously, they're pros so we learn from them, we learn from their skills and the way it is in the next level," said Martinez, who tied for the team lead in points last season. "It gives us that learning process. So, we start learning from now to build up to the season in the fall."

Playing against a strong team is a struggle for an

cer program.

"It really gives you a good standing of where you're at," said Faber, a New Zealand native. "You have to push yourself to see not only where you stand, but where you can get to. To be getting games this early on is fantastic. From what's been said and the footage we have and statistics, we're only going up."

UTRGV will play one home game during the preseason stretch. It will host St. Mary's University at 3 p.m. April 9.

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



SARAH CARVAJAL/THE RIDER

**Name:** Nichelle Hyman

**Sport:** Basketball

**Position:** Guard

**Classification:** Sophomore

**Major:** Biology

**Hometown:** Clovis, N.M.

**Who is your favorite athlete?**

"That's a tough one. There are so many athletes out there that are inspirational, so it's really hard to pick one. I can name a couple. There's LeBron James, [Russell] Westbrook, there's just so many out there that are so good that I can't name just one."

**Who is your role model?**

"I would definitely say both my parents. They work very hard to get what they earn and to make a good life for me and my brothers. They're definitely my role models and they inspire me to do better every day."

**What is the best advice you've been given and by whom?**

"The best advice I've been given is, 'Listen to the message and not how the message is delivered,' which was given to me by my parents. You know, whenever someone is yelling at you, you take the positive things they say. Take the actual message and not how they're giving it to you. Don't take the yelling to heart."

**When did you begin playing basketball, and why?**

"I started playing basketball in middle school. I thought I would try it out, and I really sucked. I couldn't catch the ball, I couldn't dribble, it was definitely rough for me, but my parents asked me if I'd like to do it, and I said yes. Ever since day one, I've tried to learn how to play the game of basketball."

**Where is your favorite place to hang out on campus?**

"I would say the Science Building. Sandella's is my favorite place to eat."

**What are your academic goals?**

"My academic goal this year is to get straight A's."

**How do you feel about being part of this team?**

"Being a part of this team is definitely fun. I like the communication, the team chemistry and I definitely learn every day from the coaches, so it's a good atmosphere."

**What are your personal goals for this season?**

"My personal goal for the season is to get better, whether it be offense or defense."

--Compiled by Sarah Carvajal



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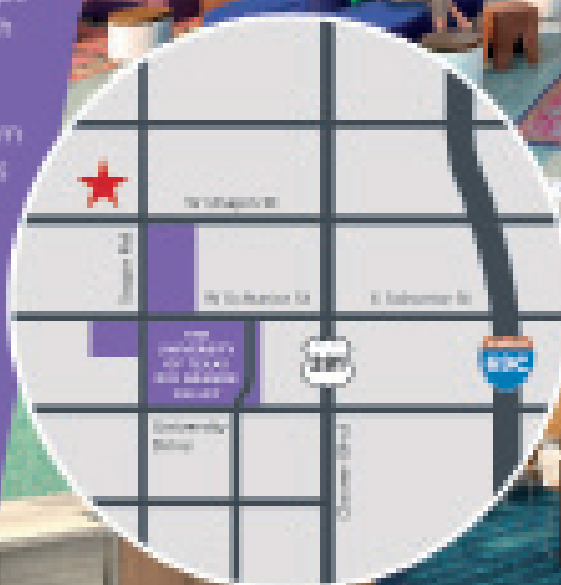
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