



UTRGV ENROLLMENT DROPS

Preliminary figures show 26,077 students enrolled at UTRGV for the Spring 2018 semester. **See Page 3**



LEARN HOW TO PLAY CHESS

The Rider and UTRGV Chess join forces to teach the campus community the basics of the game. **See Page 10**

THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

THE RIDER

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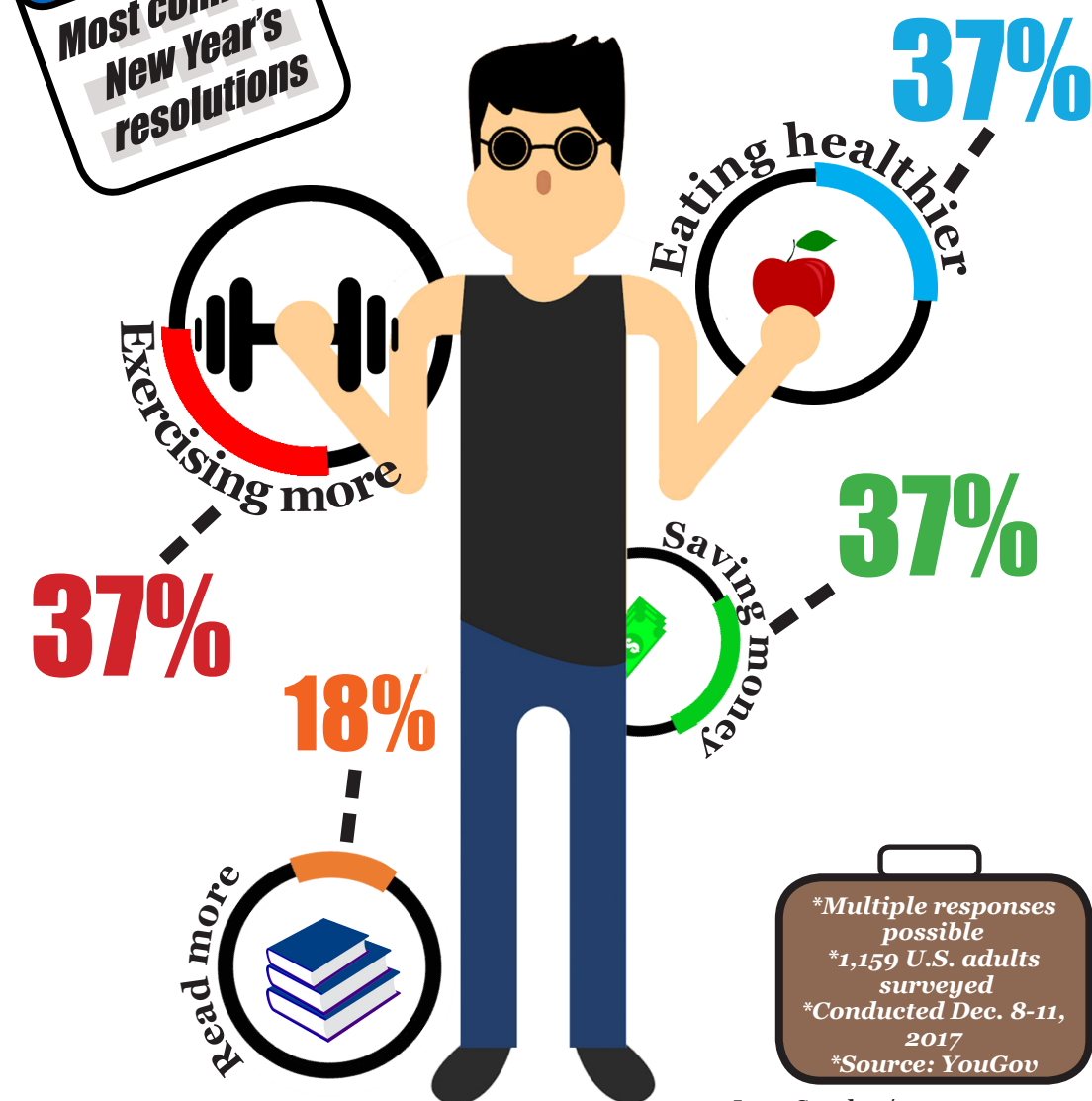


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A CLEAN SLATE, A NEW STATE OF MIND



Jesus Sanchez/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

A guide to making and keeping your resolutions

Jesus Sanchez
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Each December, most people give into temptation and don't make the best health decisions, but it's OK, because in the new year, everything will change and they will start with a clean slate. Well, that idea sounds nice, but the reality is most will have failed to keep up with their New Year's resolutions by the end of January.

For tips on keeping resolutions, *The Rider* interviewed James Whittenberg, an assistant professor of counseling whose areas of expertise include

positive psychology; Laura Zeldá-Villarreal, a registered and licensed dietitian nutritionist and lecturer in the Health and Biomedical Sciences department; and Omar Garza, the head trainer and owner of PÜR Fitness in Brownsville.

Where to start

It is not uncommon for most New Year's resolutions to include improving health or happiness.

These resolutions may feel overwhelming at times and most of them fail because they are not the right ones.

What makes a bad resolution?



SMART Plan

- S pecific
- M easureable
- A ttainable
- R ealistic
- T ime oriented

People can make a bad resolution when it is created based on expectations of others, when it is too vague or unrealistic.

Whittenberg said a New Year's resolution should be SMART.

"In our field, in counseling, when we work with clients, we ask them to establish See **RESOLUTIONS**, Page 8



Valeria Alanis/THE RIDER

Five new shuttles were expected since November. Valley Metro sent two of them during the first week of January. UTRGV Parking and Transportation Services is expecting three more vehicles.

Vaquero Express increases capacity

The Connector adds two more shuttles; each fits 42

Nubia Reyna
THE RIDER

Last semester, the Vaquero Express Connector increased its capacity by 70 percent after obtaining two large shuttle buses with 56 seats each. During the first week of January, the university received two more shuttles with 42 seats each, making the fleet a total of 15.

"We are expecting three more, hopefully, within the next week," said Rodney Gomez, Parking and Transportation Services director.

The university expected to

receive five more shuttles last November from Valley Metro to make the fleet a total of 18. However, Valley Metro has yet to send three more shuttles.

"The delay is that the units are obtained through Valley Metro ... so, we rely on them," Gomez said. "We are just waiting on the other three."

The university has a contract for transit services with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, a voluntary association of local governments in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy counties.

According to the contract,

See **SHUTTLES**, Page 2

Closer to campus

Brownsville HR Department relocates to University Boulevard

Zugay Treviño
THE RIDER

The Brownsville staff of the UTRGV Human Resources Department relocated last month from The Woods on Alton Gloor Boulevard to the new Vaquero Plaza, located at 2395 W. University Blvd., to facilitate accessibility for the campus community.

Trini Yunes, director of Human Resources, said the new location makes it easier for faculty and staff to address any concerns they have in person.

"We would like to invite everyone to get the opportunity to come in if they have any related matter for the entire Brownsville campus," Yunes said. "It is about two blocks, walking distance, from campus."

The new location is near Casa Bella, the university's student housing complex. The department's office hours will remain the same.

See **PLAZA**, Page 7

COUNTDOWN to voter registration deadline

21 DAYS LEFT

FEB. 5, 2018

THE RIDER

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MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today

Recovery Meetings

The **Collegiate Recovery Program** will host **recovery meetings** this semester: **Alcoholics Anonymous** at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays, **SMART Recovery** at noon on Tuesdays, **Narcotics Anonymous** at 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and noon Fridays, **Tobacco Intervention** at noon on Wednesdays, and the **Al-Anon Family Group** at noon on Thursdays. All meetings will be held in University Center 102 on the Edinburg campus. For more information, call 665-2674.

Tuesday

Engaged Scholar Award

The **Office of Engaged Scholarship and Learning** is accepting applications for its two awards, the Engaged Scholar Award for Undergraduate Research and the Engaged Scholar Award for Creative Works. These awards provide students with real-world experience, one-on-one mentoring, application of their

skills and building for their curriculum vitae, résumés or portfolios. The deadline to apply is Feb. 16. For more information, email engaged@utrgv.edu, or call 882-4300 or 665-3461.

Info Depots

The Student Union will host **Info Depots** from 8 to 10 a.m. on the Student Union lawn in Brownsville and the Information Desk in the



Have an announcement?

Email us at
TheRider@utrgv.edu

Student Union in Edinburg. For more information, call 665-7989. The info depots will be available at the same time Wednesday in the same locations.

Game-A-Palooza

The Student Union will host its **Game-A-Palooza** at noon in El Comedor on the Brownsville campus. For more information, call 665-7989.

Wednesday

Engagement Zone Blitz

Student Involvement will host its

Engagement Zone Blitz from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Main Building lawn in Brownsville and in Lot E4 in Edinburg. For more information, call 882-5111 or 665-2660.

Campfire Bash

The Student Union will host its **Campfire Bash** at 6 p.m. on the Student Union lawn in Brownsville and the Chapel Lawn in Edinburg. For more information, call 665-7989.

Addiction and Recovery Support Group

The **Collegiate Recovery Program** will host an **Addiction and Recovery Support Group** at 11 a.m. in Cortez Hall 220 on the Brownsville campus. For more information, call 665-2674.

Friday

Mariachi concert

Mariachi Aztlán in Concert will take place at 7 p.m. in the Performing Arts Complex Auditorium on the Edinburg campus. Admission is \$10. For more information, call 882-7025. The same event will take place at 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in the same location.

--Compiled by Steven Hughes

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Dec. 20 and Jan 5.



Dec. 20

9:55 p.m.: The Edinburg Fire Department and University Police were dispatched to the Performing Arts Complex in regard to an

active fire alarm. The fire panel indicated "Elevator Smoke Detector." Upon further investigation, it was confirmed that a custodial staff member had accidentally activated the alarm. The fire department cleared the scene.

Dec. 31

7:14 a.m.: UTRGV Police and the Edinburg Fire Department were dispatched to the University Library in reference to an active fire alarm. The alarm was set off due to a dirty smoke detector. The building was deemed safe for re-entry.

Jan. 2

10:55 a.m.: A staff member at the

UTRGV Baseball Stadium reported multiple pairs of sunglasses stolen from an unsecured office in early December. The case is under investigation.

Jan. 3

2:24 p.m.: A staff member at the UTRGV Alumni Center reported losing a key that gave her access to the



University Police

Brownsville

Dispatch

882-8232

Edinburg

Dispatch

665-7151

Email: Police@utrgv.edu

Campus Emergency: 882-2222

building.

Jan. 4

3:34 p.m.: A staff member reported losing a total of six university-issued keys at his McAllen residence.

5:32 p.m.: A staff member reported finding an unsecured door to a room in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus. No signs of forced entry were apparent and the

staff member reported there were no missing items.

Jan. 5

10:32 a.m.: A faculty member reported losing three university keys during the holiday break.

10:35 a.m.: An officer responded to an active fire alarm inside the UTRGV Campus Store on the Brownsville campus. It was determined the smoke detector was set off by an air-conditioner/heating unit. The Brownsville Fire Department evacuated the building and deemed it safe for re-entry.

5:04 p.m.: An officer made contact with a suspicious subject who was reportedly attempting to gain access to locked offices in the University Center on the Edinburg campus. He was identified but had no affiliation with the university. He was issued a criminal trespass warning for all UTRGV properties.

--Compiled by Britney Valdez

SHUTTLES

Continued from Page 1

the university pays \$24,000 per fiscal year for the "purchase of service."

"That amount is what is paid to cover, for example ... the one that goes to the Visual Arts Building," Gomez said. "Valley Metro runs that one. And, it is also to pay for the students riding free on all Valley Metro routes. You know how you only have to show your ID? Students, faculty and staff. That pays for that as well."

The official schedule for this semester has already been posted in the Parking and Transportation Services official webpage, www.utrgv.edu/parking-and-transportation-services/transportation-services/, and it shows 15-minute differences from last year's Vaquero Express Connector route.

From Brownsville to Edinburg, the 1:30 p.m. route will now be at 1:45 p.m. The 4:30 p.m. route will be at 4:45 p.m., with a stop in Harlingen at 5:15 p.m., and the 9 p.m. will be at 9:15 p.m.

From Edinburg to Brownsville, the 1:30 p.m. route will be at 1:45 p.m., the 4:30 p.m. at 4:45 p.m., with a stop in Harlingen at 5:30 p.m., and the 7:30 p.m. route at 7:45 p.m.

All other route times remain the same.

"We are going to put the Rio Grande City route," Gomez said. "We just changed, like, a couple of minutes there, too, but other than that, it's the same. We wanna keep it consistent."

He said the department is expecting an increase in ridership because every spring semester they see a "bump" in riders.

The Vaquero Express Connector had 34,564 riders for Fall 2016. In Spring 2017, it had 41,667 riders, increasing ridership by 43 percent. For Fall 2017, the ridership was 59,783, an increase of 73 percent.

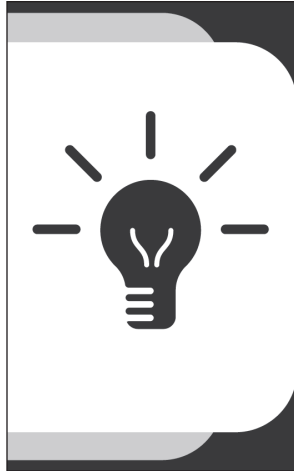
"[The additional shuttles] will provide enough seating capacity, and we hope to put those new units

into service starting at the end of this month, as soon as we get all the extra amenities, for example, the camera system, and we make sure that the drivers are fully trained," Gomez said.

The new shuttles will have Wi-Fi available for riders.

"We're also going to install routers in all the buses, so it will provide more connections for the new buses and more stable internet than the one we've had in the past," he said. "We'll phase it in starting with the new buses and then slowly will add the additional units as we get new units."

For more information and special accommodations, email transportation@utrgv.edu.



WHAT DO YOU WANT
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Enrollment: by the numbers

Undergraduate figure declines while graduate increases

Britney Valdez
THE RIDER

As of Friday, UTRGV's preliminary enrollment numbers show a total of 26,077 students for the spring, a 8.78 percent decrease from last fall. Additionally, the graduate school expects 3,034 attendees, an increase from previous years.

Last fall, the university had 28,588 students, resulting in a 9.2 percent increase in UTRGV's retention rate from Fall 2016.

Maggie Hinojosa, vice president for Strategic Enrollment, said the decrease in the overall number of students is typical for this time of year.

"Spring is always a decrease from the fall," Hinojosa said. "Across the country, you never see an increase from fall to spring. That [is] typically based on the fact that spring is not the time that you're bringing in new students. Seniors in high school graduate in June and July, so you're bringing them in the fall. Spring goes down a bit and, obviously, summer is much smaller."

Freshmen make up about 25 percent of the student population and returning students make up the other 75 percent, according to Hinojosa. In Fall 2017, the university posted a 14 percent



Robert Benavidez Jr./THE RIDER

The payment deadline for the Spring 2018 semester was last Wednesday. Preliminary numbers show a total of 26,077 undergraduate students registered for this semester.

increase in freshmen.

The university will utilize new technology to improve communication with prospective students.

"Some of the things we have done differently is implement a new communications relationship management system that not only allows us to better track our communications to prospective students, but will even allow us to, for example, let's say we sent an email out to a prospective student, we could see if they opened the email or not," Hinojosa said.

UTRGV will also send

recruiters to San Antonio to increase diversity within the school.

"We are also in the process of hiring a recruiter that will be housed in the San Antonio area to scout for students," she said. "We do [recruitment] outside of the [Rio Grande] Valley, but this person would actually be housed in the San Antonio area."

Of this semester's 26,077 expected attendees, 22,885 are undergraduate and 102 in the medical school. Graduate school preliminary enrollment is 3,090. Of these, 2,854 are seeking a master's

degree and 236 are pursuing doctoral degrees.

Some of the most popular graduate programs are business administration, special education, educational leadership, and science and health science.

From Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, the graduate school experienced an increase of two students.

In a November email, UTRGV President Guy Bailey informed the school's faculty and staff about the decline in graduate enrollment.

Dave Jackson, dean of the Graduate College, said

the decline in graduate enrollment is impactful on the university's funding.

"We get funded based on the number of students we have enrolled and that funding is what is called Formula Funding," Jackson said. "Depending on the program and the level of the student, we get funded differently. For example, we get a higher amount of funding for a student in a business program than a student in one of the liberal arts programs. Also, we get more money for a student doing a master's than an undergraduate degree."

From Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, the university experienced a decrease in graduate enrollment, from 3,647 students to 3,072.

"When graduate enrollment fell like it did between 2015 and 2016, when we had that huge drop of 15 percent, that impacted us significantly more than what the numbers seemed on the surface," Jackson said.

He said graduate enrollment for the spring is expected to surpass that of the previous two fall semesters.

Updated enrollment numbers can be found at the Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting page on UTRGV's website, <https://www.utrgv.edu/sair/>.

New beginnings

UTRGV welcomes back students

Joahana Segundo
THE RIDER

This week, students will have the opportunity to bond with others, connect with campus resources, learn about the different organizations and be involved in the UTRGV community.

The university invites students to a variety of events and activities today through Friday on the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses during the Week of Welcome.

"It mimics or replicates the Best Week Ever that we have in the fall, but just to have the same kickoff feel for the semester in the spring," said Abraham Villarreal, UTRGV Student Involvement student program adviser.

Week of Welcome started today with MLK Day of Service, an event that brings the UTRGV community together to commemorate the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy by volunteering for local service projects hosted in the community. The event will take place from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. today.

Toss for Luck takes place the first week of class on the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses. Students toss coins into water fountains in the hope of good fortune, wealth, love, success, friendship and health.

Info Depots will be hosted from 8 to 10 a.m. Tuesday through both campuses for students who may need guidance in finding a location.

The Student Union and the University Recreation Center will host Campfire Bash, an event that hopes

to prepare students for the spring semester. Music, games and free food will be provided. The event will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday on the Chapel Lawn in Edinburg and Wednesday on the Student Union lawn in Brownsville.

Casino Night is the signature event of the week, where UTRGV students gather to play Texas Hold 'em, roulette, craps and blackjack to win prizes. Food will also be served. The event is scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday in the University Ballroom in Edinburg and Thursday in El Gran Salón in Brownsville.

"For our Casino Night ... we are expecting to have at least 500 students participate," Villarreal said.

The Career Center will host Resume Rave, an event where students will have the opportunity to get their résumés reviewed by staff and a professional photo for their LinkedIn profile.

The event is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday in the University Ballroom in Edinburg and Thursday in Salón Cassia in Brownsville.

Engagement Zone Media Blitz is an event where students will be able to learn about opportunities to serve the community, the Engagement Zone application and how to sign up. Food and prizes will be available. The event will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday on the Main Building lawn in Brownsville and Thursday on Lot E4 in Edinburg.

UTRGV Athletics is hosting Back to School Night with a tailgate party



THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

UTRGV students roast marshmallows to make s'mores during last year's Campfire Bash at the Chapel lawn on the Edinburg campus.

where food and entertainment will be provided from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday outside the Fieldhouse, followed by the men's basketball match against Utah Valley University from 7 to 9 p.m. The first 200 UTRGV students to attend the tailgate will win a stadium cup. A Watch Party will take place from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in Casa Bella in Brownsville, where food and giveaways will be provided.

Next week, the Student Org Fair will be hosted to inform students about university clubs across campus from noon to 1 p.m. Jan. 23 in the Ballroom in Edinburg and Jan. 24 in the Main Courtyard in Brownsville.

"It's good that they have [Week of Welcome]. It's a good opportunity to do other stuff [and to] get to know

the staff and other students," said Viridiana Garcia, a UTRGV social work graduate on the Edinburg campus who attended last year's Week of Welcome events.

Other events include Hasta La Vista 2017 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday in the Student Union in Edinburg and on the Student Union lawn in Brownsville, Stand Up Paddleboard Clinic from 4 to 6 p.m. Jan. 22 in the REK pool in Brownsville, Stalking Awareness from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. Jan. 23 in ESTAC 1.102 in Edinburg, and REC Fest from 7 to 10 p.m. Jan. 25 in the University Recreation Center in Edinburg.

To view the calendar of events, visit UTRGV Student Life on Facebook and Twitter, @utrgvsl.



VAQUERO VOICE

What are your resolutions?



"My New [Year's] resolution will be really to help out those that have been in the [graduate] program and really don't know where to go, as far as applying. Everything I have learned in the program and putting it into the world by getting a career and advancing, as far as my real life goes, and that would be it."

Ricardo Ginez

Graduate student in business (health care administration)



"Mi resolución por el año es graduarme."

Gloria Cecilia Cira Blanco

Estudiante de cuarto año de ingeniería en manufactura



"I just want to go ahead and pass all my classes with A's and B's ... and just keep looking forward in my life and not look back."

Randy Ramirez

Kinesiology sophomore

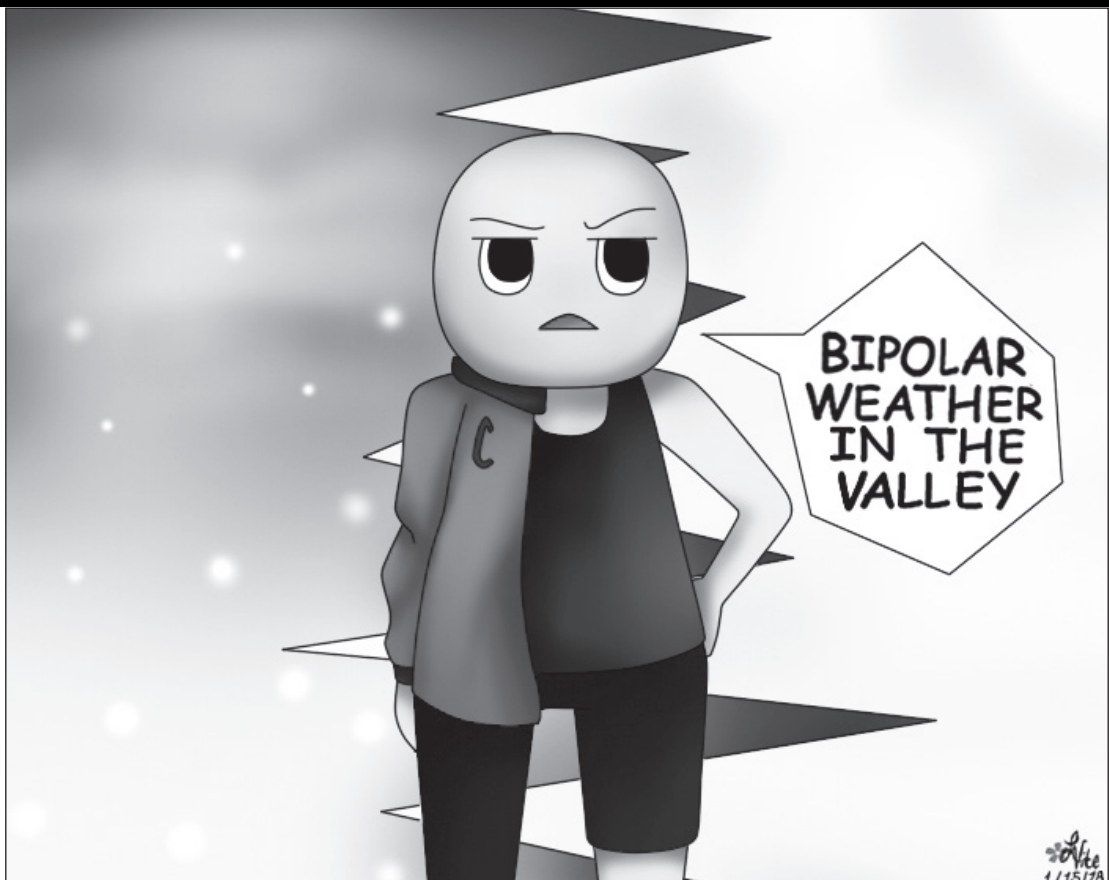


"To get out of debt and to read three books every month. I know that's crazy, but that's one of them, and to go on date nights every month with my husband."

Genesis Gomez

Psychology senior

--Compiled by Valeria Alanis and Albert Monrroy



The crown is around the corner A piece of advice from a prince



**P.J.
Hernandez**
COPY EDITOR

It feels as if I'm always pushed to a corner. It's like my name on a school assignment or a rook on the chessboard.

I'm just trying to make a play, but it's difficult to push the weight of coming fresh off the bench that's on the sideline.

In the fall, I wrote about how this doubt was raining over me just like a cloud. The solution to that was to take the reins of it and wear it like a crown. This is my true reign. I swear, once my pride catches its stride, I'll make everyone more proud than how Lavar Ball is of his three boys.

I've always been the good son. I mean, I'm from the Rio Grande Valley but I never did palm trees. I don't dare to drink because I can't drown my heart after all we've been through. Ha, we are so close that we bump fists and give each other dap, knowing well we got each other's back.

The only thing I did grasp was this pen and these 26 letters, hoping to find a combination to be safe.

Sometimes, I wonder how

everyone will remember me when I pass like an assist. I've never been a poster boy of perfection. So, would anyone try to see through my frame? I never was an all-star on the court, never been the smartest kid in the classroom, and couldn't be prince charming. But, you want to know something?

Whenever I write, I feel like a prince of the pen.

It's odd, even though writing can be a lonely profession; it's when most eyes are on me. It's the only time I feel like I have this blessing.

The shine.

I've noticed that people want to seek approval of others, as if to make sure they are doing something right. My advice is to never seek validation for your efforts. Unseen hustle shows that your train of thought is on the right grind on the underground railroad that is your mind. The travel hasn't been easy, though. Trust me when I say that I traveled sadder Miles than that of Davis' trumpet. It can be kind of blue when you're running after something that seems close, but, yet so far.

It's more beautiful than a struggle that you get over though and live to tell about it.

You have to marry what makes you stand the tallest and not flirt with it. Whether it be a person, place or thing, just promise to keep a ring. With my pen, I see the tops of skyscrapers and swear I can write my name in the skyline. However, there's always temptations, trials and tests

that will try to separate us.

At times, it feels like I'm trying to climb up Chapel Hill or Mount Olympus with Tar Heels. Then, there's more Sun Devils than Arizona State University that are hotter than Valley summers whose goals are to sway me off the path while singing so sweetly in my ears. Luckily, they dropped me as if I was a class that was too hard to pass. Maybe, they couldn't keep it together like the fist of a political activist. I can't have a heavy heart toward them, that will pour me into an early grave. It's just a sad shame we couldn't be on the same page.

Why writing? Well, I've always had this weird intuition. It's like I'm supposed to be this hero and save the world. I know I can't save the globe, but maybe I can rescue the one around me.

I said it before and I'll say it once more. We are all royalty. We all possess something special like an apostrophe. You can't give up looking for your own crown; and when you find it, don't let anyone knock it down.

So, if you ever hear a rumbling and drumming from down the street corner, it isn't Zeus or any type of thunder god. It isn't a chariot with a knight in shining armor. It isn't a player from the hood. It's a car that's blatin' tunes out the window.

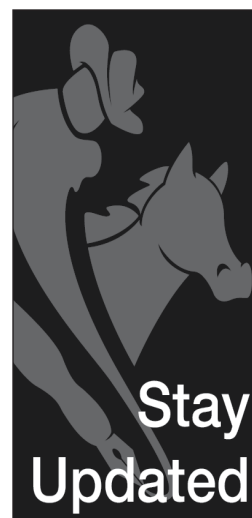
And you want to know who is in it?

It's me--the broke, brown boy who plays prince.

Submit a Letter to the Editor

The Rider encourages letters but does not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar and content. Letters for The Rider may be sent to therider@utrgv.edu. All letters must be typed and no longer than 400 words. Letters must include the name, classification and phone number of letter's author or the letter cannot be published.

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Trabajando para un mejor futuro

Madre construye un camino para sus hijas

Britney Valdez
THE RIDER

Maria Guadalupe Gonzalez fue capaz de comprarle su primer teléfono y computadora a su hija gracias a su trabajo como conserje nocturno en la universidad, donde ha trabajado por 11 años.

“Para mí [trabajar aquí] es importante porque me dio la oportunidad de sacar adelante a mis hijas y porque ... día a día me da mucho gusto ver a los muchachitos que están luchando mucho por salir adelante”, dijo Gonzalez.

Ella reside en Hidalgo con su esposo, Jose Luis Gonzalez. Empieza su día agradeciendo a Dios y llevando a cabo su rutina diaria, la cual incluye cocinar y cuidar su jardín.

Después Gonzalez maneja una hora al campus de Edinburg y trabaja de 6 p.m. a 3 a.m.

Se le preguntó si su horario de trabajo era pesado. Ella contestó, “No, o sea, soy como que nomás ama de casa. Como mis hijas no están conmigo pues nomás me levanto, almuerzo, hago mi comida para cuando mi esposo llegue del trabajo, andar en mi jardín limpiando afuera y esperar tiempo para venir a

trabajar”.

Como conserje nocturno, Gonzalez es responsable de limpiar, barrer y trapear una variedad de espacios de oficina, edificios y baños.

“Mi cosa favorita es mantener siempre bien limpios mis baños para que todos los muchachitos que están aquí entren a un baño limpio”, ella dijo. “Pienso que es lo más importante. O sea, todo es importante en el campo, pero para mí, primordialmente los baños que estén muy limpios”.

Además de poder mejorar la vida de sus hijas, Gonzalez dijo que trabajar la convierte en una mejor persona.

“Me ha dado la oportunidad de tener la satisfacción de haber hecho algo bueno en mi vida”, ella dijo.

Desde que empezó a trabajar en la universidad, uno de los recuerdos favoritos de Gonzalez es ver a los estudiantes cómodos y productivos en el campus gracias al ambiente limpio que los rodea.

Carlos Chavez, director asistente de Mantenimiento y Funcionamiento de Instalaciones, recuerda haber hablado con Gonzalez y haber sido inspirado por su pasión, determinación y amor hacia sus hijas.

“Ella me dijo, ‘Amo lo que hago. Es un trabajo de limp-

ieza, pero me ayudó a poner a mis hijas en el colegio—y eso para mí es gratificante. Lo que a mí me importa es que mis hijas tengan una mejor vida que yo, gracias a que yo tenga este trabajo’, y eso es lo que me puso a pensar”, dijo Chavez.

Para Gonzalez, su trabajo es más que simplemente venir a trabajar. Es ser capaz de proveer para sus hijas, Candy Sheila Gonzalez, quien obtuvo su maestría en comunicaciones en la institución legado UT Pan American en 2013 y es ahora maestra, y Jaqueline Gonzalez, quien obtuvo una licenciatura en justicia penal en UTRGV y obtuvo un título en una escuela de leyes.

Adicionalmente, ella insta a sus compañeros de trabajo a mantener un trabajo consistente y ser positivos diariamente.

“Pues que vengamos a hacer nuestro trabajo como debe de ser”, Gonzalez dijo. “Que siempre vengamos con ganas de seguir haciendo cada día mejor”.

Para la comunidad del campus, ella les aconseja estar agradecidos por cualquier oportunidad que reciban y a ayudar a sus hijos a tener éxito.

Además de agradecer a Dios y a la universidad por haberle



Lesley Robles/Foto The Rider

Conserje Nocturno de UTRGV Maria Guadalupe Gonzalez ha trabajado en el departamento de Mantenimiento y Funcionamiento de Instalaciones por más de una década, ayudando a sus dos hijas a entrar y terminar su educación universitaria.

dado el medio para apoyar a sus hijas con los recursos para conseguir su carrera ideal, ella también enfatiza la importancia de la educación e insta a los estudiantes actuales a seguir sus sueños.

“El comentario que tengo es nomás decirles a los niños que sigan adelante, que luchen por

sus sueños”, dijo Gonzalez. “Que no porque un día están muy cansados dejen de seguir estudiando. Que sigan estudiando y que sigan sus sueños a donde quiera que los lleven porque se les va a dar la oportunidad para tener una mejor vida”.

Más cerca del campus

El Departamento de Recursos Humanos de Brownsville se reubica al University Boulevard

Zugay Treviño
THE RIDER

El personal de Brownsville del Departamento de Recursos Humanos de UTRGV fue reubicado el mes pasado de The Woods en Alton Gloor Boulevard a la nueva Vaquero Plaza, localizada en 2395 W. University Blvd., para facilitar el acceso para la comunidad del campus.

Trini Yunes, directora de Recursos Humanos, dijo que la nueva ubicación le facilita a la facultad y al personal resolver los asuntos que tengan en persona.

“Nos gustaría invitar a todos a darse la oportunidad de venir si tienen cualquier asunto relacionado con el campus de Brownsville”, dijo Yunes. “Está a cerca de dos cuadras, a poca distan-

cia del campus”.

La nueva ubicación está cerca de Casa Bella, el complejo de alojamiento estudiantil de la universidad. Las horas de servicio del departamento serán las mismas.

Ella dijo que los estudiantes que pasen a la oficina pueden recibir ayuda para “aplicar para trabajos si es necesario, o si necesitan venir y hacer su [formulario] I-9, su verificación de empleo, su papeleo de incorporación, o venir si tienen cualquier pregunta”.

La renovación del edificio de 5,730 pies cuadrados tardó seis meses antes de que este abriera sus puertas.

Cuando se le preguntó que causó la reubicación, Yunes contestó, “Tengo entendido que el contrato de renta para The Woods se iba a terminar, y este edificio ya había sido adquirido a



Robert Benavidez Jr./Fotos The Rider

La oficina de Recursos Humanos de UTRGV en Brownsville ha sido reubicada al Vaquero Plaza en 2395 W. University Boulevard. La oficina está abierta de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m. de lunes a viernes.

principios del año pasado. Decidieron poner todos los asuntos de negocios y todo lo de contabilidad y la gente de Recursos Humanos en este nuevo edificio”.

El departamento de Recursos Humanos también se congratula en recibir a estudiantes, facultad y personal que tengan preguntas sobre asuntos como beneficios, nóminas, entrenamiento y relaciones entre los empleados.

De septiembre de 2016 a agosto de 2017, el departamento reportó que 952 estudiantes, facultad y personal recibieron ayuda sin la necesidad de tener una cita.

“Desde que nos movieron aquí ... empecé a ver que más estudiantes están viniendo”, dijo Jesus Escalante, un administrador de salarios en la oficina de Brownsville.

Escalante también dijo que la nueva ubicación es conveniente para los estudiantes que no tienen transporte.

Los últimos cuatro años, el departamento estuvo localizado en 451 E. Alton Gloor Blvd.

Los otros edificios en la Vaquero Plaza se llaman Building One y Building Three. Building One mide 4,533 pies cuadrados, mientras que el Building

Three mide 2,365 pies cuadrados. Por el momento no hay planes de renovación para estos edificios.

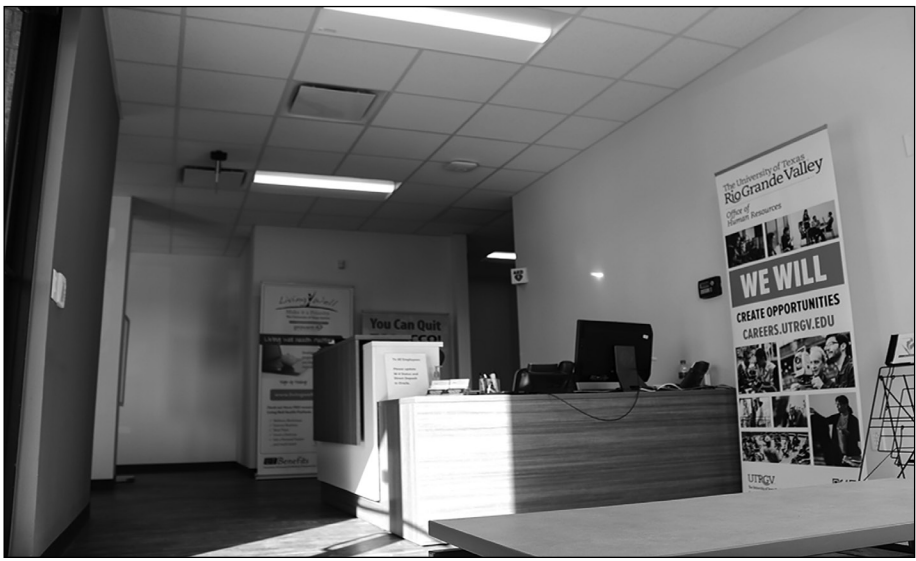
Gerardo Rodriguez, director de Planificación y Construcción de Instalaciones, dijo que la universidad se ahorrará \$28,278 de renta al mes. La universidad ha gastado \$2.2 millones en la reubicación.

El costo incluye gastos de ingeniería, construcción, equipo, mobiliario, jardín, línea de fibra óptica para el internet y gastos de mudanza.

Varios otros departamentos están alojados en esta nueva ubicación: Servicios de Transporte y Estacionamiento, Adquisición, Servicios de Contabilidad, Servicios de Auditoría y Consultoría, y Cuentas por Pagar.

“También es beneficioso, especialmente para negocios, contabilidad y Adquisición y Recursos Humanos”, dijo Rodriguez. “Esos son departamentos en los cuales la vieja [ubicación] no hubiera soportado tantos visitantes”.

Para contactar a Recursos Humanos, llama al 665-2451 en Edinburg y al 882-8205 en Brownsville, o envía un email a hr@utrgv.edu.



Se muestra el área de recepción de la oficina de Recursos Humanos de UTRGV en Brownsville. De septiembre de 2016 a agosto de 2017, el departamento reportó que 952 estudiantes, facultad y personal recibieron ayuda de este departamento sin la necesidad de cita

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STUDENT MEDIA

is accepting applications for the Spring 2018 semester for the following programs:

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PULSE MAGAZINE

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- Enrolled at UTRGV during the Spring 2018 semester.
- Have a cumulative grade-point average of 2.5 or higher.



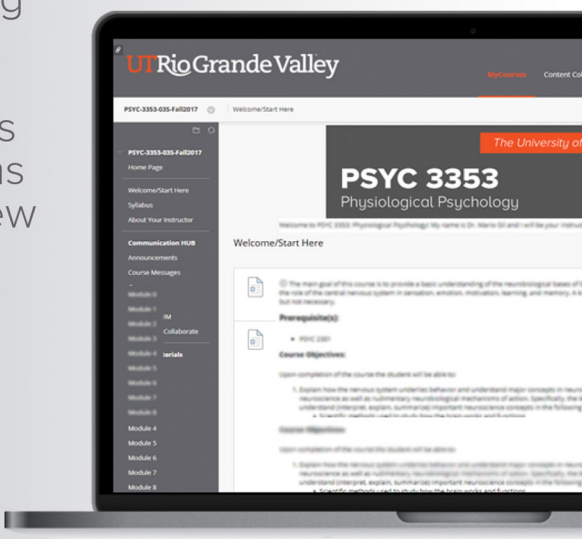
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Click on the Support Center icon to get help and find answers to your questions about Blackboard 24/7.



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- Submit a Support Ticket
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PLAZA
Continued from Page 1

She said students who stop by can receive help to “apply for jobs if needed, or if they need to come and do their I-9 [form], their employment verification, their on-boarding paperwork, or come in for any questions.”

The 5,730-square-foot building took six months to renovate before its opening.

Asked what caused the relocation, Yunes replied, “It’s my understanding that the lease for The Woods was coming up, and this building had been acquired earlier last year. They decided to put all the business affairs and all the accounting and HR folks in that new building.”

The HR department also welcomes students, faculty and staff to ask questions about areas including benefits, payroll, training and employee relations.

From September 2016 to August 2017, the department recorded 952 students, faculty and staff receiving help through walk-in appointments.

“Since we’ve moved over here ... I started seeing that more students are coming in,” said Jesus Escalante, a salary administrator in the Brownsville office.

Escalante also said the new location is convenient for students who may not have transportation.

For the last four years, the department was located at 451 E. Alton Gloor Blvd.

The other buildings in the Vaquero Plaza are called Building One and Building Three. Building One is 4,533 square feet, while Building Three is 2,365 square feet. There are currently no renovation plans for these buildings.

Gerardo Rodriguez, director of Facilities Planning and Construction, said the university will save \$28,278 monthly in rent. The university has spent \$2.2 million on the relocation.

The cost includes engineering fees,



Robert Benavidez Jr./THE RIDER PHOTOS

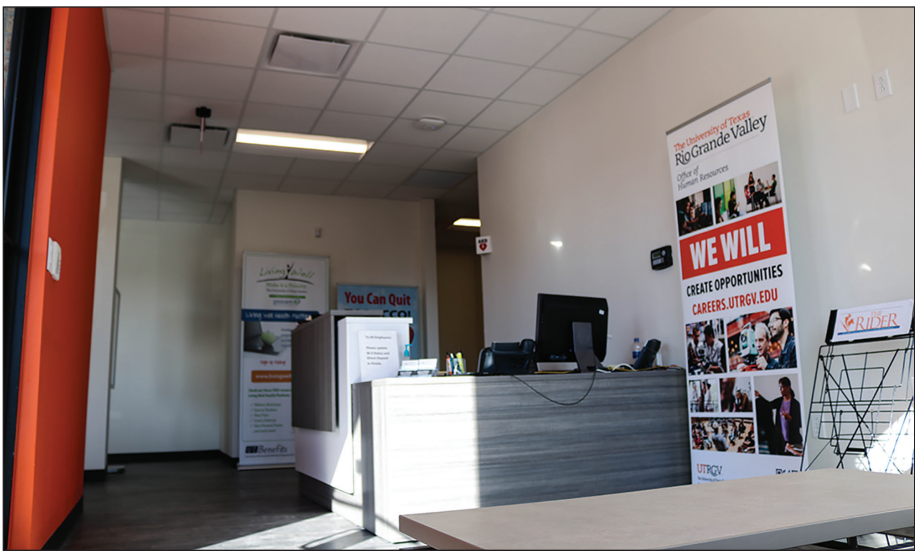
The UTRGV Human Resources office in Brownsville has been relocated to the Vaquero Plaza, Building 2, at 2395 W. University Blvd. The HR office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

construction, equipment, furniture, landscape, internet fiber optic line and moving expenses.

Several other departments are housed at the new location: Parking and Transportation Services, Procurement, Accounting Services, Audits and Consulting Services, and Accounts Payable.

“It’s also beneficial, especially for the business, accounting and Procurement and HR,” Rodriguez said. “Those are departments that the old [location] wouldn’t have allowed a lot of visitors.”

To contact Human Resources, call 665-2451 in Edinburg and 882-8205 in Brownsville, or email hr@utrgv.edu.



CLUB SPOTLIGHT



Lesley Robles/THE RIDER

Officers of South Texas Summoners include (from left) Social Media Chair Leo Resendez, Treasurer Arturo Martinez, President Roberto Treviño, Secretary Gabriela Lee Valdez and Sergeant-at-Arms Sam Gutierrez Villarreal.

Name: South Texas Summoners

Purpose: To bring the gaming community that is behind League of Legends a social and competitive atmosphere while providing options and possibilities to pursue a career in the gaming and eSports industry.

President: Roberto Treviño

Vice President: Alfredo Peña

Secretary: Gabriela Lee Valdez

Treasurer: Arturo Martinez

Sergeant-at-Arms: Sam Gutierrez Villarreal

Social Media Chair: Leo Resendez

Adviser: UTRGV Public Relations Director Jennifer McGehee-Valdez

Activities: LAN parties, League of Legends Tournaments and League of Legends general meetings.

Awards: IGX League of Legends Winners-Summer 2017

Meetings: To be announced

Membership requirements: \$20 fee per semester, \$30 shirt (optional)

For more information, email: utrgv.sts@gmail.com

--Compiled by Lesley Robles

Want your club featured? Email us at TheRider@utrgv.edu or call us at 665-2541 in Edinburg or 882-5143 in Brownsville!

RESOLUTIONS

Continued from Page 1

SMART goals,” he said. “This can be helpful for anybody. The S [in SMART goals] stands for specific, so you have a very specific goal that you take into consideration. The M is for measurable; you want to be able to measure them in some way. A is attainable. You want to set them initially where you can actually achieve them in small steps and then progress as you go through the process.

“R is for realistic. Some people set unrealistic expectations and that can hamper meeting their goals as well. T is for time oriented. It’s important that when you set these goals that you set a time that you’re going to do this, whatever the goal is that you’re going to meet, whether it’s losing weight or exercising more.”

Whittenberg said it is important to create time frames for short-term, intermediate and long-term goals.

Aside from making SMART goals and time frames, people should also surround themselves with positive influences.

“As you begin to slip just a little bit, a person can become discouraged, feel overwhelmed, and that help can come from a close friend or a family member, but also consider counseling,” he said. “There’s a very big difference between counseling and psychotherapy. Psychotherapy is for more severe mental illnesses. Counseling is, basically, for someone who kind of feels stuck, and we as counselors help them become unstuck.”

The assistant professor said it can be helpful to have someone to vent with, especially if it is a professional who can help show people the connection between the mind and body. Counselors can help people adjust goals they have in their life so they are more attainable.

Whittenberg also said it is important to have self-care.

“In positive psychology, sometimes it’s referred to ‘finding your flow,’” he said. “You have to have some kind of activity, whether it’s sports, playing an instrument, playing video games, playing fetch with your dog, planting flowers, going to the beach, whatever it is, for self-care so that you can enjoy flow and that kind of helps recharge your batteries, so you can get ahead and move forward and get back on track with your goals.”

Eating healthier

Villarreal told *The Rider* she has seen an increase in people interested in eating healthier during January more than any other month. However, she also has seen people giving up within the first four to six weeks.

“[People] try to bite off more than they can chew so quickly,” she said. “They forget to do the baby steps. ... You want to dive in, like, everything. Both feet. Let’s do it. Nobody even tests the temperature of the water or dip their toe or anything.”

Villarreal said most want to see results instantly, which causes them to follow an unhealthy diet. However, she said any diet that promises big results in a short amount of time is not

a healthy one. People need to take their time and look into investing in more complex eating plans.

A good diet is one that is inclusive to all macronutrients, which are energy-providing chemical substances consumed by organisms in large quantities. The three macronutrients in nutrition are carbohydrates, lipids and proteins.

Villarreal said people should stay away from diets that recommend avoiding a macronutrient, such as a ketogenic or the Atkins Diet.

A healthy eating plan is one that gives the body the nutrients it needs every day while maintaining a person’s daily calorie goal for weight loss. Such diets can also lower the risk for heart disease and other health conditions.

A healthy diet includes:
--an emphasis on vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat dairy products
--lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts
--limitations on saturated and trans fats, sodium and added sugars
--controlled-portion sizes

Villarreal said she encourages people



“When you feel like giving up, don’t. Talk to yourself, try to encourage yourself, take a step back and reassess.”

--Laura Zelda-Villarreal

Registered and licensed dietitian nutritionist

to take a look at what they’re doing now because, sometimes, the changes they need to make to their diet are not as drastic as they sound.

The term diet is what a person consumes; however, according to Villarreal, society has defined the term “diet” to refer to something negative.

“It is not the word ‘die’ with a cross at the end,” she said. “When somebody says they’re on a diet, the preferred terminology to use is that they are healthy eating or they are making better choices.”

For people who do not know where to start when it comes to eating healthier, Villarreal recommends they visit choosemyplate.gov.

“It’s free,” she said. “Basically, you go in there and you can create a profile based on your height, weight, age, sex and it actually gives you how many calories you should be consuming and it gives you very good, easy-to-see tools of what grains are, what vegetables are. It’s very educational.”

The site allows users to track their eating and physical activity. People should aim to have their meals resemble the MyPlate food guide, which is available on the website, as much as possible.

MyPlate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet, which includes dairy, protein, vegetables, fruits and grains. The guide visually represents daily portions.

Villarreal said it is not expensive to maintain a healthy eating plan.

“When you take out the food across the week and you actually do the math to it, it’s affordable,” she said. “If you can’t afford fresh [fruits and vegetables, for example,] the next best thing would be frozen, not canned. ... Take the time to plan what you’re going to eat for breakfast, lunch, dinner and any snacks.”

When it comes to cheat meals, Villarreal said people must remember that “it is a cheat meal, not a cheat day.”

She advises individuals to choose the cheat meal they want with time or pick the one item they can’t be without. However, she recommends that individuals try to make it as healthy as possible, but that does not mean they have to choose a fat-free pizza or anything of that sort.

“Try to balance it out,” Villarreal said. “Look at [MyPlate] and try to balance it.”

Getting in shape

Another resolution attached to improving health is exercising more.

Garza, who graduated from legacy institution UT Brownsville with a bachelor’s degree in exercise science,

told *The Rider* he also sees an increase in people interested in getting in shape during January.

“Start with what you have; what you have is plenty,” he said. “Focus on the process. The end result will come. Do not set your goals too high because you will set yourself up for failure.”

Getting in shape can have different meanings for everyone. For instance, an elderly person may want to get in shape to live freely on their own; another person might want to be in shape to play with their children; or there are people who want to get in shape to feel and look good.

Overall, getting in shape includes improving health.

Asked what workout routine he recommends for people starting out their resolution, Garza replied: “A total body exercise regimen in a circuit-based-type setting. Do what you can. Rest what you need to rest and you’ll progress from there.”

However, he advises people to learn what works for them because not all programs will show results. For instance, a workout regimen may work for one person, but not for the other.

Yet, it is important to incorporate different body movements in routines, such as push, pull, press, hinge, rotate and plank.

“Once you start moving, and you’re moving better, then you can start emphasizing other aspects in training, like your weights, bands, kettlebells and all these other pieces of equipment that make it fun,” Garza said.

He said finding a program that works for an individual will take a trial-and-error process.

People who are working out for the first time or have not done so in a while may experience delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS).

DOMS is the pain and stiffness felt in muscles several hours to days after unaccustomed or strenuous exercise. The soreness is felt most strongly 24 to 72 hours after the exercise.

To help deal with soreness, Garza said people should keep moving.

“The worst thing you can do is not work out or not do any physical activity due to soreness,” he said. “The soreness is a byproduct of the exercise you did. So, you need to move to help alleviate that soreness ... or some type of stretching session.”

If going to a gym is not an option for individuals, Garza said there are other methods that can help someone get or stay in shape.

“There is so much you can do with technology,” he said. “I partake in something called GymGO, which [allows] people to train from the comfort of their home, their office, the park. It’s live video training. You [also have] YouTube. You have so many fitness professionals that have online programs. There’s books, there’s [free] apps.”

Getting back on track

Eventually, people will fail or slip up during their resolution attempt and that’s OK.

“We’re all human and it’s going to happen,” Whittenberg said. “We’re going to miss a day at the gym or skip that time that we play fetch with our dog or whatever it is that we do to help our self-care and our motivation for the day.”

What should a person do if they fail or slip up?

Don’t be afraid to start again and use the slip-up as an opportunity to learn from a mistake.

“When you feel like giving up, don’t,” Villarreal said. “Talk to yourself, try to encourage yourself, take a step back and reassess, ‘OK. Obviously, that was more than I can handle. What can I do?’ Try to make those gradual changes into your diet and physical activity every day and don’t give up.”

Garza told *The Rider* people should remember that New Year’s resolutions, such as getting in shape, are not a sprint, they’re a marathon of small sprints.

“You might deviate from the trail, but you’ll get back on and you do it again,” he said. “There’s no magic formula but hard work, dedication and time.”

Whittenberg said he encourages people to not be afraid to ask for help or shy away from counseling.

The UTRGV Counseling Center offers services to students that can help improve their mental and physical health. The center is located in Cortez Hall 237 on the Brownsville campus and in University Center 109 on the Edinburg campus.

To contact the UTRGV Counseling Center, call 882-3897 in Brownsville and 665-2574 in Edinburg or email counseling@utrgv.edu.

Have a story idea?

Let us know at

882-5143 or 665-2541

■ OPINION

Land of the hypocrites, home of the social media obsessed

Sydni D. Salinas
A&E EDITOR



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS
Logan Paul

Recently, YouTube star Logan Paul made national news when he traveled to Aokigahara Forest, located in Mount Fuji, Japan.

It is no hidden secret to Japan that visitors of this forest are often seeking to commit suicide, so much so, that it is popularly dubbed the “suicide forest.”

While there are signs and rangers pleading with visitors to remember their families, this does not stop the high rate of deaths within the forest.

With Japanese and American manga and film portrayals making the forest known for its bad history as well, there’s no undermining or downplaying to the reasoning of why people go there.

Paul, who had planned to camp overnight in the forest, was filming when he caught sight of a dead body.

The action that followed is what caused his downfall and national uproar, in which he laughed at the body and made other videos in Japan with racist and disrespectful content toward the people.

In today’s society, there truly is not a censorship to seeing a dead body on newscasts or films, but the difference is that no one laughs about these atrocities.

Plastered in the media are the colors of war, famine and a constant plague of information that is both detrimental and depressing, making death such a casual numbness to our everyday lives.

However, if one stops and thinks about it, what does it say about Americans when this sort of disrespect occurs? Yes, death is something we blissfully turn away to despite it being in our face every hour on the hour, but what do we do as people when one looks at death being caused by such severe depression and laughs?

Is depression laughable?

Is going to another country and disrespecting the culture and life of someone that is different than yours OK? Or, does one have to ask themselves if seeking fame in a social media world has become more important than common decency?

Wanting to know what you, my readers think, I reached out to students at UTRGV for their opinion.

Only three of 10 students I asked—computer science senior Ismael Melendez, marketing sophomore Andrew Nieto and general rehabilitation services junior Maria Gomez—knew of what happened and these were their thoughts.

What are your thoughts on the Logan Paul situation?

Melendez: “I think it was an incredible situation. It was a really bad thing that he did. He didn’t think of what he was doing. He went to that location knowing what it was, and the history behind it. He mentioned that throughout his video before he arrived at the location. I think that he pretty much knew there was a possibility of finding a body there. He didn’t take that into consideration, and he didn’t think of the people that were there and the emotions people go to get there.”

Nieto: “It’s really immature how he was acting. As an American, you want to set an example of the country you represent, but as a person in general, the videos are terrible. The way he was acting was very racist, very, it was just terrible, him and his brother both.”

Gomez: “I thought it was very inappropriate. The thing I found most inappropriate about the whole situation was the fact that everything was caught on camera and he still uploaded it to YouTube, in which he has many underage fans and many followers who shouldn’t be seeing this.”

What do you think should be done?

Melendez: “Action should be taken, especially by YouTube. It’s up to YouTube, really, because they’re the ones who give him the platform.”

Nieto: “I saw his video. I read the tweets and all that, and I agree with all the other YouTubers who openly admit that this isn’t how YouTubers, or content creators, should be taken. He’s using his power and he’s using his millions of subscribers as a way to, like, ‘Oh, one little apology, he’s stupid, he’s learning.’ You can’t take that into what he did.”

Gomez: “We’re all human. We all make mistakes, but I just think he should be suspended.”

What do you believe this action says about our country as a whole, in which this sort of stunt happens to begin with?

Melendez: “Social media is making



Valeria Alanis/THE RIDER
Marketing sophomore Andrew Nieto



Computer science senior Ismael Melendez

us less human. People that are using it to promote themselves are doing a lot of things that they forgot about how it’s going to affect other people. It dehumanizes other people, too, because they’re doing jokes on, like, other cultures and they don’t think about how they’re making a joke out of a culture, and that’s not correct.”

Nieto: “For a country in general, it’s the population, it’s the viewers who are watching it. The ‘Jake Paulers’ and the ‘Logan Paulers,’ just to see that they agree with him, all because he made one apology video. That doesn’t cut it. What he is doing is terrible, especially in a time, well, we take for granted of the little things. Suicide is a big topic; he can’t just make one apology for that.”

Gomez: “I think it says that we are too numb to these sensitive things. We find humor in everything. I mean, it’s OK if you find humor in everything,

but just, don’t show it. I mean, keep it to yourself. Keep it private.”

What power do you believe celebrities hold in our society?

Melendez: “In the age of social media, anyone can become a celebrity. That’s the case of Logan Paul. They do create and have an important role because they are able to affect people’s lives, and of the case of Logan Paul, he has a lot of young followers who are, like, teenagers. So, whatever he does, it’s something a lot them look up to. They look to him as a role model, because a lot of them want to be celebrities.”

Nieto: “More power than our congressmen, Senate, more power than the government, obviously. Followers and subscribers are taken into more account than voting itself. Just because they have power over social media, doesn’t mean they have power. What power do they have shouldn’t be used for publicity or money.”

Gomez: “I believe they hold a lot of power, mostly because they have a lot of followers, and a lot of them are trendy as well. If a celebrity shaves their head, I believe a lot of followers are going to do it as well just because their idols do it.”

So, I would like to ask you another question, one last one.

As Americans, what message are we sending to other countries about who we are?

If the tables were turned, and a Japanese, or anyone other than our own nationality, came into our country and disrespected our lands and people, we would protest, threaten, curse and subject the counter nation to our Facebook judgments and Twitter hashtags.

There would be no sleep in our fury’s fire.

Yet, we can do it to other countries?

We can visit other countries without knowing their language and expect them to speak English?

We can throw stuffed Pokémon balls at chefs and moving cars?

We can take down our pants in central plazas and show our underwear while there are children and people present?

It is interesting to objectively view how that works in America, land of the free, home of the ever so brave.

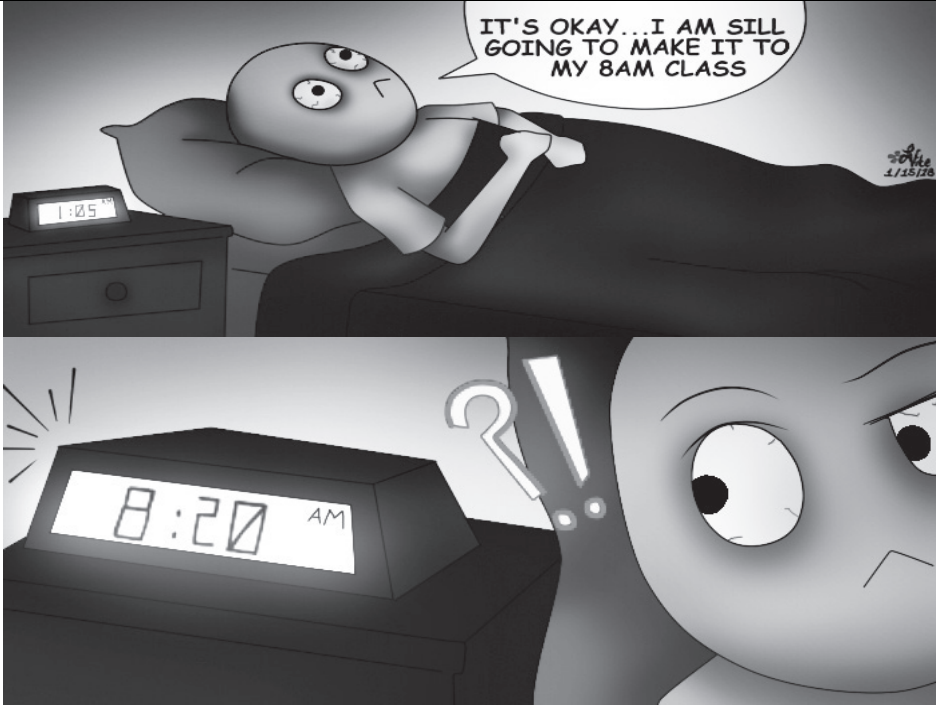
Editor’s note: As of Jan. 10, YouTube has cut a film that Logan Paul was to appear in, according to published reports. The company also announced that it removed him from the Google Preferred program, he will not appear in season four of “Foursome,” and his “Originals” is placed on hold.

SUDOKU

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Scribbles & Thoughts

By Laia Vite



Square up

Robert Benavidez Jr.
THE RIDER

Chess has been around since the sixth century and throughout time, society has made the connection between the game and advanced thinking skills. Knowing this, *The Rider* will work with Grandmaster and UTRGV Chess Coach Bartek Macieja, as well as the school's chess team, to begin a weekly feature this semester, teaching our readers how to play chess. "It teaches you some discipline," Macieja said. "You have to play a move but you have some amount of time. ... You have to make the best move. ... You don't do it, you lose the game. It's like with life ... when you prepare for exams, you also have some limited number of days, hours and then it's gone." Chess is believed to have originated in Asia or Persia and was a "war game" that taught soldiers some basic rules of war. The goal was to capture the opponent's king. The war was over once the king was captured, similar to today's game of chess. A chess board consists of 64 squares, 32 light and 32 dark. The light square on the first row must be on the right-hand side when facing the board. In chess, the white pieces always make the first move. Macieja said to begin to learn and understand chess, one must first understand the basics, which would be how each piece moves. There are six different pieces; each


side consists of eight pawns placed on the second row, two rooks on the corners, two knights next to the rooks, two bishops next to the knights, one queen that goes on its color and one king on the first row. The pawns move forward one square at a time throughout the game, unless it is their first move during which they can move two squares forward. They capture enemy pieces by moving one square forward diagonally. The rooks move horizontally or vertically through any number of empty spaces. The bishops can only move diagonally through empty squares. Knights are a little tricky as they move two squares horizontally and one vertically, or two squares vertically and one square horizontally. It may be easier to remember it as an "L" shape in any direction. The queen is a combination of a rook and a bishop as it may move diagonally, vertically or horizontally through any number of empty spaces. Lastly, there is the king, which can move one square in any direction it pleases. A similarity in all the pieces is that to capture an enemy's piece, your piece must take its place. **UTRGV in Final Four** The university's chess team placed fourth in the 2017 Pan-American Intercollegiate Chess Championships and will advance to the President's Cup, also known as the Final Four of College Chess. The tournament is set to take place the first week of April in



COURTESY PHOTO
UTRGV's Chess Team competes against the Webster University Chess Team last month in Round 2 of the 2017 Pan-American Intercollegiate Chess Championships. Shown are Grandmasters (from left) Carlos Hevia Alejano, Vladimir Belous, Andrey Stukopin and Kamil Dragun.

New York. UTRGV will be represented by Grandmasters Kamil Dragun, Andrey Stukopin, Vladimir Belous, Hovhannes Gabuzyan and Carlos Hevia Alejano. The other schools advancing to the Final Four are Webster University, St. Louis University and Texas Tech University. "With our motivated team and our [eagerness] to succeed there, I really believe we have a very good chance to surprise other teams and claim the trophy," Macieja said.





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ATHLETICS HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

Squads seek conference titles

Gabriel Galvan
THE RIDER

As the semester begins, UTRGV Athletics programs plan for an exciting season with their respective athletes and coaching staff.

The men's basketball team has improved its win-loss ratio considerably from the 2016-2017 season with a current overall record of 10-8.

Last season, the Vaqueros finished with a 10-22 overall record.

They opened conference play with a victory over the University of Missouri-Kansas City on Jan. 6.

Before its victory over UMKC, the squad defeated Our Lady of the Lake University 96-75. The successful game, which took place Jan. 2 in the UTRGV Fieldhouse, was credited in part of the scoring performance by sophomore guard Xavier McDaniel Jr., who had 17 points, in addition to seven other members of the team, who scored in double figures.

Other players scoring double figures were sophomore Lesley

Varner Jr., juniors Terry Winn and Lew Stallworth, and seniors Nick Dixon, Moe McDonald, Dan Kimasa and Mike Hoffman.

Head Coach Lew Hill said the players' familiarity with him as coach can be credited to the team's improvement.

"It's their second year with me, so we've been through the year, we've learned, we're more experienced," Hill said. "Last year, they still had the loser mentality. But, like I tell everybody, you've got to crawl before you walk."

While no players have left from the fall, there is a new player, forward Terry Winn, from the University of Texas El Paso who could potentially provide a needed bounce to the team.

"He brings us a physicality we didn't have," Hill said. "He brings a different leadership, a different mindset that our team has grasped."

Last Thursday night, the squad sealed their second WAC conference win over California State University, Bakersfield with a score of 87-74.

The Vaqueros also faced

off against the Grand Canyon University Antelopes in conference play last Saturday in Phoenix, but as of press time, results were not available.

The men's team will also go up against Utah Valley and Seattle universities on Thursday and Saturday in the Fieldhouse.

Visit utrgvrider.com for game coverage.

Women's Basketball

So far, the women's basketball team has been doing about as well as it did last season. Last year, the team had an overall record of 19-14, compared to its current record of 10-7. On Jan. 6, the squad opened its conference play with a home game loss (54-52) against UMKC.

Last Thursday night, the Vaqueras suffered their second straight conference loss (67-64) against CSUB in an overtime thriller.

Head Coach Larry Tidwell said there are no new players or changes to the coaching staff.

"We're sticking with the status quo this season," Tidwell said. The inspiration comes from within. We're gonna reach



Joahana Segundo/THE RIDER PHOTOS

The UTRGV Men's Basketball Team practices for its upcoming basketball game. The Vaqueros will face Utah Valley University at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Fieldhouse.

new heights. We're gonna get prepared. It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."

The women's team will hit the road against Utah Valley and Seattle on Thursday and Saturday.

Baseball

Last year, the UTRGV Baseball Team had an overall record of 26-28. The season opens at home against Central Michigan University at 7 p.m. Feb. 16.

Derek Matlock, who spent the last five years at West Virginia University as a pitching coach, is the new head coach for the Vaqueros.

Matlock said the team is getting acclimated to his coaching style.

"If there is one thing I'll say about our players, it's that they are unbelievable kids, unbelievable workers," he said. "They have bought in 100 percent. We had a great fall of guys playing extremely hard and being extremely coachable."

Coleman Grubbs, a sophomore transfer from North Central Texas College, will be at the center field spot.

Austin Douglas (right-handed pitcher) and Victor Garcia Jr. (first baseman), are both players from last season who graduated with a bachelor's of science in criminal justice. The

first baseman starting position had not been determined as of press time.

Matlock said the team is ready to swing for the WAC.

"It's gonna be fine. We're gonna play fast in and off the field. We're gonna play fast and aggressive offense," he said. "The plan is ready."

Golf

The men's and women's golf teams will compete in the Waves Challenge Tournament Jan. 29 in Ventura County, California.

The teams have Men's Head Coach Philip Tate and Women's Head Coach Bryan Novoa to help them prepare for the season.

Novoa started as the new women's coach in the fall. He played golf professionally from 1997-2006 and served as the head scoring instructor at Scoring Solutions Golf from 2008-2017.

"I went into observation mode for the first 60 days," Novoa said. "And, yeah, I did speak my mind and give suggestions, but now I've had the time to get to know the students."

Freshman Tennoshin Ogawa, of Japan, and Texas A&M University sophomore transfer Rachel Yu are the newest members of the golf teams who will represent UTRGV this spring.



Mass communication graduate student Marie-Fatou Gueye (from left), business administration junior Daniela Azubell, psychology sophomore Megan Johnson and public affairs graduate student Alicia McCray practice in the UTRGV Fieldhouse for their upcoming basketball game. The UTRGV Women's Basketball Team will compete against Chicago State University at 7 p.m. Jan. 27 in the UTRGV Fieldhouse.



Laura Van Tilburg, a kinesiology graduate student and Weslaco native, is a third-year forward for the UTRGV Women's Basketball Team.

If you could be any animal, what would it be and why? "I think maybe, like, a lion, 'cause they are [at the] top of the food chain kind of thing and they just kind of do as they please and [they are] aggressive. Probably, a lion."

What TV show are you currently into? "Oh, a lot. I really love "Grey's Anatomy," that's probably top, like my favorite. I love "Criminal Minds." Right now, I'm watching "NCIS" and I'm on season eight.

I love "Scandal," "How To Get Away With Murder," like, all of those kind of crime shows. Those [are] my favorites."

Do you have any hidden talents? "Actually, I do have a hidden talent. I'm really good at figuring, like, people's doppelgangers. I'm really good ... like saying what people look like."

If you could have dinner with any celebrity or athlete, who would it be? "I would really like to have dinner with Gregg Popovich, the Spurs head coach. He's just been one of my idols ever since I was growing up and just looking at him and, like, how he coaches his players and how his players respond to him. I think that it would be really cool to have dinner with him."

Who is your personal hero and why? "Definitely, my mom. Without her, I wouldn't be where I'm at. She is my biggest supporter. She is my rock and everything I do is because of her."

Who makes you laugh the most on the team? "That's hard, everyone makes me laugh. Everyone is so funny, but I will have to say probably Krisy [Sampson], on our team, and Natalia [Ready]. Definitely, they are always making me laugh ... and

Marie [Fatou Gueye]."

What is the best advice you've received recently? "Every day, our coach sends us, like, a little motivational text in our team group chat and I think it's just those things that you got to look at. ... We have a sign in our locker room and it's by J.J. Watt, and it says, "Success isn't owned. It's leased and rent is due every day." ... You have to work hard every day and you can't take anything for granted. You have to give it all you have all of the time."

Pizza or tacos? "Tacos, for sure."

If a song played every time you walked into a room, what song would that be? "When our team plays "Gucci Gang," they look at me 'cause I kind of know all the words of that one. So, that's probably recently, but if probably it's like a song from a Disney movie, I know all of them. I got the soundtracks on my phone."

On your off time, what do you like to do? "Well, in the summer I really like to swim. So, I'm either at the pool or the beach, but right now, I'm probably in my bed watching Netflix."

--Compiled by Valeria Alanis

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